



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the mission and goals of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)?

WBENC is dedicated to advancing the success of certified women's business enterprises (WBEs), Corporate Members, and government agencies, in partnership with its Regional Partner Organizations.

WBENC works to foster diversity in the world of commerce. Its programs and policies are designed to expand opportunities and eliminate barriers in the marketplace for women business owners. WBENC works with corporate representatives to encourage the use and expansion of Supplier Diversity programs.

2. Who are WBENC's Corporate Members?

Membership is open to corporations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations that have a demonstrated interest in supplier diversity programs. As of April 17, 2017, WBENC has 309 [Corporate Members](#). WBENC's 14,000+ certified WBEs are not classified as members.

3. Who is eligible to join?

Corporations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations that have a supplier diversity program or are in the process of starting one are eligible to join. They must proactively seek women business enterprise (WBE) suppliers.

4. What is the value of a WBENC Corporate Membership?

National Membership with WBENC provides you not only with unlimited national access to 14,000+ certified WBEs and WOSBs to fulfill your contracting needs, but you will also work directly with us to receive the tools and resources needed to build the type of Supplier Diversity Program that best fits your company's needs. From a strong traditional program, to an advanced or world class program, the programs and services offered through your National Member Benefits will help you achieve this goal. As a new Corporate Member, your Company joins the 300+ major corporations and government agencies that have discovered and are recognized for the bottom line value of adding diversity to their vendor pool. These corporate and government. To learn more about the true value of a WBENC Corporate Membership please see our [Corporate Membership Benefits & Dues Structure](#).

5. Is Supplier Diversity or WBE utilization training provided?

Yes, training is provided on an informal basis. For companies seeking to start a new program, WBENC refers an experienced consultant or connects you to a Corporate Member with a national leader in Supplier Diversity. Many of these Corporate Supplier Diversity leaders either serve as WBENC Board Members or in our [Ambassadors' program](#). These leaders can be an invaluable resource in providing support and advice.

Support and information is also provided through research such as the Benchmarking Survey referenced above, and through workshops, Live Meetings on a variety of topics, online services such as WBENCLink, plus tools such as the Balanced Scorecard that assists member companies in self-assessing their programs.

6. How can my company participate?

WBENC offers many high visibility opportunities for corporate participation. Two-thirds of WBENC's Board seats are held by corporations, and corporate representatives are eligible to serve on standing committees of the Board. Involvement in the Ambassadors' program or providing event sponsorship and support (see below) are additional ways for companies to participate.

7. Are corporate sponsorship opportunities available?

Sponsorship of events and programs such as our annual [Summit & Salute](#) held in March every year during Women's History Month; annual WBENC [National Conference & Business Fair](#), the largest conference for WBEs in the country, held each year in June; the Tuck-WBENC Executive Program, a six-day executive program aimed at building the capacity of the participating WBEs; the Dorothy B. Brothers Executive Scholarship Program; WBENC publications and books and many others are significant sponsorship and branding opportunities. In addition to the events and programs listed above, WBENC also undertakes research and other special projects each year, each with well-established benefits and attractive outreach opportunities. Please contact Mia Delano at mdelano@wbenc.org for more information.

8. What is the certification process and how do I know it is reliable?

WBENC provides a national standard for the certification of women owned companies. Our 14 Regional Partner

Organizations implement this standard utilizing professional staff and trained volunteer certification committees. The process begins when a woman applies through the WBENC website. After completion of the online application, she must then submit the required documents to complete her file and send it to the designated Regional Partner Organization. A regional Certification Review Committee reviews the file and directs the next step, a site visit, be conducted.

The Certification Review Committee outlines specific questions for the site visit, and the result of the site visit is reported during the next monthly Certification Review Committee meeting. If the file review and site visit have led the committee to determine that the business meets all of WBENC's criteria, certification as a Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) will be issued. While approximately 23% of applications are denied, an appeal process is in place that provides a review at both the regional and, if appropriate, the national level.

Corporate Members can track a WBE through the certification process, access, and download a PDF version of the WBE certificate via WBENCLink, the WBENC online database of WBEs.

The national Board of Directors' Certification Committee maintains the standards. WBENC oversees the standards and training for Certification Committee members and Regional Partner Organization program staff. WBENC staff conducts an annual audit of each Regional Partner Organization's processes to ensure that each is following the WBENC certification standards.

9. How many Women's Business Enterprises (WBEs) does WBENC have and what is the profile of these businesses?

As of January 2017, there were 14,000+ certified WBEs in WBENCLink 2.0. As the Certification process addresses extensive criteria, many applicants do not meet WBENC's thorough requirements and do not complete the process.

A profile of WBENC certified WBEs:

- Five have annual revenues in excess of \$1 billion
- 140 have revenues of \$100 million or more

Excluding the billion dollar companies, the average WBENC business has:

- \$7.7 million in annual revenue
- 46 employees
- 14 years in business

10. Where are the Regional Partner Organizations located? What is their relationship to WBENC?

There are 14 Regional Partner Organizations located around the country. Together, they cover the 50 states. The following is a list of the states covered by WBENC's Regional Partner Organizations. [Click here](#) to view an interactive Regional Partner Organization Territory map.

Astra Women's Business Alliance	AK, OR, WA, No. CA, ID
Center for Women & Enterprise	MA, CT*, ME, NH, RI, VT
Greater Women's Business Council	GA, NC, SC
Ohio River Valley – Women's Business Council	OH, KY, WV
Women's Business Enterprise Council – Great Lakes	MI, IN
Women's Business Enterprise Council-South	LA, AL, TN, FL*
Women's Business Council - Southwest	No.Texas, OK, AR, NM
Women's Business Development Center of Florida	FL*
Women's Business Development Center-Chicago	IL, WI, ND, SD, MN,IA, NE, KS, MO
Women's Business Enterprise Council/PA-DE-sNJ	PA, DE, So. NJ*
Women's Business Enterprise Alliance	South Texas
Women's Business Enterprise Council - West	AZ, CO, So. CA., NV, HI
Women Presidents' Educational Organization/DC	DC, MD, VA
Women Presidents' Educational Organization/NY	NY, No. NJ*, CT*

* Indicates a shared territory.

A more detailed listing of presidents/executive directors of the organizations is included on the [Regional Partner Organization](#) webpage.

In addition to conducting WBENC certification, many of the Regional Partner Organizations offer separately funded programs designed to help women establish and grow businesses. Others only handle certification, provide local Women's Enterprise Leadership Forums, and host events to connect buyers and WBE suppliers. WBENC has a Designation Agreement with each Regional Partner Organization that details the relationship and the territory covered.

For more information about WBENC, call us at 202-315-1498