Step 1: Develop a sustainable approach

Link procurement to wider priorities
Organisations’ local and national social and environmental policies and identify how they can be linked with your procurement activities.

Create a needs assessment
Consult colleagues and service users to ensure what you purchase meets social and environmental requirements.

Engage with the market
Talk with suppliers to find out their response to sustainable aims and address. You can take place prior, during and after your procurement, using different formats such as meetings, notices and information days.

Step 2: Choose the right procurement procedure

Open Procedure
Restricted Procedure
Competitive Negotiated Procedure
Competitive Dialogue
Innovation Partnership

Find out more about the different procedures here: bit.ly/EU-PublicTenderingRules

Step 3: Embed social and environmental criteria

Use selection and exclusion criteria to ensure you choose the most sustainable bidder. The 2014 Directives allow you to exclude or select bidders from tendering based on their sustainable technical ability and experience.

Make use of social and environmental technical specifications in the call for tender. Include sustainable performance or functional requirements, a reference to standards, typical technical specifications or references, or a combination of these approaches.

Use contract clauses and conditions to further ensure sustainable procurement. Embed full terms and conditions that address the specific sustainability aspects can ensure that suppliers deliver social and environmental outcomes.


Step 4: Create sustainable change

Encourage the market to create sustainable impact
Aim to push your suppliers to go beyond the baseline by providing them with an opportunity to propose more sustainable solutions. Also consider ‘best available technology’ or ‘continuous improvement’ clauses to drive innovation.

Use your network
Do not be afraid to speak with other procurers and experts. Share experience, learn from approaches tested by others and build capacity together to progress practices further.

Embed sustainability at every stages of your procurement process.
Integrate sustainability considerations into all processes so that positive social and environmental impacts become business as usual.

Monitor, review and build on lessons learned
Monitor the delivery of outcomes, evidence the impact of your approach, celebrate milestones, assess how practices can be further improved and share your story to inspire others!

For more guidance, tools and recommendations on how to take your strategic procurement journey forward discover the Making Spend Matter Toolkit:
Visit: urbact.eu/makingspendmatter #MakingSpendMatter

Making Spend Matter is a network of 7 European cities, funded through the URBACT III Programme and the European Regional Development Fund, exploring how spend analysis can be used as an evidence base to improve public procurement and deliver wider benefits to communities and places.