

London Universities Purchasing Consortium

Background

The London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) is a not-for-profit professional buying organisation owned by its members, for its members. LUPC arranges supply contracts between a wide range of suppliers and its 64 members, who are Universities and Colleges in and around London. LUPC is based in Bloomsbury and employs 6 staff.

Sustainable purchasing

LUPC has an aggregated non pay spend approaching £1 billion and recognises the importance of promoting the principles of sustainability in its procurement activities. It has been able to use this purchasing power to exert influence on its marketplace. Some examples are shown below:

- LUPC spent £1.3 million last year on recycled products
- Ensures that sustainable criteria are incorporated into tender documents and awards framework agreements
- Works right through the supply chain to encourage improvements in environmental credentials

and performance

- Continuously monitors and measures supplier sustainable performance
- Green product design is being built into the new desktop and laptop agreement
- Office purchases such as paper are green; tea/coffee etc is FairTrade
- Recycling system for waste.

One very good example of how LUPC exerts its influence is with the National Office Supplies Agreement. LUPC has introduced a set of incentives to encourage green procurement. These include:

- Rebates for recycled products and environmentally friendly products
- Rebates for collection and disposal of used packaging and catalogues
- Ensure only one catalogue per user
- Rebates for online use.

Implementation

Research of green procurement is a continuous dialogue with members and suppliers. LUPC also participates in groups such as

National Sustainable Procurement Group and London Universities Environmental Group.

Implementation takes place at an institutional, regional and supplier level. There is continuous monitoring of agreements to ensure that the most relevant and latest sustainability issues are covered.

Policy

LUPC has a sustainable document, which seeks to integrate sustainability into its strategies, policies and operations. The sector has developed a number of best practice guides and toolkits to translate these strategies and policies into tangible actions and procedures. Examples of these are:

- A Sustainable Procurement Risk Assessment tool
- A Corporate Social Responsibility questionnaire.

LUPC formalises its procurement initiatives through its tender requirements. Bidders are asked questions relating to equality, diversity and sustainability.

Communicating with stakeholders

LUPC is active in ensuring that its members are supported with sustainability issues. It has developed Buyers Guides for each agreement area. Further communication of occasional information is published in the LUPC quarterly newsletter and via the LUPC website.

Best practice is shared by working with the education sector.

Business Benefits

Although not quantified, members have received benefit through improved supplier performance. This is felt in terms of energy efficiency, process efficiency and waste minimisation.

Looking to the future

LUPC firmly believes that it is on a continuous path of sustainable procurement and as such will continue the good work to date. The organisation will develop and monitor agreements, ensuring that green choices are made available to members and that suppliers understand LUPC's green agenda.

Contact

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