

The NETpositive Supplier Engagement Tool (HE): Joining Forces

Encouraging collaboration between Sustainability and Procurement teams

Using the NETpositive Supplier Engagement Tool (HE) brings many benefits. Embedding the tool as part of your procurement process and practice will ensure you get the best possible value.

We have created a series of practical guides to make this as easy as possible.

This document ***outlines practical ways the tool can support collaboration between sustainability and procurement teams.***

What makes collaboration between teams challenging?

- Lack of shared understanding
- Lack of shared projects
- Lack of time!

We always encourage teams to work collaboratively but we understand that it doesn't just happen! Even where there are good relationships the challenge is to make these effective and deliver demonstrable progress for both teams.

Without a clear shared purpose this can sometimes be difficult.

How using the tool helps

The tool provides a sound basis for teams to have a conversation about the sustainability issues that are most important to them. Exploring their own sustainability priorities and targets stimulates discussions about ways teams can support each other or work together.

Using data from the tool to support sustainability *and* procurement priorities also makes it great value for the institution. Having different teams reporting on progress and success from different perspectives can also help to build the profile of the sustainability agenda.

Sustainability excellence involves teams across an organisation working together and it is relationships that are key to making this happen. Sometimes we need a reason to invest in relationships, which can be hard. Collaboration around a shared agenda provides a reason for you to join forces.

We are confident you will have more impact together.

From a Sustainability Team perspective:

What can you offer?

- Your expertise (at the right time and in the right place!)
- Clarity about your priorities (what are you trying to achieve and why)
- Profile (you probably have different ways to communicate with shared stakeholders)

What can you gain?

- A better understanding of the overlap between the teams
- Data relating to supplier impacts; what are their priority issues? What are local suppliers focusing on?
- Deeper relationships with colleagues

From a Procurement Team perspective

What can you offer?

- Clarity about your priorities (what are you trying to achieve and why)
- Access to supplier data on sustainability; what are the key environmental and social issues for suppliers? What are local suppliers doing well or needing support on?

What can you gain?

- Sustainability expertise to feed into your procurement process and practice
- A more effective way to embed sustainability into your activity

A suggested approach

- Set up a meeting between the two teams (or add it to the agenda of an existing meeting)
- Ensure everyone in the teams understands the opportunity afforded by the data
- Share some of the initial findings

We are confident this practical approach will help you develop stronger relationships with your colleagues.

You may also be interested in some of our other guidance which [can be found here](#).