

UKUPC Festive Campaign



Day 2: Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity in Procurement

The festive season often brings to mind feelings of togetherness, but the reality is that within societies we all rarely have access to the same opportunities or advantages. This leaves tangible and lived experiences of inequality that we must address. Today's post is actually not about giving. It's about taking necessary action to ensure the diversity of people and experiences in the procurement profession and our wider communities are effectively represented. This goes further than our teams and organisations. It also extends to the organisations with which we work and those we contract with. How are we making sure that our organisations and our supply base is diverse and representative of society?

Within each consortium, UKUPC partners are adopting approaches to address EDI within our teams, our profession and our supply chains – though we recognise we are in the very early stages. Here are some examples of how UKUPC partners are approaching EDI activity. Please contact your local consortium for details and support.

1. **Commitment through policy and action** – Having a clear EDI Policy is important to demonstrate commitment to improvement and to provide a framework and priorities for activity. The equality, diversity and inclusion policy should be supported by senior management and be reviewed annually to ensure the targets are met and activity contributes to positive onward change. SUPC, part of the SUMS group, which provides support to universities to improve performance across all professional services, has developed an [EDI Policy](#), which outlines our commitment and objectives for the year ahead.
2. **Staff and member training** – The right trainer can provide a grounding in EDI as a first step to raising awareness and facilitating change. Your trainer can help you explore EDI from an individual perspective and then think about how that impacts your procurement activity. In a safe and supported environment, a trainer can help you explore questions like: Are you sure that you are reaching ALL suppliers who could be providing a fantastic service for your University? Could there be some bias in process or decision making that favours suppliers from certain backgrounds? Would you like to be doing more to encourage inclusive practices in your suppliers?
3. **Best practice sharing** - Events can highlight changing legislation, examples of best practice and case studies of how others are implementing changes. Most recently, LUPC & SUPC hosted a Responsible Procurement Webinar in November 2021 with insight from framework

supplier Clyde & Co on creating a diverse workforce. You can watch this recording on-demand [here](#). You can also catch the most recent UKUPC webinar on Environmental Social Governance [here](#).

4. ***Changes within tenders and improved supplier management*** – Asking a tender or SQ question in a certain way might disadvantage a certain group of suppliers? The SQ part of a tender allows us to ask questions for information only, such as ‘Does the organisation have an EDI policy?’, These are basic questions but we can probe further into areas such as gender and ethnicity pay gap, neurodiversity policies, disability policies, or flexible working policies for families? Questions can go much deeper into asking about investigations from The Equal Rights Commission or comparable bodies, and asking how policies and regulations within our contracting partners are cascaded down the supply chain.

There is much more work to be done in the area of EDI and across the UKUPC partners, we welcome an opportunity to work with advisors, members, suppliers and our wider communities in this area. Please contact your local consortium if you would like to feed into any EDI activity.