


# CALVIN

College

TO: Administration and Finance Division Directors  
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RE: Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) Participation

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As one component of Calvin College's efforts to support our internal goals of anti-racism that are stated in *From Every Nation*, and also as a contributing element to our engagement with greater Grand Rapids Partners for a Racism-Free Community, we have an opportunity for meaningful engagement with the local community through our business activities as a consumer of goods and services. I am pleased to share these guidelines for procurement of goods and services to assist us in being faithful to our commitment for equitable access by MBEs/WBEs.

## INTRODUCTION

Calvin College has developed the following practices to guide the procurement of services and supplies to the campus to insure equitable access by MBEs/WBEs (Minority Business Enterprises / Women Business Enterprises). The goals of this procurement program are to remedy past and current discrimination against MBEs/WBEs and to ensure a "level playing field" in which MBE/WBEs can compete fairly for provision of goods and services to Calvin College.

As a faith-based institution, Calvin College concerned with both standards of behavior and issues of justice on our campus and in all of our business partnerships. As we initiate working relationships with suppliers and contractors, we regularly share with them our campus community values of the importance of cultural and ethnic diversity, respect for individuals, including those with differing abilities, environmental stewardship, and concerns for justice, including anti-racism.

Unlike many similar institutions of higher education, Calvin College does not have a centralized purchasing office that operates the procurement process. Instead, we empower decentralized purchasing activities for smaller items/supplies, and coordinate the procurement of larger supply contracts and services.

## **OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

Consequently, it is critical that the following principles are observed by all members of our campus who carry out procurement activity.

- 1) Outreach – We will work to identify MBE/WBE firms that provide needed goods and services and, within each procurement area, we will establish and maintain a database of these firms for outreach when procurement opportunities arise.  
For example – In the area of physical plant maintenance and construction, we will work with the West Michigan Minority Contractors Association (WMMCA) to acquire this information. For both these and other goods and services, we will collaborate with organizations like the Michigan Minority Business Development Council (MMBDC) and the City of Grand Rapids – Equal Opportunity Department and the Purchasing Department – to establish this database of appropriate MBE/WBE suppliers.
- 2) Bidding -- We are committed to maximizing the diversity of our business partnerships while procuring highest quality goods and services at a competitive price. To accomplish this goal, Calvin College will regularly invite MBE/WBEs to participate in competitive bidding for goods and services. Calvin procurement staff will be expected to provide documentation that good faith efforts were made to attain MBE/WBE participation in the bidding process.
- 3) Partnerships – As appropriate and possible, Calvin College will encourage the teaming of key large-volume vendors of goods and services with MBE/WBE vendors as a means of developing business partnerships with MBE/WBEs. This MBE/WBE partnership involvement may also take the form of joint ventures on primary bids, subcontractors to bidders, and/or manufactures or suppliers to bidders.
- 4) Workforce Diversity – In addition to encouraging business partnerships with MBE/WBEs, Calvin will also focus attention on diversity in the workforce by encouraging business partners to report on percent of women and minority participation in their workforce.
- 5) We will consider this activity to be successful when the MBE/WBE providers of goods and services to Calvin College reach a level comparable to the availability of MBE/WBE firms that are ready, willing, and able to provide the goods and services required by the college.

**NOTES:**

Calvin College is extremely grateful to the The Christman Company, one of our major construction partners, for their pioneering leadership, vision, innovative practice, and willingness to coach Calvin in process of ensuring a "level playing field" in which MBE/WBEs can compete fairly for provision of goods and services in Western Michigan. We look forward to continuing dialogue with The Christman Company and future potential business partners as we continue to refine and improve this process.

**Defintions:**

A Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) is defined as a business entity in which a minority individual or individuals holds a minimum of 51% or the voting shares and interest in the entity, and in which that minority ownership constitutes management and investment control in the organization.

A Women Business Enterprise (WBE) is defined as a business entity in which a female individual or individuals holds a minimum of 51% or the voting shares and interest in the entity, and in which that minority ownership constitutes management and investment control in the organization.

