

Supplier and Procurement Policy

[Audio version available](#)

At Open Source Arts (OSA) we are a welcoming, inclusive and open space, and we believe in 'Welcome' as a practice to take with us into everything we do. We aim to engage communities to create better places for themselves to live in, whilst encouraging creativity and environmental and social sustainability.

We believe in LEADing as we **L**et **E**very **A**ction **D**emonstrate our recognition that changes towards a low carbon, sustainable, equitable world is not only necessary but possible. We too recognise that Leeds is not an island, that our actions have international implications, and that all our actions must address their international impact and ensure global justice.

For these reasons, we have produced this policy to lay out how OSA can act to ensure that our procurement practices are responsible and progressive, and our supplier choices are consistent with our aims and values. This includes ensuring they improve the wellbeing of people worldwide, are environmentally sustainable and climate-friendly, promote equality and diversity, support the local economy, and provide social value.

The policy is structured as follows

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1. What is Responsible and Progressive Procurement?

[Procurement](#) is the obtaining of goods or services and generally refers to the act of purchasing. Here it is referring more broadly to the procurement process leading to the final decision to buy.

[Responsible Procurement](#) is the act of ensuring that the organisations needs for goods and services are met, whilst also generating benefit for society, the environment and economy.

[Progressive Procurement](#) is a very similar concept emerging from the Community Wealth Building approach and is focused on ensuring that procurement decisions create benefit for local communities. This perspective allows conscious choices to support local businesses, communities and individuals.

In both frameworks allow for considerations of value for money and reasonable financial costs, and therefore will not jeopardise the financial sustainability of Open Source Arts.

2. Our Commitments

We are committed to making its supplier and procurement choices represent our belief that changes towards a low carbon, sustainable, equitable world are necessary as well as possible. We are also committed to our decisions illustrating that we understand Leeds is not an island and that our actions have implications across the globe, with all actions protecting the wellbeing and justice of people and planet locally and worldwide.

We are committed to our supplier and procurement choices:

- minimising environmental impacts locally and globally.
- minimising carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.
- minimising negative impacts on ecology locally and globally.
- encourage and support a diverse and self-reliant local economy.
- encourage fair pay and good working conditions.
- deliver social value.
- protect the wellbeing of all people.

3. Scope

This policy is intended to apply to all goods and services purchased by Open Source Arts and should be used by all team members when deciding whether to or where to purchase any good or service from.

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4. Cost Considerations

When making all purchasing, supplier and procurement decisions cost and value for money must always be considered. It is often believed more ethical choices and choices that bring added social value are more expensive.

In ensuring value for money the whole life costs will be taken into account, which means considering quality, long-term running costs, disposal costs and opportunities, as well as initial price.

If purchasing from a supplier that meets our values, it should not bring excessive additional costs compared to an alternative that does not fit so strongly with our values. This reflects the limits we face as a small, self-funded organisation which must protect its financial sustainability.

5. Themes

The policy aims to lay out a framework for decision making which is holistic and allows all decisions to be reflective of our commitments and aims to enact both responsible and progressive procurement.

a. Social Value: adding benefit to the community

This is the overall guiding principle for our supplier and procurement choices. Social value is defined as 'wider financial and non-financial impacts of projects and programmes including the wellbeing of individuals, communities, social capital and the environment' ([Cabinet Office, 2019](#)).

Ensuring that our supplier and procurement choices add value to wider society and the environment by supporting environmentally and socially responsible firms.

b. Avoid, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

One of the most important and sustainable things to ask when making a purchasing decision is 'do you need it?' followed by 'can you upcycle or repurpose existing resources?'. Before embarking on the journey to establish the best supplier you must first decide whether it is something you really need.

We can consider borrowing, hiring or sharing resources before buying something new. Especially if this is an item which will only be used on a handful of occasions. We can consult fellow team members, art organisations and our wider network to identify the potential for borrowing or hiring what we need.

It is also important to consider the materials and packaging involved in the purchase. Seek out those items using lesser levels of packaging and purchase non-perishables in bulk where possible.

Consider whether it is possible to repair an item if you are looking to replace it.

c. Environmental Sustainability

Suppliers chosen must have transparent environmental or sustainability policies and be taking actions to reduce their adverse environmental impacts. This will include the firm taking actions such as having publicly accessible environment or sustainability policies, being zero waste, using responsibly sourced materials and more.

Where possible we must avoid materials that are toxic or harmful to the environment.

d. Carbon Management

Suppliers must be taking actions to limit their carbon emissions. This could include actions such as holding a renewable energy policy, being open about their actions to tackle climate change among others.

e. Equality and Diversity

Suppliers chosen must align with the open and welcoming nature of Open Source Arts and be taking action to ensure diversity in their workforce and activities and equal opportunities.

Suppliers must have a policy that states that they adhere to the Equality Act at a minimum. They may also have policies that promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination. An example of a company doing this is [Lucy and Yak](#).

f. Diversity in Supply Chain

We must ensure that we use a range of local suppliers when purchasing goods and services with particular attention to supporting small to medium enterprises (SMEs). This will help to support the local economy and allow local businesses to survive - it is thought that for every £10 spent at local firms means up to £50 injected into the local economy.

This may include switching to local suppliers where possible or breaking down larger supply opportunities into smaller opportunities that can be given to smaller local firms.

This is guided by the Community Wealth Building approach which is focused on redirecting wealth into the local economy and benefiting local people.

g. Ethical Sourcing

We are committed to ensuring people and communities are treated fairly and that fundamental human rights are respected.

We must ensure that supplier and procurement choices support only companies that explicitly make known their commitment to preventing Modern Slavery. This may include purchasing [Fairtrade](#) items and from cooperatives.

An excellent example of a company that would support these values and be a great supplier choice would be [Suma](#) as they have explicit values and statements.

h. Circularity

The Circular Economy is the concept that offers an alternative to the current system of extracting, making, using and disposing. Instead, resources are kept in use for as long as possible and the maximum value extracted from them; it can be summarised as making, using, repairing and remaking.

When making procurement and supplier choices we must consider whether it is recyclable, will we be able to repair it, can the existing item be repaired, can it be bought second hand and more.

This will mean considering organisations that have recycling return schemes, good repair services, offer second hand or refurbished goods, offer products utilising reused or recycled materials, and more.

An example of this includes the purchasing of the Community Canvas [Nokia G22](#) mobile phones. These phones have an eco-design and are easily repairable.

i. Cascading Responsible Procurement

This is about ensuring our attitude to procurement and creating social value is passed down the supply chain so other organisations choose to make procurement, supplier and behavioural decisions that promote these values and themes.

To ensure this it may require conversations with SEMs or local businesses around how they can work to fit our supplier and procurement policy, or

simply asking the questions. This will help cascade a Social Value attitude down the supply chain and help other businesses act more environmentally and socially responsible.

6. Steps for Implementation

a. Action Plan

Communication of this policy across the team is the first step towards allowing it to be adhered to and used to create positive impact.

Secondly, conversation with all team members will help support the implementation of this policy. This will allow staff to make decisions that reflect these aims and create Social Value.

We will endeavour to create a portfolio of best practice and organisation examples, such as choosing to purchase from Organic North and Suma, will be created and shared to help support decision making.

Finally, we will share successes more widely to encourage other organisations to enhance their supplier and procurement policies.

b. Monitoring

Monitoring will include maintaining an overview of the suppliers used by Open Source Arts regularly. This does not have to be an extensive document but one that provides a snapshot of the suppliers used.

This can be used to determine whether this policy is being put into practice or whether there is need for further action to ensure the policy and the conscious culture it encourages is being integrated into Open Source Arts.

c. Review

The Supplier and Procurement Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that practices still reflect the values and aims of Open Source Arts. Reviews will also be there to allow for assessment of the effectiveness of the policy and its implementation.

The next review due August 2024