

Equity in contracts, grants, and procurement: where the questions belong

Equity belongs in the solicitation, the evaluation criteria, the contract terms, and the monitoring. This aid names the questions for each stage and the partners who own the rules.

Why it matters

Contracts decide who delivers services and how. Adding equity language after award changes little. Procurement and grants offices own the rules; equity professionals help shape the questions in time.

Content

Before the solicitation. Who will the service reach, and in which languages and formats? Which communities have providers that could deliver it but rarely win awards, and why? What accessibility requirements apply to the deliverables?

In the solicitation. State accessibility, language access, and community-engagement expectations as requirements, not preferences. Make the application process itself accessible and plain, with a human contact.

In evaluation. Score demonstrated experience with the communities served, accessibility practice, and workforce practice, using written criteria applied the same way to every proposal.

In the contract. Include reporting that lets you see who is served, disaggregated with small-group protection, and a way to raise and fix access problems during the term.

In monitoring. Look at outcomes by community, language, disability, and place with the data owner, and bring what you learn to the next solicitation.

Who owns what. Procurement rules, vendor diversity programs, and contract language have their own owners. Bring these questions to your contracts office and Equity Director before the solicitation is final.

Next steps

- **Procurement or contract equity review (Practice path)** — program page </practice/gp-10>
- **Operational equity review canvas** — program page </library/ja-operational-equity-canvas>

Practice paths this supports

- Procurement or contract equity review