

# ACEC Missouri

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
of Missouri

## **DIVERSITY COMMITTEE – AUGUST 2018 UPDATE**

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### **Mentoring/STEM Outreach Opportunities**

The Engineering Center of St. Louis is applying for a grant to develop a diversity outreach program. ACEC-Missouri has submitted a letter of support to be included in that grant application and our members will have opportunities to be involved in outreach events. Our Diversity Committee members have shown great interest in mentoring and STEM outreach programs in schools and this is a nice fit for us to be involved in. ACEC-Mo is an affiliate member of the Engineering Center of St. Louis – we will keep you posted on how that grant develops. The Engineering Center has already created an “engineering-in-a-box” program suitable for middle school classrooms and hosts annual high school and college career fair events where students can interact with engineers from the public and private side of our industry. For more information: <https://www.engineeringcenter.org>

### **MoDOT DBE Availability Study**

Solicitation No: RFP605CO19000061 from MoDOT through MissouriBUYS  
Contact Person: Leann Kottwitz - Tel: 573-751-3685 [Leann.Kottwitz@modot.mo.gov](mailto:Leann.Kottwitz@modot.mo.gov)

RFP issued July 11 - Proposals were due August 15, 2018 at 2:00 PM CDT

The Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks proposals from qualified organizations to provide a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Availability Study to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission (MHTC) and Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT). ATTENTION VENDORS: You must be a registered MissouriBUYS vendor to review all terms and conditions of this solicitation.

Visit <https://missouribuys.mo.gov/registration.html> to obtain full access.

The Availability Study May Include

- Economic Analysis of DBE firms' success
- Analysis of qualitative evidence from DBE firms and non-DBE firms
- Econometric Analysis of DBE firms' access to capital and credit relative to non-DBE firms
- Legal Review discussion the US Supreme Court's decisions
- Estimate of the percentage of all prime contract and subcontract dollars earned by DBE firms
- Statistical comparison of public sector utilization to availability

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## Agency Partnerships

**MoDOT:** Nicole Adewale, Earl Harrison and Linda Moen are serving as ACEC-Missouri representatives on a MoDOT DBE Education and Information Sharing Focus Group that meets quarterly to discuss how the MoDOT DBE program is working and how it can improve to help all of the stakeholders involved. Attendees include MoDOT, FHWA, AGC/Contractors, ACEC-Mo/Design Firms, MOKAN and other interested organizations.

**Bi-State Development Agency (St. Louis Region):** Bi-State has completed their public notice/comment period and has submitted a recommended overall DBE goal of 18% on FTA federally funded projects, for fiscal years 2019-2021, for review by FTA.

Past Bi-State Goals and Awards:

Year (Goal)	Awards/Commitments	Difference
2015 (16% goal)	11.7%	-4.3%
2016 (20% goal)	11.0%	-9%
2017 (20% goal)	6.3%	-13.7%

If you are interested in more information, LaWanda Jones and Linda Moen attended an AGC-sponsored presentation on the goal-setting process by Francoise Lyles-Wiggins.

## FHWA Request for Public Comment –

### Safe Harbor Indirect Cost Rate Policy for State DOTs

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) posted a notice requesting public comment on expanding and making permanent the Safe Harbor Indirect Cost Rate policy for state departments of transportation. FHWA has been conducting a 3-year pilot study of a safe harbor overhead rate with MoDOT and several other DOT's. FHWA has said that the results of the pilot study were very positive, and they want to expand the program to be available to every state DOT. The basic concept is to allow new or small/DBE firms without a compliant FAR overhead rate to voluntarily use an artificially low rate (set at 110% in the pilot, but subject to state discretion in the proposed permanent policy) on federally funded contracts. This would allow more firms to compete for work while they develop a cost history and adequate accounting systems to develop a FAR-compliant rate. The proposal is not a change in regulations; it would be guidance issued to DOTs to allow them to develop written procedures for a safe harbor rate as part of their risk-based oversight.

The ACEC-Missouri Diversity Committee coordinated a comment to ACEC National and to MoDOT in favor of expanding this pilot to all state DOT's.