



Fact Sheet for Women Owned Businesses

What is WEConnect Europe?

WEConnect Europe is a non-profit organisation led by corporate members. The organisation certifies businesses that are at least 51% owned, managed and controlled by women and connects them with the growing corporate and public sector demand for diverse suppliers. It is an affiliate of WEConnect International, which promotes the leading international certification standard for women-owned businesses to give them a foothold in the global supply chain, and is building on successful models in the U.S. and Canada.

In addition to certification, WEConnect Europe delivers education and training programmes that are essential for women business enterprises (WBE) to bid successfully on procurement contracts. This support contributes to significant growth for women's businesses. The organisation also facilitates the building of strong networks for women by connecting them both with procurement officers of top corporations and with other qualified organisations in order to enhance bidding capacity.

Who Should Apply?

The certification programme is open to women business owners who:

- are based in Europe or whose Head Office is registered in Europe
- own a minimum 51% of their company
- manage and control their business
- operate an established, successful business – whether product or service-based – in any sector
- are growth-oriented
- have the capacity to sell to large corporations and/or the ability to scale their operations accordingly. It is recommended that applicants have a minimum of £150,000 in annual revenues and the capacity to deliver on large contracts within one to five years.

Why Should You Get Certified?

- To maximize your potential to do business with big business by providing access to local, national and global procurement opportunities that are otherwise difficult to identify.
- To take advantage of the search by our corporate members to diversify their supply chains and find new sources of innovation, quality and competitive pricing. Large corporations need a broad range of services, covering everything from technology to HR, event management and marketing.

- To gain marketing edge for your company by raising its visibility with these corporations and providing opportunities to develop relationships with supportive corporate and government buyers as well as with other qualified businesses.
- To build new sales opportunities and create partnerships with other qualified firms to enhance your access to large supply chain contracts.
- To significantly accelerate the growth of your company nationally and globally.

Certification as a Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) by WEConnect Europe is all about increasing your access to contract opportunities with corporations in Europe and globally. Certification verifies that your business is majority-owned (51%), managed and controlled by a woman, or women – crucial to multinational corporations and government procurement departments that need to demonstrate and measure diversity in their procurement practices.

Which Companies are WEConnect Corporate Members and Supporters?

Companies include Accenture, Alcatel-Lucent, AT&T, Cisco, Citi, Hewlett Packard, IBM, Intel, Kodak, Manpower, Motorola, Pfizer, Wal-Mart, UBS, Goldman Sachs, Credit Suisse and MasterCard

Specific benefits for you and your business:

- Inclusion of your company details in the WEConnect Europe database that our corporate members access to source new and diverse suppliers
- Your company profile on the WEConnect Europe website
- Opportunity for you to meet with procurement officers from our member corporations – an impressive and growing list of top global corporates, all eager to diversify their supply chains – and to bid on potentially lucrative corporate contracts
- Education on the commercial opportunities to market to large corporations through supplier diversity initiatives
- Training workshops on how to use the opportunity of being 'qualified' to further develop your marketing plan, with specific activities to help you professionally pursue procurement opportunities
- Invitation to forums presented by corporate members, with overviews of their procurement process and practical tips on responding to Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and submitting professional bids
- Opportunity to participate in the dynamic annual conference of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), the U.S. certifying body
- Potential to do business with other qualified firms, run by like-minded, high-growth women business owners, and to create partnerships that can increase your ability to tender for larger contracts

"As a WEConnect Certified business, many large corporate doors have opened to us because we satisfy both product requirements and corporate objectives".

Louisa Moger, Marketing Director, Richard Edward Ltd Printing

"Being a WEConnect Certified business has opened up opportunities for us with major corporates on both sides of the Atlantic".

Claire Mason, Managing Director, Man Bites Dog PR

What is the Certification Process?

The certification process is robust but the steps are simple:

1. Register your interest with WEConnect Europe via website www.WEConnectEurope.org
2. Submission of completed online application
3. Confirmation to apply for Certification supported by documentation and non-refundable fee.
4. Review of application by WEConnect Europe.
5. Site visit conducted by WEConnect Europe to verify information in application and to get to know you and your business.
6. If certification is confirmed, a Certificate is sent to you.
7. Your company is added to the WEConnect Europe database system used by our member buyers searching for potential suppliers, for a one-year period.
8. After the first year, you may renew for each of the following two years by annually updating your information and remitting the annual renewal fees. A re-application and site visit will be required again in year 4.

Who to Contact?

WEConnect Europe has a strong leadership team on the ground that has both a proven track record in serving the women's business market and a passion to help women entrepreneurs grow and succeed nationally and globally. Their goal is to increase the capacity of women business owners to bid successfully on large procurement opportunities. It was incubated originally by Prowess and is now an independent organisation and an affiliate of WEConnect International, a global non-profit that promotes women's enterprise development worldwide, and is spearheading the international growth of WEConnect.

For general enquiries, contact:

admin@weconnecteurope.org

If you are a woman business owner who meets the application requirements, visit

www.WeConnectEurope.org for more information and an application.

Direct any questions to:

Sue Stockdale, Director of Certification and WBE Development

(Primary contact for women business owners)

ss@WEConnectEurope.org

For enquiries about corporate membership and partnerships, contact:

Sue Lawton, CEO

(Primary contact for corporate members & strategic alliance partners)

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