**GO Social and Community Benefit in Procurement Award**

This Award recognises the crucial role that public procurement in Scotland can play in providing a more sustainable and equitable society.

It highlights those organisations who have embedded social and community benefit requirements at the heart of their procurement and supply chain activities to enable better outcomes for the citizens of Scotland.

The GO Social and Community Benefit in Procurement Award is designed to promote the best use of community benefits, designed to deliver sustainable, long-term social, environmental, ecological and/or economical outcomes across Scotland.

**Timescale**

A GO Awards submission in this category must cover activity during the period October 2016 to April 2018.

The start date can either be the contract start date or when the procurement process or initiative began.

**Open to**

Public, private or third sector organisations

**Evidence Keywords**

Social economic environmental impact, embedding social economic and environmental requirements, future-proofing, recycling, supply chain engagement, value for money, total cost of ownership, life cycle costing, corporate social responsibility, regeneration, social inclusion characteristics,  re-engineering processes, stakeholder involvement, clear evidence of measurable community benefits**,**  ethical sustainable socially responsible procurement, fair workforce practices, sustainability, ecological, supported business, supported employment, corporate social responsibility, social, citizen, community, impact.

**Awards**

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**Category Questions**

**Elevator Pitch: Your elevator pitch should be approximately 3 bullet points in length. This is your opportunity to provide a brief, persuasive description of what makes your submission stand out from the crowd.**

During the relevant period, UoE implemented social and community benefit measures through procurement that together reflect an approach based on a commitment to best practice, collaboration and innovation in order to achieve inclusive growth. The wide range of initiatives help the University stand out as a leader in this space and to demonstrate the potential that procurement has to drive value beyond cash savings. This has included:

* Community Benefit implementation based on a long term engagement and a determination to navigate this complex issue to achieve real impact
* Fair Work Practice guidance and supplier engagement that helped the University achieve a key strategic goal, Living Wage accreditation, and allowed us to make valuable contributions to the public sector on this issue
* Several other social and ethical initiatives that embedded best practice across the issues highlighted by the new procurement regulations

1. **Please describe the social and community benefit approach that your organisation has implemented through the procurement process, and the measurable benefits it has created. 295**

The University of Edinburgh (UoE) is the largest university in Scotland and is ranked number 18 in the world. The UoE Procurement Office is a leader in sustainable and ethical procurement, and the introduction of new duties in 2016 provided a challenge to rethink and aim higher in regards to social procurement and community benefit (CB).

Our approach in meeting these duties has been to take the time to identify, implement and continuously improve best practice on a wide range of issues highlighted in the regulations. Our goal has been to position ourselves as leaders and innovators in these areas, to maximise collaboration, and to explore the potential of procurement to drive the University’s strategic aim to deliver positive impact to society. Between October 2016 and April 2018, the UoE Procurement Office fully implemented or began to embed new social, economic and environmental procurement measures across its spend (£354m for FY 2017/2018):

We developed a CB Policy aligned with the Scottish Statutory Guidance committing UoE to consider CB for all regulated procurements (significantly below the £4m requirement) and to ensure that reportable benefits are achieved through contract management. Measurable commitments have been achieved from a wide range of contracts to date.

We developed our own UoE Fair Work Practices (FWP) guide and committed to score this requirement as widely as possible, including in all operational and capital Estates procurements. Supplier engagement on FWP was key in UoE achieving Living Wage accreditation over the past year.

During the same period, we implemented procurement measures in regards to Modern Slavery, equalities, working conditions, ethical ICT, conflict minerals, palm oil, terms and conditions and contract management. We also renewed our Fair Trade accreditation under tougher rules and implemented a major project to re-adopt and improve the Scottish sustainable procurement tools.

1. **What aspects of the initiative or approach have been particularly innovative, creative or ground-breaking (while remaining within the bounds of procurement legislation)? 300**

Our CB and social procurement approach is to maximise inclusive growth through collaboration and innovation, focussing on achieving genuine impact and addressing the challenge of achievability.

As an example, internal and external partners helped us to develop CB menus that align with UoE strategic objectives, for instance regarding Widening Participation, that also identify willing delivery partners who will work with suppliers to ensure CB are achievable and viable on a long term basis.

This up-front identification of partners was successfully piloted with UoE Careers Service on a procurement delivering three Living Wage paid Corporate Social Responsibility and Programme Management student internships and is an innovation that makes CB implementation and contract management less onerous for end users, project managers and suppliers, and increases measurable impact as CB are reported consistently and repeated over time.

A second innovation has been a commitment to leverage expertise within the University, including student or academic research, to increase CB and social procurement impact. An example of this is an effort instigated by the Procurement Office to achieve bespoke apprenticeship commitments from suppliers in an engineering research procurement. The UoE Engineering School end users will help design an apprenticeship training programme that incorporates not only mechanical and electrical training, but also the essential laboratory and data management skills that are not available in current programmes and will better meet the School’s future skills needs.

The most exciting CB innovation is a Procurement Office collaboration with the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI) started in March 2018 that led to a 50K euro award from EU’s Climate KIC programme. ECCI and Zero Waste Scotland will support our construction suppliers to develop business cases around Data Driven Innovation-led decarbonisation and circular economy. This pilot is running now and is expected to be up-scaled.

1. **What level of engagement has been achieved with parties within and outside the nominating organisation to ensure that the initiative has been thoroughly scoped and designed with end-user benefit in mind?**

The extent of stakeholder engagement helps UoE stand out. We engaged in preliminary discussions with councils, other Universities, current and prospective suppliers, Scottish government, and University partners and end users to find out what others have done on these issues, challenges they’ve faced and how they’ve addressed these. We also held University and supplier engagement workshops that provided valuable input on CB and sustainable procurement.

Our CB policy, for instance, was endorsed at University committee level and benefited from generous engagement from internal and external colleagues, even though we were not able to guarantee what the outcomes from the exercise would be.

We also identified stakeholders on CB willing to help deliver each potential benefit and developed CB menus. The University’s City Region Deal team provided expert input on ensuring CB alignment with best practice on reportable activities linked to agreed outcomes and impacts. They also allowed us to deepen ties with the City of Edinburgh Council and city region partners to find areas where they can help suppliers deliver significant opportunities regarding supported employment and targeted recruitment for those who are disadvantaged or share a protected characteristic.

The UoE Social Responsibility and Sustainability Department provided crucial support to ensure our CB is informed by the surrounding community organisations and members and fulfils the University’s new Community Engagement Strategy.

This up-front planning is a major benefit to end-users, who are delivering complex projects—while they all express a desire to support inclusive growth, they don’t have the resource to plan, implement and monitor CB delivery. At the same time, our policy still gives the final say in CB to the project owners, and a menu and consultation process gives the end-user the ability to select the focus and target groups for CB within the range of UoE’s strategic priorities.

1. **What specific challenges have been faced in the procurement approach taken, and how were these overcome?**

For CB, the initial trial of requirements on a procurement was actually unsuccessful. However, the potential of CB was highlighted, and this informed our commitment to CB development.

External engagement identified common challenges with adequate planning and resource for CB delivery and implementation, as well as with “box ticking” measures that don’t necessarily fulfil real community needs (ad hoc school visits were a frequently cited example). Suppliers complained about a lack of guidance on what authorities wanted or alternatively, measures that were disproportionate or unachievable. Also, we had no clear examples available on how to relate ad hoc benefits into a reportable quantitative or qualitative story of the value we were adding to strategic priorities.

These barriers were addressed through wide consultation, leading to the development of supplier engagement materials and CB project plans and menus of achievable benefits. These followed a logic model of themes and strategic outcomes, defined activities and suggested KPIs, identified delivery partners, and flexibility on resource inputs from suppliers to ensure equal treatment. These new measures have been successfully piloted in two capital procurements leading to successful contract commitments that we know we can support to deliver. These are being rolled out widely, including currently in two major Competitive Dialogue procedures.

Another challenge was having limited resource to achieve the high number of procurement initiatives in this area. To address this, we leveraged experience from each procurement, taking time to make new templates including for Modern Slavery and ILO conventions, Fair Work Practices, and continually refined CB procedures. We also leveraged the input of UoE students who assisted on topic-based research, for instance on timber eco-labels, but who also were able to lead major projects to improve and implement new Scottish sustainable procurement tools and produce a suite of supplier engagement sustainability guides.

1. **What were the expected outcomes of the procurement initiative, and what success has been achieved to date? Please provide evidence of specific targets set, feedback received and performance or other measurable benefits achieved.**

Several individual achievements collectively show the commitment that UoE has to leading in social procurement and community benefit. We’ve laid the groundwork for significant results in CB and social and ethical procurement, and in the process have already helped UoE to achieve several institutional social responsibility commitments as well as to navigate a growing list of ethical and reputational imperatives:

CB implementation led to measurable commitments from suppliers across areas of spend, including procurements well below the £4m requirement. We are working to implement these commitments regarding apprenticeships, work experience placements, targeted recruitment (in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council employability and skills team), student internships, benefits for third sector organisations (that they have requested through consultation), and links to funded projects from the emerging Edinburgh City Region Deal. Our biggest success to date has been the EU Climate KIC funding award that came about through CB development.

Fair work practice implementation led to our own best practice guide and embedded practice, which helped UoE achieve Living Wage accreditation and allowed us to make a valuable contribution to the Scottish Government best practice working group on Fair Work Practices in procurement.

We have successfully implemented modern slavery, ethical working, and equalities checks for every level of procurement, including non-regulated spend. This has been achieved through due diligence templates, adapting the FWP question for high risk overseas procurements, highlighting specific legal requirements in contract notices, and updating our T&Cs with robust modern slavery and equalities measures (embedded into every purchase order issued by the University, regardless of value and whether the spend had been directly influenced by the Procurement Office). Fair works, Modern Slavery, and other commitments like those related to Palm Oil, have been integrated into our adapted version of the Scottish sustainable procurement tools.

1. **How has your organisation spread the benefit of its initiative to other organisations or stakeholders, and with what effect? What lessons have been learnt as a result of the exercise?**

We have shared our documentation on community benefit, fair work practices and ethical supply chains with the wider HE/FE sector and Scottish Government, and participate in working groups on community benefit and fair work practices for the sector. The development of our policy was timely as it informed the social inclusion approach for the University City Region Deal bid, submitted as part the University’s inclusive growth approach in their UK government business case.

We’ve also shared our approach and learned from the procurement and employability and skills teams of the City of Edinburgh Council, and are working with them and city region partners to explore a more joined up approach to community benefit including a skills and jobs pipeline that feeds into the emerging funded deal-linked skills initiatives. We’ve also shared our experience with colleagues in Scottish Government policy team as they develop their approach to social value and impact measurement in procurement.

Regarding FWP, we shared our guide and played a role in the FWP working group that developed the recent best practice guide and toolkit. Internally to the University, our work to develop social procurement has made valuable connections and initiated important conversations, but more practically, was key in UoE achieving Living Wage accreditation.

One lesson from this experience has been the value of collaboration, which has shown benefits even before the results of most CB exercises have been realised. For example, in addition to the connections that led to the successful EU funding for innovation in our procurement supply chains, we have made valuable contributions to colleagues on coordinating the University’s school and community engagement activities more generally, as well as initiating work on a coordinated approach to impact measurement and linking diverse activities to our key strategies and the national performance framework.

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