



Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion

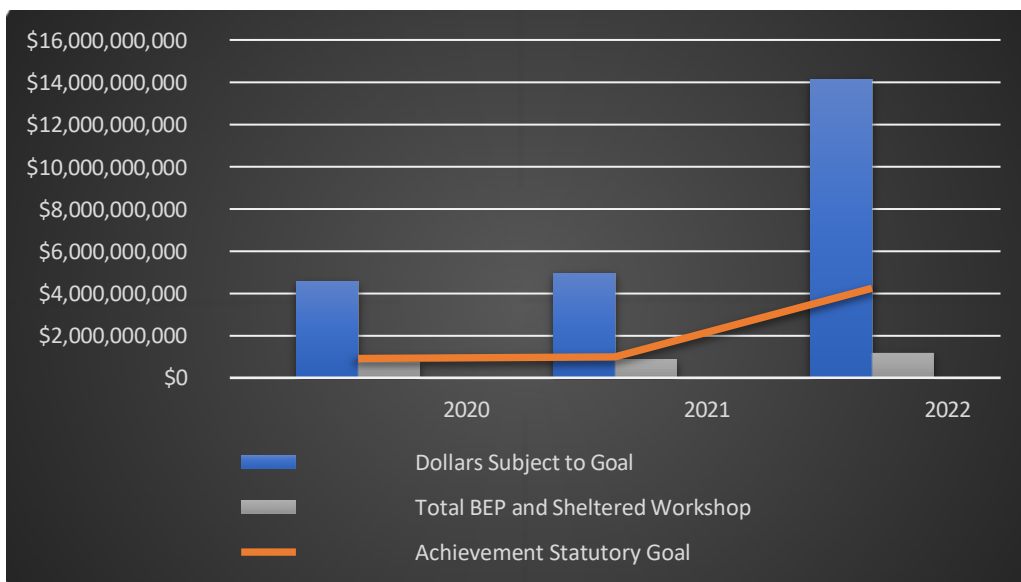
Scorecard

FY 2022

An Analysis of the Illinois Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Procurement Landscape

Scorecard Overview

The State of Illinois is committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and competitive business environment. The Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion (CEI) was created to promote diversity in the Illinois hiring process and champion the continuing economic development of minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, and persons-with-disabilities-owned and operated businesses to participate and succeed in the State procurement process. CEI employs capacity-building and development strategies to ensure the statewide vertical and horizontal growth tactics needed to sustain and undergird the Illinois minority-owned business economic engine. In FY2022, the Statutory Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Goal for state agencies and public institutions for higher learning (Entities) rose from 20% to 30%. In addition, there was a noted increase in Dollars Subject to Goal from \$4.9b to \$14.1b, caused by fewer class exemptions being granted to agencies, as some of the larger agencies reduced the amount of their exemption request from the previous year.



CEI, as part of its responsibility to assess the State's progress toward reaching this goal, may create a scoring evaluation for State agencies and public institutions for higher learning. See 30 ILCS 574/40-10(2). In furtherance of this effort, CEI launched a participatory research initiative to serve as a barometer for building a greater understanding of equity in opportunity within Illinois' business support ecosystem. This landscape analysis measured the disparities or equality gaps between prime vendors and Business Enterprise Program (BEP) certified entities in accessing the State's procurement processes and systems. The research process included surveying stakeholders, including Illinois agencies and public institutions of higher

learning, as well as procurement-related councils and commissions. This report presents the findings of the analysis for each State agency and public institution for higher learning (“Entity”) for CEI’s 2022 fiscal year. It identifies areas of achievement, opportunities for growth, and recommendations for improvement to help enable the State to reach its aspirational goals for diversity in procurement. It also highlights instances of innovation in efforts to diversify procurement within our State.

Scorecards

This report contains scorecards for each Entity for which CEI obtained sufficient data to complete its analysis. Due to a lack of substantial data provided in certain instances, some Entities were assessed based on the limited information provided. This is noted on individual scorecards. Where possible, CEI scored each Entity¹ based on achievements in three performance areas:

- **increasing capacity:** the existence of structured infrastructure dedicated to focusing on supplier diversity initiatives, strategies, and tactics deployed to strengthen non-BEP and BEP collaborative relations, bid solicitation diversity scoring structures, internal BEP relations (including financial outlay and satisfaction monitoring and tracking efforts), and individual and collaborative outreach activities.
- **growing revenue:** success in meeting the BEP aspirational goal performance of 30% during the fiscal year and a demonstrated increase in investing in BEP firms throughout a three-year period, the fiscal year 2020 through the fiscal year 2022.
- **enhancing credentials:** performance in developing and maintaining business mentor relations and opportunities that foster interaction and potential collaboration considerations.

Each State agency and public institution of higher learning received a tier assessment ranging from “I” to “IV” based on the quality of their survey responses to questions related to the performance areas. “Tier I” indicates excellent accomplishment in achieving BEP goal performance, establishing infrastructure, and engaging in a strategy that facilitates optimal BEP support. “Tier II” indicates good accomplishment with BEP performance goal achievement beyond average expectations and implementation of strategies to enhance performance and support the continued development of BEP firms. “Tier III” indicates satisfactory BEP goal performance and implementation of an underdeveloped strategy to foster BEP support. “Tier IV” indicates opportunities for the expansion of potential BEP procurement engagement activity were identified. For the Entities that are categorized in Tier IV, CEI will provide direct technical assistance to help the Entity

¹ CEI employed a Convergent Design methodology for this analysis drawn from responses to a survey tool. This is mixed-methods research in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously and analyzed separately.

work toward achieving at least satisfactory BEP goal performance and implementation of a developed strategy to foster BEP support. Many Tier IV entities rely extensively on procurement from master contracts and, as a result, have not developed significant programs to increase BEP engagement. CEI looks forward to working with these entities to develop strategies for use in expanding BEP procurement activity while continuing their reliance on master contracts.

Full-size scorecards are dedicated to Entities categorized as “Tier II” or above. These scorecards include analysis for all three performance areas. One-half-size scorecards are included for Entities categorized as “Tier III” or below. In such cases, Entities were assessed only on Increasing Capacity and Revenue Growth performance. Finally, an “Innovative Strategies” section is highlighted for Entities categorized as higher than “Tier II,” chronicling best practice strategies that can be replicated to foster impactful outcomes supporting BEP firms.

Summary

Key highlights and overall takeaways were captured during the data analysis phase of this initiative. Overall, 61 out of 102 Entities participated in the research initiative survey, yielding a 59.8% participation rate. The organizational breakdown was as follows: 32 of 61 participating Entities were State agencies (yielding a rate of 52.5%), and 29 of 61 participating Entities were Public Institutions of Higher Learning (yielding a rate of 47.5%). Of note, survey responses from some Entities required further information to assess BEP performance fully. Several noteworthy developments in advancing equitable and inclusive systems were identified.

- Altogether, 32 (or 52.5% of) participating Entities experienced a favorable trend from FY2021 to FY 2022 regarding the percentage of BEP achievement.
- In addition, 37 (or 60.7% of) participating Entities experienced a favorable trend from FY2021 to FY2022 regarding percentage of revenue growth.
- Examples of concrete actions Entities have taken to increase equity and inclusion consisted of the following:
 - collaboration with Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to garner additional stakeholder support in launching development and strategic efforts to build BEP relations;
 - continuous outreach to firms that may qualify for BEP, encouraging firms to register, attend and hold BEP vendor informational events and train staff to search for vendors in the BEP database;
 - hosting pre-submission/pre-bid conferences for all solicitations, facilitating prime and subcontractor networking and relationship-building opportunities;
 - regular outreach to CEI's compliance unit, as needed, to garner

additional information and written support regarding the sheltered market program;

- routine NIGP code listing reviews to garner awareness of the availability of new BEP firms;
- collaboration with nearby institutions, state agencies, and business organizations for strategic partnerships, time-saving tactics and resource opportunities;
- publicizing solicitation opportunities through established social media platforms; participation in CEI's Mentor Protégé Program;
- implementing cross-agency relationships to collaborate in outreach efforts to expand prime and BEP networking opportunities;
- investing resources and efforts into developing platforms and protocols to track BEP performance and engage in tactics to foster sustainability among these businesses; and
- referring small businesses to CEI for assistance in obtaining BEP certification.

Many members of the CEI intra-stakeholder network of BEP service providers, including agencies, chief procurement offices, commissions and councils, and public institutions of higher learning, are engaged in unprecedented work through innovative strategies that fortify Illinois' business economic engine. There were approximately 30 innovative highlights featured within this scorecard report. Some examples include:

- Through dedicated direct service to BEP-certified firms, the **Toll Highway Authority** administers multiple procurement opportunities that span four operational areas, including a 5-pronged prime and BEP mentorship initiative with a Partnering for Growth program, technical assistance support, business initiatives, credential earning opportunities, and additional opportunities extended through external partnerships.
- The **Illinois Housing Development Authority** administers training for prime vendors to support development in strengthening BEP-certified firms through successful collaborative partnerships.
- The **Department of Innovation & Technology** routinely monitors prime vendors' BEP performance and plans to connect primes and BEP-certified firms through satisfaction surveys.
- The **Department of Central Management Services** hosts multiple webinars encouraging timely information sharing and innovative strategy with procurement professionals across Illinois to foster an exchange of ideas on best practices and diversity efforts.

Please take note of the "Innovative Highlights" contained within the scorecards with a tier "II" or higher for additional perspective on the groundbreaking work undertaken to support BEP-certified firms.

CEI thanks each of the Entities that participated and completed this survey as a demonstration of their support and commitment to addressing continued economic development of minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, and persons-with-disabilities-owned and operated business participation and success in the State procurement process.

Recommendations

Continued investment is necessary to maintain a growth mindset and enable unfettered progress toward achieving ambitious goals. A shared understanding helps to explore conditions and experiences of importance. It is incumbent upon all Entities to adopt an intentional process in creating a constructive approach in the journey forward. The required time and resource investment to realize such efforts, community benefit, and equity aims necessitate progression and innovation.

In furtherance of equitable and inclusive procurement practices, State agencies and public institutions of higher education should consider following common principles and practical strategies for sustained success:

- Identify the department within each respective Entity that addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and engage with that department to increase understanding of current State initiatives, pipeline, and community contacts and leverage their subject matter expertise to ensure an inclusive approach within the procurement space.
- Work with DEI departments to create an inclusive mission and vision, measurable short-term and long-term goals, tracking and trending methods, and a control plan to address goals below the established benchmark.
- Ensure visibility and understanding or awareness by developing a comprehensive communication plan that clearly identifies vital stakeholders, optimal modes of communication, and a determined re-occurring cadence to report out key metrics.
- Establish partnerships with pipeline programs, community resources, and sheltered markets, plan relationship-building, networking, and outreach events to develop an intentional and comprehensive internal and external marketing plan incorporating mixed-media modes to establish and attract BEP businesses.
- Identify and implement an evidence-based project methodology to ensure the success of the proposed future state, including setting executive-level sponsorship and alignment with the organization's or entity's key initiatives.
- Create a comprehensive and inclusive onboarding or orientation program that establishes clear expectations and includes the necessary information to ensure success in meeting the aspirational goal performance of 30%.