

## The Challenge

The Head of Procurement at a leading research university came to the Procurement Shared Service (PSS) with a common challenge: cut non-pay expenditure to deliver sustainable savings, without negatively affecting the student experience or the work of staff. Taking a proactive and values-based approach, the Head of Procurement recognised that delivering savings would need to be part of a larger procurement change programme to re-align the department's activities with university needs. Our consultants were tasked with developing a meaningful change programme that would deliver cashable savings in a way that upheld the University's values and unique offering.

## What Happened?

PSS consultants engaged with staff across departments and faculties to gather data for an in-depth spend analysis. We worked with stakeholders across the University to understand unique practices, issues and opportunities. Our initial opportunity analysis involved benchmarking the University against best practice qualitative and quantitative sector metrics. We were able to draw on a robust database of benchmark information as providers of the [Procurement Maturity Assessment \(PMA+\) Programme](#) and through our sister division [SUMS Consulting](#).

We then supported the Head of Procurement to develop a model of future procurement; a vision and strategy for the department that would see its activities align with the University's strategic objectives. This included a best practice framework addressing areas such as key focuses of category and supplier management, and enabling technology.

With a robust strategy agreed, we supported the Head in taking a deep-dive analysis of spend categories to

identify potential benefits and agree priority areas. A second opportunity assessment was undertaken against each category, which identified specific benefits, resource requirements, risk, assumptions and dependencies. Senior management then agreed on a prioritised programme of activity, which could deliver value while the larger change programme was still being developed.

The final stage of the project was to develop a business case for senior leadership that set out the overall costs and benefits of the change programme. The business case outlined the required investment to achieve the savings identified. It also laid out the programme plan with a recommended implementation approach, programme structure and governance.

## The Result

Working closely with the Head of procurement, and other key University stakeholders, the PSS consultant developed a procurement change programme to release savings. The changes made within the department and across activity areas would deliver cashable savings of 3-5%. The recommended implementation approach gained executive-level sponsorship for procurement change across the University, which was supported by stakeholder endorsements.

*"Based on comprehensive analysis and benchmarking, we helped the client make the case for investment in procurement to deliver a rigorous and robust procurement strategy, which will achieve significant savings for the University."* says PSS Consultant Linda Crotty.

This work, which began prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, has put this university in a better position to respond to the rapid changes required as a result of the outbreak and support long-term financial sustainability.



**Our HE expertise meant that we hit the ground running, understood the unique challenges of universities, and were able to develop sustainable and impactful solutions.**

LINDA CROTTY,  
PSS ASSOCIATE CONSULTANT

# Procurement Transformation

## For More Information

e – [pss@reading.ac.uk](mailto:pss@reading.ac.uk)  
t – 0118 935 7081

[www.heprocurementsolutions.ac.uk](http://www.heprocurementsolutions.ac.uk)