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ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING AGC MEMBERSHIP

**A Comprehensive Report on Attracting and
Retaining Members**



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INTRODUCTION



This report outlines the challenges AGC faces in attracting and engaging new members and proposes actionable strategies to foster a more inclusive association environment. By identifying key obstacles to joining AGC, this report aims to foster a deeper understanding of the issues AGC and its chapters face in growing membership.

While this report looks at membership through the lens of diverse businesses, the strategies outlined are universal. Recognizing that each chapter varies in size, staff support, resources, and current standing in diversity and inclusion efforts, it's crucial to acknowledge that implementation will look different across chapters. However, implementing the strategies outlined in this report will help achieve membership growth and retention across the entire membership spectrum.

Gradual implementation of these recommendations as each chapter's resources and circumstances allow will enable chapters to build momentum over time. However, this is not a one-time effort. Merely adopting these recommendations will not guarantee immediate membership growth and success. Achieving the desired outcomes requires a sustained, long-term commitment to these best practices. It's the ongoing, consistent efforts that will drive meaningful change. Over time, chapters can expect to see positive business outcomes, including increased membership dues and higher non-dues revenue as a result of greater member participation in chapter programs, events, and services.

This report is a living document, and as such, it will be periodically reviewed and updated as needed to reflect new insights and evolving challenges. Through strategic recommendations and actionable solutions, this report seeks to empower AGC and its chapters to create a more inclusive environment that not only attracts new and diverse businesses but also actively engages and supports their growth and success within AGC. Additional tools and resources to support chapters in implementing these best practices will be forthcoming.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP ENVIRONMENT



Creating a welcoming and inclusive membership environment is essential for AGC and its Chapters to attract and support all businesses, but especially diverse businesses. This section will delve into the multifaceted challenges faced by small and diverse contractors when trying to engage with larger contractors within AGC. It will also outline the practical solutions and strategic actions that can be implemented to overcome these barriers, fostering a sense of belonging and active participation among all members. The goal is to ensure that AGC is not only diverse in composition but also inclusive in operation, thereby making AGC appealing to a broader range of construction firms and enhancing the overall effectiveness of AGC in advocating for and supporting the entire construction industry.

Challenge 1: Addressing Size Disparity for Smaller Contractors to Enhance Participation

AGC can seem daunting for smaller contractors, particularly those who are new to the Association, making it difficult for them to engage with larger contractors. This size disparity often discourages active participation and meaningful interaction.



Strategy: Host New Member Orientations to Foster Connections and Build Relationships

Chapters should regularly host new member orientations to help new members connect with each other, chapter leadership, and AGC staff. These events should be held monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly, depending on membership growth and chapter size and be open to all new Association members.

The orientation will provide a comprehensive overview of AGC membership benefits, including educational opportunities, networking events, advocacy efforts, and other resources that support business growth. A Q&A segment will allow new members to ask questions and gain clarity on maximizing their membership, while also giving AGC staff insight into their immediate needs and concerns.

In addition to the formal orientation, an informal networking session will allow new members to build relationships with each other and engage with chapter leaders. This fosters a sense of community and opens direct lines of communication with key decision-makers.

After each event, follow up with new members to reinforce connections and offer additional resources or support, such as sharing materials from the orientation or facilitating introductions to relevant AGC members or staff.



Strategy: Host Dedicated Networking Opportunities Specifically Designed for Diverse, Small, and Specialty Contractors to Meet and Engage with General Contractors

These dedicated networking opportunities can facilitate fruitful partnerships and collaborations as well as help break down barriers and foster a sense of community within the chapter.

To fully engage, attendees representing both small contractors and large contractors must approach these events with the mindset that meaningful participation requires time and investment. Success in these endeavors is a process, not an overnight achievement.

By ensuring that the right individuals—those who understand the long-term value of building relationships and contributing to the collective success of the industry—are participating in these events, AGC can create an environment where all members, regardless of company size, feel like a valued part of the AGC family.

Challenge 2: Addressing Misconceptions About Diverse Contractors' Capabilities

Additionally, small and diverse contractors and larger contractors are often wary of each other, stemming from a lack of trust that prevents both parties from taking full advantage of networking opportunities. This was highlighted in an example shared by one task force member, where an individual who works for a large prime contractor was talking to the owner of a small, diverse firm at a networking event. The prime contractor individual was asking questions about the diverse firm's business needs to identify ways the large contractor could help and support the diverse business. The diverse business owner took these questions as an assumption by the prime that the diverse business wasn't qualified or capable of performing the work. This unfortunately created a poor engagement experience for both contractors.



Strategy: Provide Orientations Prior to a Networking Event for both the Diverse Businesses and for the Prime Contractors About What to Expect and How to Get the Most Out of the Networking Opportunities

Prior to networking opportunities specifically for diverse businesses to meet with prime contractors, providing orientations for the two membership segments that outlines the purpose and expectations of the networking event can expect from each other can set a positive tone that encourages openness and trust. This orientation will guide members on how to effectively communicate their commitment to working with other firms, which can help lower walls and build mutual respect from the onset.



Strategy: Utilize Technology to Collect Information from Diverse Businesses During Networking Events so that Business Connections can Follow-Up

Additionally, utilizing technology like QR codes at networking events and meetings to collect contact information and specific interests from diverse businesses enables the connections to follow up in timely manner – ideally within 24 hours – to demonstrate genuine interest and dedication to engaging with diverse members.

Challenge 3: Overcoming Resistance to Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives at the Board Level

Another key challenge is the resistance to Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) initiatives at the chapter board level. This resistance can stem from a lack of awareness or understanding of the benefits of diversity or from entrenched cultural attitudes that are slow to change. If a Chapter's leadership does not reflect the diversity of the membership, this can create a perception of exclusivity and bias.



Strategy: Offer Comprehensive Inclusive Leadership Education and Training for Board Members and Association Staff as Part of Board Orientations and New Employee Onboarding

To effectively represent the entire membership, AGC leaders and staff must engage in ongoing education and training to develop the deep understanding and skills required for inclusive leadership. This education should be embedded into board orientations and new employee onboarding processes, providing continuous learning opportunities that evolve with the needs of the association.

A single training session is not sufficient. Education needs to be more comprehensive, recognizing that fostering an inclusive environment is a learning journey that takes time, dedication, and genuine commitment. The training should equip AGC leaders and staff with the skills necessary to understand the diverse needs of the membership and actively consider that diversity when making decisions or setting policies.

It is not enough for leaders to simply be aware of diversity and inclusion principles. They must also be able to effectively apply them in their roles as decision-makers. This process requires a commitment to long-term learning and the recognition that building an inclusive culture is an ongoing effort.



Strategy: Outline and Communicate the Steps and Qualifications Needed for Leadership Roles

By clearly outlining the steps and qualifications needed for leadership roles, individuals interested in leadership opportunities within AGC can more easily envision their potential for involvement and influence. This

transparency helps demystify the process and encourages participation from a wider range of members, increasing engagement, volunteerism, and commitment to the chapter and AGC as a whole.



Strategy: Be Intentional with Development and Outreach Efforts to Diversify the Association’s Volunteer Leaders

Intentional membership development and outreach efforts to diversify the association's leadership are crucial. These efforts can include targeted recruitment that promotes leadership opportunities to diverse members within and outside the Association. Examples include:

- Ensure that volunteer descriptions include AGC’s commitment to an inclusive Association environment and highlight the value of diverse perspectives.
- Ensure the group responsible for selecting new leaders understands the benefits of bringing varied experiences into leadership roles and is intentional about selecting the right individuals to fill open positions.
- Establish volunteer leader mentorship and sponsorship programs that connect diverse members with current leaders to help prepare future members for AGC leadership roles.

Challenge 4: Addressing Cultural Gaps in Member Relations

Finally, the overall culture of the chapter may not be inclusive when interacting with members, making it challenging for diverse members to feel valued and respected. This cultural barrier can manifest in various ways, such as communication styles, meeting formats, or networking opportunities that do not consider the needs and preferences of all segments of AGC’s membership.



Strategy: Build Trust with Members through Open Dialogue and Transparent Communication

Providing members with the opportunity to voice their concerns through various feedback channels allows AGC leaders to reaffirm the Association’s stance on key issues, share desired goals and outcomes, reinforce how the chapter is supporting its entire membership, and clear any misconceptions.

As U.S. demographics become increasingly diverse, so does the construction industry. To continue attracting new members and maintaining relevance in the future, AGC needs to offer open lines of communication to allow members with varying perspectives the opportunity to be heard and have influence within the Association.

Establishing a diversity and inclusion committee that meets regularly and allows for ample time during meetings to discuss the issues that matter most to its members is an effective way to gather feedback and leverage the insights of already active and engaged members.

This committee can play a crucial role in guiding the Association toward creating a more inclusive environment for diverse businesses. To strengthen this effort, Board members should be invited to network and engage with the committee. This interaction allows the Board to better understand and align AGC's initiatives with the needs of its diverse membership.



Strategy: Create a Psychologically Safe Environment for Staff to Support Member Recruitment and Engagement Efforts

When staff members feel secure in expressing their ideas, concerns, and experiences related to diversity and inclusion without fear of judgment or retaliation, they are better positioned to support the Association's mission to build an inclusive chapter culture.

This psychological safety gives staff the confidence to offer innovative strategies to address cultural barriers, reach new member prospects, develop new member benefits, and interact with members more effectively.

DATA COLLECTION ON MEMBER COMPANIES



As the association strives to better support and promote growth for small and diverse businesses, it is crucial to develop and implement a robust framework for data collection on member companies. This data will serve several key functions, including assessing the current demographic and business type makeup of the AGCs membership, tracking changes and trends over time, and evaluating the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Robust data collection will provide the necessary insights to guide strategic decision-making and tailor approaches to meet the varying needs of member companies effectively. Through systematic data collection, AGC can also identify areas requiring additional support or resources, enabling it to act proactively to facilitate the continuous growth and engagement of diverse businesses within the industry.

Challenge 1: Limited Knowledge About the Current Makeup of AGC's Member Companies

AGC has historically not asked for details regarding ownership, certification, NAICS and CSI codes, number of employees, etc., which are crucial for understanding the current makeup of AGC's membership. Furthermore, the lack of standardized data collection methods across different chapters complicates the process of aggregating and analyzing information systematically, often leading to fragmented efforts and outcomes.



Strategy: Standardize the Information Collected on Chapter Membership Application to Better Understand the Makeup of AGC's Membership

To address the challenges of data collection, AGC of America recommends chapters make these business questions a standard part of the membership application and renewal processes, to help ensure that AGC collects relevant information regularly to help ensure its accuracy. Chapters should also develop targeted communication strategies to regularly remind and encourage members about the importance and benefits of data sharing as part of the AGC value proposition.

Incentivizing members to share their data, through recognition or rewards programs, may also increase participation rates and the overall quality of the collection information, contributing to a richer, more comprehensive database.

THE MEMBERSHIP PROCESS



The process of becoming an AGC member can greatly influence how both members and nonmembers view the association. It serves as the initial point of contact and sets the tone for the engagement and experiences of new members. It also tells existing members what type of association they belong to and what AGC values.

Challenge 1: The Decentralized Structure of AGC's Federated Association Model Creates a Disparate Member Experience from One Chapter to Another

AGC's unique federated association model, wherein membership initiation occurs at the chapter level, poses a fundamental challenge for new members. This decentralized structure means that membership procedures, benefits, and expectations can vary substantially from one chapter to another. This lack of consistency creates confusion and uncertainty for potential members, particularly for small and diverse businesses who may already face additional barriers to entry. Consequently, the federated model inadvertently hampers efforts to attract and retain diverse membership.



Strategy: Standardize the Membership Application Across AGC Chapters

Standardizing the membership application across AGC chapters ensures a uniform experience for applicants. This consistency reinforces the AGC brand and provides a reliable expectation of what is required to join the Association.

The member application should be online, mobile friendly, and compatible with various devices to allow potential members to apply for membership at their own convenience. Additionally, the application should be user-friendly with clear instructions, step-by-step guidance, and a contact to reach out to for assistance readily accessible.

Embedding the application process directly into the chapter website can significantly streamline the membership application procedure. By centralizing all necessary information in one accessible location, chapters can minimize the risk of applications getting missed or lost, and reduce administrative burdens, leading to more efficient processing and management of applications.

Challenge 2: The Member Application Process Needs to Be Clear and Transparent

A lack of transparency and clear guidelines surrounding the application process creates confusion for a potential new member to navigate the application process effectively. This lack of clarity not only discourages potential members from pursuing membership but also reinforces perceptions of exclusivity within the Association, undermining AGC's commitment to fostering a culture of inclusivity and belonging.



Strategy: Make Membership Information Readily Available on a Chapter's Website

Information such as membership criteria, benefits, costs, and application procedures should be clearly outlined on the chapter's website. Chapter's website should include membership categories, membership dues per category, industry-specific criteria for membership (e.g. signatory to a union), a detailed explanation of AGC member benefits (e.g. access to discount programs, networking & education opportunities, industry resources, advocacy support, etc.), a step-by-step guide to the application process, the expected timeline for when a prospective member will begin receiving benefits, and contact information for support.



Strategy: Create an Efficient Application Process that Includes Cross-Training Staff to Assist Prospective Members

To ensure a smooth and responsive membership application process, it is crucial to establish a robust system for handling applications once they are submitted.

Additionally, standard operating procedures should be in place to guarantee that prospective companies receive a timely response to their application. Standard operating procedures should include:

- Cross-training multiple staff members to handle applications helps distribute the workload and prevent delays in the absence of key personnel. Applications should be received by at least two (2) chapter staff members at all times.
- Utilizing an internal system, such as a shared email inbox or a CRM tool to track applications and communications to ensure no application is overlooked. Including an overview of new membership applications as part of regular staff meetings to assist with reviewing applications and addressing any issues with the application.
- Implementing an automated response when a member application is submitted to acknowledge receipt of the application, outline next steps, and provide a timeline for further communications. This automated response helps prospective members feel recognized and informed about the process.
- Establishing key performance indicators (KPI's) to evaluate the application process and identify areas for improvement on an ongoing basis. KPI's to track include response times, the number of applications processed, areas of concern with an application and rejection rates.
- Following up with the prospective member through personalized outreach by chapter staff within 1 business day of an application submission. This outreach provides the chapter staff with the opportunity to address any specific questions the prospective member might have.



Strategy: Utilize Volunteers to Provide Personalized Assistance with the Membership Process

Finally, AGC chapters can create a new member ambassador program that calls on experienced AGC members to assist with recruiting prospective new

members into AGC through targeted outreach. These seasoned members can address common concerns and questions prospective members have about joining AGC, share their experiences in belonging to AGC, and offer advice on how to get the most out of AGC membership.

Once a member successfully joins the association, AGC can establish programs to connect new members with experienced members who can offer guidance and advice on how to get the most out of their membership.

These programs can take several forms. A few examples include:

- Mentorship programs, either formal with structured meetings and goals, or informal with casual check-ins as needed.
- Networking opportunities that are intentionally structured to allow new members to connect with experienced members.

A buddy system that encourages experienced members to bring new members to chapter events to introduce them to key individuals and help them navigate their first few chapter meetings or events.

Challenge 3: Membership Dues and the Perceived Cost-Benefit Imbalance

Another significant challenge lies in the perceived cost-benefit imbalance associated with AGC membership, particularly for diverse businesses. While membership dues are a standard component of association participation, diverse businesses may hesitate to invest in membership if they do not perceive equal value in return. This hesitancy can stem from a variety of factors, including limited access to networking opportunities, resources, and business development initiatives tailored to their specific needs and challenges. As a result, the perceived lack of value may deter diverse businesses from joining AGC.



Strategy: Offer Creative Dues Pricing Structures

To address concerns about the cost of membership, chapters can explore options to reduce financial barriers for diverse and small businesses. Examples of creative dues pricing and incentives include:

- Flexible payment plans to spread the cost of membership throughout the year instead of one lump sum payment at the start of each year.

- Tiered membership pricing models to provide options suitable for businesses of various sizes and financial capacities.
- Temporary promotional memberships that provide customized access to benefits of interest to the prospective member as a low-risk trial for potential members to experience the benefits of joining without the initial financial commitment. This trial membership allows a chapter to demonstrate the value of joining AGC to businesses who are on the fence about joining due to the perceived lack of value in investing in AGC membership.



Strategy: Highlight Tangible Benefits of Membership in a Clear and Easily Digestible Format

Chapters should emphasize the tangible benefits and returns on investment associated with membership, highlighting opportunities for business growth, professional development, and industry advocacy. Chapters can demonstrate the value of membership in a way that resonates with potential members by clearly showcasing the value of membership that takes into consideration the unique needs of a potential member. The next section will discuss in more detail the AGC value proposition for diverse businesses.

ADVOCACY



Advocacy is an essential part of AGC’s strategy to influence legislative and regulatory standards that support the construction industry. Effective legislative engagement can help shape policies that promote growth and sustainability for all types of construction firms, thereby creating a more favorable business environment for all AGC members. By positioning the association as an advocate for small and diverse construction firms, AGC can strengthen its role as a leader in fostering an inclusive industry.

Challenge 1: Perception of Partisanship Associated with AGC

There is a prevailing perception of partisanship associated with AGC, particularly among diverse businesses in the construction industry due to AGC’s historical opposition and legal challenges to diverse business set-aside programs. This perception undermines the trust and credibility of AGC among diverse stakeholders and hurts chapter efforts to attract and engage diverse businesses into membership.



Strategy: Prioritize Transparency in Communications

Transparency is key to overcoming perceptions of partisanship and building trust with diverse stakeholders. Establishing and maintaining clear, open communication channels with AGC members that provide regular updates on the Association’s advocacy priorities, policy positions, and decision-making processes can help demystify AGC’s actions and intentions.



Strategy: Develop Relationships Across the Political Spectrum

In navigating these complex issues, it is necessary to cultivate alliances across the political spectrum, ensuring that the interests of all members are effectively represented. Each chapter should actively seek to build relationships with stakeholders and policymakers with different political ideologies to find common solutions to complex issues.

Hosting bipartisan forums and discussions on key industry issues can showcase AGC's commitment to inclusivity and willingness to consider multiple perspectives.



Strategy: Celebrate Advocacy Wins that Benefit Small and Diverse Businesses

Highlighting AGC's efforts to advocate for issues that impact small and diverse businesses and celebrating the Association's wins can begin to soften negative perceptions among diverse stakeholders and demonstrate AGC's commitment to supporting all members. Chapters should work with small and diverse members to develop case studies or testimonials from members who have benefited from AGC's advocacy efforts, showcasing tangible positive outcomes.

Challenge 2: Unequal Representation in Advocacy Efforts Across Membership Groups

Often, decision-making positions are occupied by individuals who lack the diverse perspectives necessary to understand and address the unique needs of all members. This homogeneity in decision-making results in decisions that reflect the interests of a narrow demographic of AGC's membership, rather than the collective welfare of the entire association.

The absence of established processes and protocols for unbiased decision-making exacerbates this issue, leaving diverse contractor members feeling that their interests are not adequately represented or supported by AGC.



Strategy: Create a More Inclusive Advocacy Structure that Genuinely Reflects the Voices and Needs of All Members

Diverse teams are better equipped to understand and navigate the complexities of different legislative and regulatory policies that will impact groups of members differently. By soliciting feedback and actively involving a wide range of stakeholders and by engaging in meaningful dialogue to address concerns and perspectives from all member segments, AGC can ensure that its advocacy efforts genuinely reflect the voices and needs of all members.



Strategy: Communicate Processes & Protocols to Guide Decision Making

When evaluating legislative, legal, and regulatory positions, endorsements of political candidates, and political action committee disbursements, AGC leaders should be using an objective process to make decisions that don't favor one group of members over another. Below is a set of standard questions chapters can use to guide their decision-making process on an issue where the AGC membership is divided.

1. Who are the various groups affected by this policy action?
2. What are the potential impacts on these groups?
3. Does this policy action worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?
4. How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by this policy action?
5. How will you address the potential negative impacts identified above?
6. What strategies will be used to ensure this decision continues to have the intended impact(s)?
7. What is the communication plan for this decision?

VALUE PROPOSITION FOR SMALL AND DIVERSE BUSINESSES



This section of the report focuses on articulating the unique benefits that AGC offers to diverse businesses and how it supports the growth of diverse contractors. It outlines strategic considerations that tailor the value propositions specific to minority-owned, woman-owned, LGBTQ+-owned, veteran-owned, and other underrepresented groups within the contracting community. The emphasis is on understanding and addressing the unique challenges faced by these groups, thereby not only attracting them but also ensuring their continued growth and success within the industry.

By actively listening to the needs of diverse contractors, enhancing the visibility and accessibility of support networks, offering targeted education, and demonstrating the value of membership, AGC can better deliver on its value proposition and support the growth and success of diverse businesses within the construction industry.

Challenge 1: Insufficient Support for Diverse Businesses

Many diverse businesses are unaware of the support programs and resources available through AGC. This lack of awareness is often due to insufficient promotion and outreach efforts, ineffective communication strategies, language barriers, and cultural differences. Access to these support networks becomes even more difficult for companies operating in remote or underserved geographic areas served by the chapter. This can make it difficult for diverse contractors to access the assistance, mentorship, and networking opportunities within AGC that are essential for their growth and development within the industry.



Strategy: Enhance Outreach and Accessibility

Develop targeted outreach campaigns to raise awareness of available support programs among diverse businesses. Utilize multiple communication channels, including developing community partnerships with existing and trusted organizations to reach more potential businesses. Provide a diverse array of events and educational opportunities to allow businesses to participate in programs and events of interest to them, including offering virtual opportunities to reduce the financial and time burden on small business owners.



Strategy: Develop Tailored Support Programs Designed to Address the Unique Needs of Diverse Businesses

AGC chapters should develop and implement tailored support initiatives specifically designed to address the unique needs and challenges of diverse businesses. This could involve creating mentorship programs that pair diverse business owners with mentors who have relevant experience and understanding of their specific challenges, offering training workshops resource materials that address the unique needs of diverse businesses such as securing funding and overcoming industry bias, and hosting networking events focused on the development and growth of diverse businesses within the contracting community.

Examples of this include engaging large prime contractors in hosting networking events at their offices for diverse and small trade partners to connect directly with the business development, estimating, and project management teams who award the subcontracts and develop the relationships with trade partners.



Strategy: Establish Strategic Partnerships with Regional Government Entities, Other Associations, and Local Community Organizations

Establishing partnerships with regional government entities, other associations, and local community organizations to increase the support network available to member companies. Chapters can collaborate with regional government agencies to provide access to funding opportunities, grants, and financial assistance programs designed for diverse businesses.

Partner with other construction associations to share resources and educational opportunities and strengthen advocacy efforts that support the growth of diverse businesses in the construction industry. Work with local community groups to assist with grassroots support and outreach, serving as a link between the supportive services AGC provides and the diverse business owners.

By establishing these strategic partnerships, AGC can create a robust support network that empowers diverse businesses while being mindful of their resource limitations. This strategy helps ensure that support efforts are beneficial rather than burdensome, fostering the sustainable growth of diverse businesses in the construction industry.



Strategy: Expand Business, Professional, and Leadership Development Programs

Finally, chapters should always be looking to refine and expand their member benefits. Additional benefits chapters can offer to support small and diverse-owned businesses include:

- Offering business development educational programs focused on business operations, financial management, contracts, marketing, safety compliance, bidding and estimating, etc. These programs can help diverse businesses build a solid foundation for long-term success. Take advantage of [AGC's Emerging Contractors Education Series](#).
- Host leadership development workshops that focus on developing key professional skills, such as negotiation, leadership, networking, and communication.
- Facilitate the creation of peer networks where diverse business owners can connect, share experiences, support, and learn from each other.

Challenge 2: Complex Prequalification Process for Small and Diverse Contractors

The prequalification process for trade partners in working with prime contractors can be complex and onerous, particularly for smaller and diverse businesses. Each contractor has unique requirements and procedures, making it challenging for diverse and small contractors to navigate the process effectively. This can result in missed opportunities for contract awards and hinder the growth potential of diverse businesses within the industry.



Strategy: Assist Contractors with Obtaining Certifications

AGC chapters should work towards offering support for smaller and diverse business in obtaining certifications. Supportive services can include helping businesses navigate the certification process, ensuring they understand and meet all the requirements for certification, while assisting with application preparation, documentation and submission.

In certain areas, chapters may be able to be authorized by a public entity to assist diverse businesses with navigating the certification process. For example, the Chicagoland AGC is identified as a Designated Assist Agency by the city of Chicago to provide training to diverse businesses.



Strategy: Assist Contractors in Navigating the Prequalification Process

AGC chapters can also support smaller and diverse businesses in navigating the subcontractor prequalification process requirements for various prime contractors. One way chapters can support small and diverse businesses is by encouraging prime contractors to utilize resources like the AGC-endorsed ConsensusDocs best practice statement of qualifications forms, including editions to prequalify [subcontractors](#), [design professionals](#), [general contractors](#), and [design-builders](#) to help standardize the process across the industry.

Challenge 3: Geographical Disparities in Diversity Representation

Geographical disparities in diversity representation pose another challenge for some AGC chapters, leaving the diverse businesses in certain regions feeling overlooked because they are a smaller pool of potential or current members. Addressing these disparities requires proactive efforts to ensure proportional representation and support across all chapters, regardless of location or regional dynamics.

Strategy: Demonstrate Membership Return on Investment (ROI) for Diverse Businesses through Success Stories

Chapters can demonstrate the tangible return on investment for diverse businesses by showcasing the success stories of diverse contractors who have benefited from AGC membership and support programs. These could be in the form of member spotlights, testimonials, or volunteer opportunities to serve as a chapter ambassador.



CONCLUSION

Through this document, the AGC Task Force on Attracting and Engaging Diverse Business seeks to share their collective findings and offers actionable recommendations aimed at supporting chapters in attracting and engaging diverse businesses into their membership. By addressing key challenges and proposing practical steps forward, the report seeks to empower chapters to foster inclusivity, expand growth opportunities, and maintain relevance in an evolving business landscape.

Identified challenges span various facets of national and chapter operations, including the establishment of an inclusive membership environment, legislative engagement, and the membership process as a whole. Notably, the report highlights barriers to initial engagement and trust between diverse contractors and larger counterparts as significant obstacles to overcome. It also emphasizes the pivotal role of strategic partnerships and data-driven approaches in driving membership growth and enhancing legislative engagement.

Implementing these recommendations will require collaborate efforts, leadership commitment to long-term change, and ongoing monitoring to gauge progress and make necessary adjustments. To support chapters with implementing these best practices, AGC of America will develop additional resources and templates to help chapters effectively apply these strategies and achieve their diversity and inclusion goals. By doing so, AGC can not only attract but also retain, support, and derive benefits from a diverse and vibrant member base.



ABOUT THE TASK FORCE

The task force was created by the AGC Diversity & Inclusion Committee to align with the 2023/2024 AGC Board Business Plan goal to “create a plan for helping chapters recruit and retain diverse businesses.” The task force comprised of diverse expertise and perspectives, drawing on the collective insights of chapter staff, diverse businesses, and Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) professionals from larger construction firms. This multi-faceted composition ensured a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities of attracting and engaging diverse businesses within AGC's membership.

The inclusion of chapter staff brought valuable institutional knowledge and operational insights, while representatives from diverse businesses offered firsthand experiences and perspectives on the barriers they faced in joining the association. Additionally, the involvement of D&I professionals from larger construction firms brought specialized expertise and best practices in fostering inclusive environments.

Through a series of discussions, the task force identified both the real and perceived barriers that diverse businesses face in joining and engaging in AGC and then crafted effective solutions to address these obstacles. The task force categorized these barriers and solutions into five categories: Creating an Inclusive Membership Environment, Data Collection on Member Companies, The Membership Process, Advocacy, and the Value Proposition for Small and Diverse Businesses.



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THE CONSTRUCTION
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