



ONTARIO
SOCIETY OF
PROFESSIONAL
ENGINEERS

OSPE GUIDE TO USING PUBLIC PROCUREMENT TO REINFORCE EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MANDATES

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The Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) is dedicated to the advancement of the engineering profession. This includes creating a future where any and all marginalized groups are able to make a contribution.

The need for increased equity, diversity and inclusion in engineering requires those throughout the value chain to make changes. To identify what systemic changes will provide the most impact, OSPE has initiated a number of research studies. Our findings reveal several approaches. However, the one that has the broadest and greatest impact is to modernize public procurement practices so that those seeking and bidding on public sector work will raise their standards to be considered.

All public sector procurement should adhere to the principles of Sustainable Procurement.

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

What Is Sustainable Procurement?

Sustainable Procurement is the integration of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) principles into your organization's procurement processes and decisions. As purchasers of engineering services, public sector organizations are in a unique position to influence practice throughout the value chain.

FOUR PILLARS OF SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL



INDIGENOUS



SOCIAL



ETHICAL

ENVIRONMENTAL: Sustainable Procurement considers how the project will impact the environment, modifying it where necessary to reduce ecosystem disruption.

INDIGENOUS: Sustainable Procurement ensures that projects are respectful of Indigenous peoples, their lands and existing treaties and agreements.

SOCIAL: Sustainable Procurement examines processes to ensure they have lasting positive societal benefits, such as fair wages and employment for equity-seeking groups.

ETHICAL: Sustainable Procurement requires that decision-making is ethical in nature, adhering to appropriate oversight.

Sustainable Procurement may fulfill some of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an urgent call to action for the prosperity of the planet.

Engineers lead in innovation and design that power our communities. OSPE encourages all organizations to adopt Sustainable Procurement practices that will meet their equity mandates and have a higher return.



BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT FOR PUBLIC SECTOR PURCHASERS SUCH AS MUNICIPALITIES, UNIVERSITIES, AND CROWN CORPORATIONS

- Supporting internal EDI objectives and goals, including accountability and transparency
- Demonstrating commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion
- Increasing the pool of candidates for consideration
- Producing a more inclusive product or project
- Creating a more supportive, collaborative, and creative workplace
- Fostering innovation and productivity
- Expanding perspectives to maximize problem-solving and troubleshooting

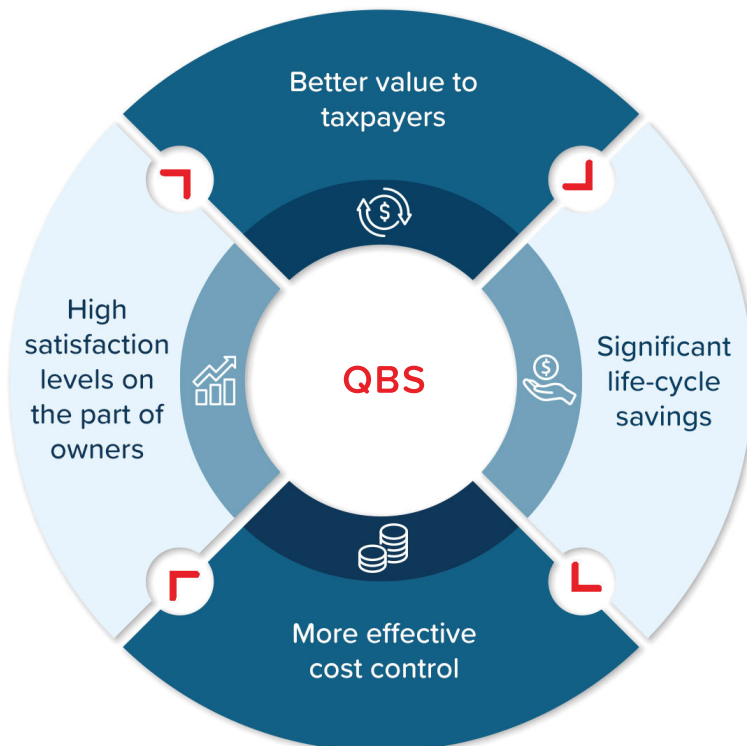
QUALIFICATIONS-BASED SELECTION

Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) is a process wherein firms are selected based on their qualifications to do a project, instead of their low bid. Integrating EDI principles into this process of prequalifying bidders is a meaningful way to extend your internal practices to the marketplace.

OSPE has been promoting QBS for many years because we believe that it is in the best interest of completing successful projects. It has been shown to protect the public interest over the life cycle of the project, including design, construction, operations, maintenance, and eventual upgrading or decommissioning.

QBS very easily accommodates the application of equity, diversity and inclusion criteria as part of the qualifications of the supplier and combined with Sustainable Procurement can lead to enhanced levels of satisfaction from all parties.

QBS was mandated into law by the United States government in the 1970s, and is now mandated in Calgary and Quebec. Ontario should be next and you can be a leader.



WHERE TO INCLUDE EDI PRINCIPLES IN YOUR SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

There are many opportunities to include EDI objectives within in your procurement process. Here are some suggestions:



PLANNING

- Needs Assessment
- Specifications
- Market Research



BIDDING

- Announcement
- Pre-Qualification
- Clarification
- Methods (Bid/RFP)



EVALUATION

- Evaluation
- Contract Award



MONITORING

- Drafting Contracts
- Payments
- Amendments
- Performance



EXAMPLES OF ENGINEERING FIRMS LEADING EDI PRACTICE:

WSP GLOBAL:

- Employs a director of Global Inclusion and Diversity.
- Target of having 30 per cent women in management roles globally by 2021.
- Commitment to pay equity.
- 40 per cent of leaders in Canadian branch are women.

SNC-LAVALIN:

- Their 2018 Sustainable Business Strategy commits to increasing diversity and equity in operations and with clients, including quantitative targets for women in senior leadership roles.
- Offers a minority scholarship program to college students pursuing STEM.

MOTT MACDONALD:

- Global EDI policy including a full-time EDI team.
- Diversity Dispatch publication.
- Mentoring programs in U.K. and Middle East.

Currently, many public sector authorities follow a Supplier Diversity Program (SDP), meaning the buyer provides preferred or encouraged access to procurement contracts for businesses owned by persons from equity-seeking groups. More specifically, this program defines a diverse supplier in terms of ownership.

For a more genuine movement towards a truly equitable and inclusive practice, public sector procurement authorities should ask prospective suppliers to describe their policies, programs, and initiatives to increase opportunities for women as professional engineers.



SUPPORTING PARTNERS

The following organizations participated in research investigating the impacts of EDI in Public Procurement:

- Association of Consulting Engineering Companies (ACEC – Canada)
- ACEC – Ontario
- Buy Social Canada
- Canadian Collaboration for Sustainable Procurement
- Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario
- Engineers Canada
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce
- Society of Women Engineers – Toronto

EFFECTIVE EDI PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

When it comes to improving equity, diversity and inclusion in an organization there is no single best practice. Good EDI practices are those that are meaningful to the organization and its employees, and can be measured for effectiveness.

Here are some common examples that you may wish organizations to provide evidence of as part of your Sustainable Procurement pre-qualifications:

- Mentoring programs
- Hiring outreach initiatives
- Income support during pregnancy and parental leave
- Work-from-home policies
- Training opportunities
- Focused recruitment targets
- Diversity-focused employee resource groups
- Setting corporate objectives
- Support and advocacy for EDI-related firms/causes
- Internal/external language review
- Pay equity policies
- Public statements of commitment





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