DEFRA UK Sustainable Procurement Guidance and Resources

1. Overview of Organization

Name of Organization: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Website: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs

Emails: defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk (general), gbs@defra.gsi.gov.uk (sustainable procurement)

Funding Sources: Government

Organization Type: Government

Partners: Unknown

Location: United Kingdom

Mission: "The UK government department responsible for policy and regulations on environmental, food and rural issues." [i]

2. Sustainable Purchasing Activities and Resources

1. Sustainable Procurement: Other tools and approaches

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/tools/

2. Sustainable Procurement: Other initiatives
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/growth/

3. Sustainable Purchasing Guidance Materials

1. Sustainable procurement in government: Guidance to the Flexible Framework

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-procurement-in-government-guidance-to-the-flexible-framework

"The Flexible Framework is a widely used self-assessment mechanism developed by the business-led Sustainable Procurement Task Force, which allows organizations to measure and monitor their progress on sustainable procurement over time." [ii]

Year Guidance was Published: 2011
Access: Full public access
Types of Purchasers: The framework was designed so that it could be used by all organizations, from those with significant levels of procurement expertise and resource to those with very limited resource at their disposal.
Location: United Kingdom
Languages: English

Topics covered:

√√ *environmental sustainability*   √ *social sustainability*   √√√ *economic sustainability*

Steps (very high level):

√√√ Identify and address training needs for staff; √√√ Set overarching sustainability objectives for procurement; √√√ Create a sustainable procurement policy and strategy; √√√ Expenditure/spend analysis; √√√ Prioritize; √√√ Conduct sustainability risk analyses; √√√ Whole-life cost approach; √√√ Life Cycle Analysis; √√√ Supplier engagement; √√√ Measure the impacts of actions; √√√ Demonstrate results

2. National Sustainable Public Procurement Programme

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http:/sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/

"The National Sustainable Public Procurement Programme (NSPPP) seeks to make it clear to government employees that sustainable procurement is simply good procurement practice which can generate significant benefits, including: increased efficiency, reduction in carbon, and cost savings. The programme explains public procurement and demonstrates how to apply sustainable procurement good practice throughout the purchasing cycle." [iii] The programme has several aspects which are described below.

2a. NCSPPP modules and training materials

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/modules-and-trainers/

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/materials/

NSPPP training courses are highly interactive with a lot of attendee participation. The programme is delivered in 5 modules captured as a whole below.[iv]

Year Guidance was Published: Unknown
Access: Full public access
Types of Purchasers: Central government, higher education, local authorities, and National health service (content of modules varies depending on audience)
Regional Focus: United Kingdom
Language: English

Module 1: Actioning policy through sustainable procurement

Modules 2 & 3: Assuring sustainability

Module 4: Carbon literacy for procurers

Module 5: Sustainable food procurement

Topics covered:

√√√*environmental sustainability*   √√√ *social sustainability*   √√√*economic sustainability*

Steps:

√√√ Identifying needs and assessing the sustainability risks; √√√ Developing the specification; √√√ Supplier selection and inviting bids; √√√ Bid evaluation; √√√ Contract management; √√√ Monitoring and reporting (internal and external); √√√ Stakeholder engagement; √√√ Supplier engagement; √√√ Spend analysis; √√√ Whole life cycle cost; √√√ Developing policy, strategy and action plans

The modules, and other resources/ training materials associated with the modules, touch on the following product and service categories:

Product categories covered:

√√√ Food; √√√ construction; √ uniforms, clothing and other textiles; √ pulp, paper and printing; √√√ office machinery and computers; √ transport vehicles; √ pharmaceuticals; √√√ cleaning products; √√√ furniture

Service categories covered:

√√√ Food and catering services; √ health and social care; √ transport; √ waste; √ business travel; √ IT & computer services; √√√ ICT

2b. Sustainable procurement e-learning modules

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/sustainable-procurement/

"A new series of sustainable procurement e-learning modules, developed by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)as part of its work for European Pathway to Zero Waste (EPOW) and supported by DEFRA, aims to help practitioners realize the cost savings associated with implementing more sustainable practices when procuring goods and services, as well as meeting Greening Government Commitments." [v]

Year Guidance was Published: Unknown
Access: Need to register for WRAP account in order to have access
Types of Purchasers: Unknown
Regional Focus: United Kingdom
Language: English

Topics covered:

√√√ *environmental sustainability*   *social sustainability*   √√√ *economic sustainability*

"The six modules comprise an Introduction to Sustainable Procurement module and five independent tutorials on high priority areas:" [vi]

Product categories covered:

√√√ Furniture; √√√ textiles

Service categories covered:

√√√ Construction and major refurbishment projects; √√√ ICT; √√√ re-use and remanufacturing

2c. Prioritisation tool

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/prioritisation-tool/

"The tool helps prioritize action and helps in the development of the buyer approach and market engagement strategy as well as identifying the key areas for focusing time and resources to embed sustainable procurement and manage sustainable risk." [vii]

Year Guidance was Published: 2011
Access: Full public access
Types of Purchasers: Public sector
Regional Focus: Europe
Language: English

Topics covered:

√√*environmental sustainability*   √√ *social sustainability* √√ *economic sustainability*

Steps:

√√√ Prioritization; √√√ Spend analysis; √√√ Risk, scope and influence assessments

*The tool asks the user to enter product groups of interest at the beginning.

3. Government Buying Standards

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/

Within NSPPP, DEFRA provides a page of resources for Government Buying Standards. The page links to all the current specifications by product group – giving you an overview of the specifications that exist and a quick route to get the one you need.

Product categories covered:

√√√ Construction products; √√√ cleaning products; √√√ electrical goods; √√√ furniture; √√√ office ICT equipment; √√√ paper and paper products; √√√ textiles; √√√ transport vehicles; √√√ water using products; √√√ wood products

Service categories covered:

√√√ Cleaning services; √√√ food and catering services; √√√ horticulture and park services; √√√ transport services

4. Observations

The Flexible Framework allows organizations to measure and monitor their progress on sustainable procurement over time, and was designed to be useful to different sizes of agencies at different levels of maturity in sustainable procurement. The Prioritization tool helps organizations to adopt a more strategic approach to sustainable purchasing, providing guidance on creating a strategy, gaining stakeholder support, and focusing actions. The material provided by DEFRA is primarily designed for UK government entities, however the advice and guidance materials that will be useful to other types of organizations, from other regions.

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[i] DEFRA. *What we do.* Accessed from: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs

[ii] DEFRA. (2011). *Sustainable Procurement in Government: Guidance to the Flexible Framework.* Accessed from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-procurement-in-government-guidance-to-the-flexible-framework

[iii] DEFRA. *National Sustainable Public Procurement Programme.* Acessed from: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http:/sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/

[iv] Ibid.

[v] DEFRA. *Sustainable Procurement E-Learning Modules.* Accessed from: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/sustainable-procurement/

[vi] Ibid.

[vii] DEFRA. (2011). *Prioritisation Tool, More about the tool.* Accessed from: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140827110041/http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/prioritisation-tool/