



UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

**SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT
STRATEGY**

2018 - 2022

1. Background and Purpose

This Sustainable Procurement Strategy has been developed to ensure that all staff involved in the procurement of goods and services within the University routinely consider how we can enhance and protect our shared environment, contribute to the health and well-being of society and build a sustainable economy through our procurement decisions.

This strategy outlines the following:

1. The six priority issues the University Purchasing Department (UPD) will always consider as part of our procurement decisions and which we will promote to devolved departments who have delegated authority to make certain purchases
2. The related statements of action as outlined in our Procurement Strategy 2018-2022
3. The principles UPD will follow to support the delivery of this strategy

The approach we have taken in the Sustainable Procurement Strategy is to focus on promoting the positive impact we can have through our procurement practice and processes. This will of course mean we will work to reduce the negative environmental and potential social impacts every organisation has in its supply chain, however, by taking a pro-active approach we are seeking to maximise the positive impact we can have through procurement.

The University of Oxford's vision is to lead the world in research and education in a way which benefits society on a national and global scale.

UPD is responsible for establishing and managing effective commercial arrangements to deliver the University's purchasing requirements at best value for money (to time, quality and budget whilst considering environmental and social impacts) in support of this vision.

This document sets out the University's Sustainable Procurement Strategy for the next five years which is developed alongside, and is aligned to the University's objectives and values.

2. Ownership and Approval of the Strategy

This Sustainable Procurement Strategy is owned and maintained by the Director of Purchasing and is sponsored by the Director of Finance.

Specific yearly implementation plans will be developed against this strategy and will be delivered by UPD. Performance against these implementation plans will be monitored by the Director of Purchasing and reported to the Director of Finance.

3. Our Priorities

Sustainable procurement to the University of Oxford means routinely considering the environmental, social (including equality) and economic opportunities and impacts of purchasing decisions, whilst taking a long term view.

Given the range and scale of sustainability issues which are potentially relevant to the University of Oxford, the Sustainable Procurement Strategy has identified six priority issues which will be considered in all of UPD's procurement decisions and which UPD will promote to devolved departments who have delegated authority to make certain purchases.

The priority issues have been selected because they make a significant contribution environmentally, socially and economically to the University of Oxford, our key stakeholders, suppliers and the local community. This strategy also supports the delivery of the University's Carbon Management Strategy, the University's Environmental Management System and is aligned to the work of the Environmental Sustainability Team.

As well as the consideration of these priorities in our procurement processes UPD will ensure that a risk based approach is used to identify and take opportunities to manage any significant environmental, social and economic considerations which are unique to any individual product or service procured by the University.

Key to success in implementing this strategy and delivering progress against the six priority issues will be to work in collaboration with the University's suppliers.

The six priority issues are:

- Optimise the use of natural resources in our procurement decisions and throughout our supply chain
- Effectively manage waste in the supply chain
- Effectively manage the delivery of goods and services to the University
- Support the management of our carbon impact and the delivery of the University's Carbon Management Strategy and Environmental Management System
- Work with suppliers and departments to raise awareness of sustainability to build a more sustainable economy
- Ensure that ethical considerations such as Fairtrade and a living wage are considered in our procurement practices

4. Priorities in detail

For each of the priorities we have identified why it is a priority for the University, and detailed some specific considerations.

4.1 Optimise the use of natural resources in our procurement decisions and throughout our supply chain

People and communities are reliant on a readily available supply of natural resources to sustain life itself – water being a perfect example. There is pressure on many of these resources caused by increased consumption and inefficient use. A commitment to optimising the use of these vital resources is a pre-requisite for any socially responsible institution.

We will:

- Encourage our suppliers to decrease any reliance on non-renewable resources within their production processes
- Systematically reduce the use of unsustainable materials e.g. unsustainable timber
- Systematically reduce the use of virgin materials

4.2 Effectively manage waste in the supply chain

It is well recognised that the cost of waste management and disposal will continue to rise. By effectively managing the production and flows of waste within our supply chain we can save money and reduce the negative environmental and social issues associated with waste.

We will:

- Manage and reduce the amount of packaging related to the products we purchase (including promotion of recycled packaging)
- Promote the procurement of recycled products
- Promote product options which generate less waste (either through their production or use)

4.3 Effectively manage the delivery of goods and services to the University

The University is a major employer and holds a central position within Oxford. As a tourist destination and the place where we live it is important that we consider the environmental and health related issues, such as air quality, associated with transporting our goods and services within and around the city.

We will:

- Manage the scheduling of deliveries to reduce the impact on the local environment
- Reduce the overall volume of deliveries to the University through our procurement practices
- Engage with local stakeholders to promote our commitment to reducing traffic congestion within Oxford

4.4 Support the management of our carbon impact and the delivery of the University's Carbon Management Strategy and Environmental Management System

Procurement was identified in the University's Carbon Management Strategy as being a mechanism to reduce energy consumption across the University. The integration of the consideration of carbon into our procurement processes is essential if we are to meet our stated carbon targets, and we will work with our colleagues in the Environmental Sustainability Team to achieve this.

We will:

- Embed energy efficiency criteria in University-wide contracts and precedent contracts
- Promote the procurement of energy efficient equipment to all staff (particularly within laboratories)
- Promote suppliers that have accredited environmental management systems such as ISO14001

4.5 Work with suppliers and departments to raise awareness of sustainability to build a more sustainable economy

As a large local employer with a vast supply chain we can have a significantly positive impact environmentally, socially and economically. Whilst value for money is a key part of our Procurement Strategy, we also understand that a sustainable supply chain will help us deliver excellence for the University and support the local economy.

We will:

- Support our suppliers understanding of sustainability and sustainable procurement
- Explore opportunities to increase the number of local businesses within our supply chain
- Encourage our suppliers to implement mechanisms to monitor and communicate their sustainability performance and that of their wider supply chains

4.6 Ensure that ethical considerations such as Fairtrade and a living wage are considered in our procurement practices

Social and ethical considerations are important part of our social responsibility as a high profile employer and purchaser. Working with our supply chain we make decisions for the benefit of individuals and communities locally and globally.

We will:

- Support a living wage within our services supply chains
- Promote excellent health and safety practices both on our site and through our supply chain
- Work with suppliers to promote relevant certifications which support workers in the supply chain, such as Fairtrade

Consideration of these priorities is integrated into our procurement processes and supporting guidance has been developed and communicated to staff and suppliers.

5. Statement of Action

In our Procurement Strategy 2018-2022 we have identified the following statements of action which are relevant to this Sustainable Procurement Strategy. It is through delivering these statements of action that we will ensure the effective delivery of our Sustainable Procurement Strategy.

Sustainable Procurement – Related Statements of Action

1. We will engage Estates Services (Environmental Sustainability Team) in the development and execution of all category plans to ensure sustainability considerations (environmental, social and economic) are prioritised.
2. We will prioritise our supplier management activity on those suppliers willing and able to partner and innovate to deliver sustainable value, and promote growth with those suppliers.
3. Working with Estates Services (Environmental Sustainability Team) we will raise the awareness of sustainable procurement with customers and influence the development of specifications to ensure they contribute to the delivery of sustainable objectives.
4. We will deliver training and guidance to equip UPD staff with the right skills, knowledge and tools to effectively identify, quantify and manage risk in the University's supply chains.
5. We will analyse relevant indices, market intelligence systems and supplier data to ensure our risk identification, quantification and management is informed by sound data and information.
6. We will revise our supplier management processes to increase emphasis on the identification, quantification and effective management of risk in our supply chains (taking in account what is feasible, affordable and manageable). Where we transfer management of risk to a supplier, we will seek to ensure their risk management approach is robust.
7. We will work with key suppliers to ensure that embedding sustainability considerations becomes 'business as usual' (directly and down the supply chain), through supplier education, the establishment of key performance indicators, contract terms and supporting reporting and supplier management activities.
8. We will promote those preferred suppliers who have the best sustainability credentials, and where practical establish agreements that offer environmentally preferable products.
9. We will adopt and promote codes of conduct where these assist in managing identified risk.

7. How we will deliver this strategy

There are three key guiding principles which will support the effective delivery of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy. We will ensure these principles are embedded into UPD's thinking and action.

Principle 1: Communicating and Learning

We will share good practice and effectively communicate our lessons learned from implementing sustainable procurement initiatives. We will seek ideas from others to continually improve our performance.

Principle 2: Partnering and Engaging

We will partner with internal and external stakeholders to effectively deliver our sustainable procurement objectives. It is by working with colleagues we will maximise the impacts of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy and identify mechanisms to ensure our strategy has the positive impact we intend it to have.

Principle 3: Measuring and Reporting

We will ensure we regularly monitor and report on our progress against this strategy. We will continue to use the Flexible Framework to benchmark our performance with colleagues within the sector and beyond.