

Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium

Responsible Procurement Statement

Version 2

September 2021

Introduction

SUPC

SUPC are part of SUMS, a charitable body whose aims are to support efficiency and innovation in the Higher Education Sector.

SUPC is one of six regional purchasing consortia serving UK higher education. SUPC is a member of UK Universities Purchasing Consortia (UKUPC), the shared vehicle by which English, Scottish and Welsh HE purchasing consortia manage joint contracting, developmental and improvement projects for collaborative procurement in the HE sector. Many of the framework agreements that SUPC manage are shared nationally. Using our agreements, members procure competitively priced goods and services across a wide range of commodity areas. These agreements save members both time and money. Members also have access to advice, support and market knowledge.

SUPC is in a strategic partnership with London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC). A Strategic Partnering Advisory Group oversees the partnership.

SUPC has a Council that comprises Heads of Procurement from each of our full member institutions and represents a wide range of institutions, from large research-intensive universities to smaller specialist universities. The Council informs the work of SUPC.

Purpose

The Responsible Procurement Statement covers all of the SUMS group, and in particular the SUPC division's activities. It supports economic, social and economic activities and SUPC's framework activity undertaken on behalf of the HE sector. We aim to do this by balancing our environmental impact and the social value we create, against the need to remain economically stable and to fulfil the financial obligations required by our charitable status.

What is Responsible Procurement?

SUPC is committed to tendering for goods and services for its members without causing harm to others.

We seek to take into account the positive and negative impacts that our procurement activity can have within our local communities, the communities in which our members operate, and globally throughout our many and varied supply chains.

Our Responsible Procurement Statement sets out the three areas under which our priorities sit. These three priority areas have sub-priorities which outline the areas which we consider when carrying out procurement exercises:

1. Planet and Environmental
2. People and Social
3. Surplus and Economic.

Planet and Environmental

- Climate change

SUPC has committed to the Sustain Supply Chain Code of Conduct (SSCCoC), which requires our supply chains to acknowledge the Global Climate and Ecological Emergency. It requires that suppliers within the supply chain have plans and actions in place to address this for their areas of responsibility and influence. We will embed SSCCoC into our tendering processes.

- Energy

The Energy Consortium (TEC) are fellow members of UKUPC. Their goal is deliver cost-reduction and sustainable energy solutions for their members, and we recognise, promote and endorse them as the sector's energy partner. SUPC also recognise that reducing energy consumption and production is key, as well as a reliance on fossil fuels.

- Responsible Consumption and Production

SUPC recognise the need to reduce consumption and production. This requires our supply chains to address packaging and recycling, removal and recycling of end of life goods and equipment, policies to reduce waste going to landfill, to ensure the constituent parts of products have been sustainably resourced.

People and Social

- To protect and assure all protected characteristics

As part of our commitment to the SSCCoC we ask that our suppliers commit to non-discriminatory and fair treatment for all workers over and above the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

We make a commitment to identifying and mitigating the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains. We require suppliers to include modern slavery statements in frameworks that present the highest risk, and we check compliance of supplier modern slavery statements against the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act (2015).

Surplus and Economic

- To assist SMEs to gain access to our frameworks

We create and signpost to guidance and resources that can help SMEs overcome the administrative burdens of bidding on public sector contracts and increase their chances of winning work.

- The Social Value Portal

Our relationship with the Social Value Portal aims to produce a set of Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMS) that will allow our institutions to measure their contribution to social value against a recognised national framework.

SUPC spend categories that present human rights abuses risk

SUPC's supply chains fall under five 'super-categories':

1. Science, Technical, Engineering and Medical Goods and Services
2. Corporate Services, including Travel
3. ICT Equipment and Services
4. Estates Goods and Services
5. Academic Services.

Spend Area	Highest Areas of Risk
STEMed	Gloves, PPE, garments, warehousing, electronics manufacture
Corporate Service including Travel	Hospitality, temporary workers
ICT Equipment and Services	Electronics manufacturing and assembly, mining and refining, warehousing
Estates Goods and Services	Construction, cleaning, janitorial, security services
Academic Services	Garments – gowning, warehousing for physical library supplies.

What has SUPC achieved in the last financial year?

SUPC has committed to the SCCoC and will be rolling this out to all suppliers not yet signed up.

We have worked with the UKUPC responsible procurement group to produce guidance for suppliers to ensure their modern slavery statements are compliant.

SUPC has produced a toolkit to help members ensure their suppliers comply with modern slavery statement best practice: checklist and letter of follow-up to suppliers when amendments are required.

SUPC has created its own responsible procurement action plan on the NetPositive Futures system to show our suppliers and our members that we are committed to responsible procurement.

What are we going to do in the next financial year?

SUPC will ensure that the SCCoC forms a mandatory part of the tender process for working with SUPC and other UKUPC consortia.

SUPC will ensure that all SUPC framework suppliers have created and updated an action plan on the NetPositive Futures system, to ensure we are able to track their commitments and progress.

SUPC will share headline information on framework suppliers with the data gathered in the NetPositive Futures System.

SUPC will produce a resource map of where the most useful and up to date Responsible Procurement resources are kept for ease of use and to assist those new to the sector.

SUPC will form a special interest group to ensure that all aspects of EDI are considered in our activities and allow members to share learning and best practice in this area.

SUPC will ensure that all aspects of responsible procurement are discussed as part of supplier reviews so we can ensure our suppliers are aware of our commitment to responsible procurement.

SUPC will review and update where appropriate any policies or statement relating to responsible procurement.