

PROCUREMENT POLICY

The purchase of goods and services is necessary for the smooth operation of Gaia Education. Gaia Education adopts an ethical approach to procurement, which means we take social and environmental factors into consideration alongside financial factors in making decisions on the purchase of goods and the commissioning of services. Our purchasing decisions should where practicable consider whole life cost and the associated risks and implications for society and the environment. We believe procurement can make a significant contribution to our goals of sustainable economic development and resource minimisation by ensuring that the goods and services we buy consider optimum environmental performance.

METHODOLOGY

Gaia Education follows a method in purchasing goods, equipment and services required for the needs of the organisation and its projects. Giving priority to local businesses when possible shall be a priority practice. Local or regional small firms, voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises and ethnic minority businesses are to be considered members of our supply chain as they play an important role in the local economy and contribute to social cohesion. Environmental and social factors shall be considered in the purchasing process. Specifically this includes considering what the product is made from, the product durability, where it is made and by whom, the efficiency of the product during use and the processes involved in its production and distribution, what the disposal requirements are and if it can be reused or recycled.

The steps to go through for a particular purchase depend very much on the type of purchase:

1. One off (e.g. consultancy service) or repeat (e.g. office stationery)
2. Low, medium or high value
3. Budgeted or not budgeted – if not budgeted, check whether expenditure be recouped from increased income or savings elsewhere
4. Subject to grant conditions or not
5. Cash or credit purchase
6. Fixed asset or consumable
7. Routine or emergency

A typical process for the purchase of an item on credit follows these stages:

1. Check budget and the specification of goods or services to be purchased
2. Research potential suppliers locally or regionally where possible
3. Obtain quotations
4. Select the supplier
5. Order the item
6. Receive goods from suppliers
7. Receive and check supplier invoice
8. Authorise the payment
9. Pay the supplier invoice
10. Enter payment into the accounts

Gaia Education Treasurer keeps the invoices for each purchase.

