



# **Procurement Policy**

**October 2012**

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## 1. Purpose and Scope of Policy

This policy sets out guidelines for National Galleries of Scotland's (NGS) employees when procuring goods, works and services to ensure compliance with relevant legislation, other NGS policies and procedures and general good practice. The intention is to achieve best value and sustainability in our purchases and the use of public money. This policy directly supports delivery of NGS' corporate priority to *develop a sustainable and efficient business model to support our aims and ensure long-term viability*.

Procurement is defined here as the purchase of any goods, works and services, including consultancy, by NGS from a third party supplier, whether under formal contract or otherwise. All members of staff making purchases on behalf of the organisation should act in accordance with this policy and the accompanying procedures.

'NGS' means NGS Charity and NGS Trading Company Ltd for the purposes of this policy.

## 2. Policy Statement on the Procurement of Goods and Services by NGS

NGS will provide best value in its expenditure of public funds when procuring goods, works and services from third parties, in line with the principles set out below.

## 3. Key Principles for Procurement

The policy statement is underpinned by the following principles:

- **EC Treaty Principles and International Obligations**  
Procurement must observe European Community (EC) Treaty Principles of Equal Treatment, Transparency, Proportionality, Mutual Recognition and Confidentiality and processes must comply fully with the EC Procurement Directives and the World Trade Organisation Government Procurement Agreement (WTO GPA)
- **Scottish Government Guidelines**  
NGS will follow the principles of the Procurement Reform Programme<sup>1</sup> and follow best practice in procurement through the Scottish Government's Procurement Capability Assessment project. As part of this project NGS has established an Action Plan to improve future capability. Attention is drawn to the Scottish Procurement Policy Handbook and the Scottish Procurement Policy Notes available at - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement/policy>
- **Legislative Requirements**

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<sup>1</sup> The Procurement Reform Programme was the result of a review by John McClelland into Public Procurement in Scotland. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement/about/Review>

There are several pieces of legislation which NGS must comply with which relate to procurement. These include:

- Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

Employees should bear in mind the requirements and duties placed on NGS by these acts when procuring goods, works and services to ensure full compliance.

- **Equality, Ethics and Social Responsibility – Sustainable Procurement**

NGS recognises that the procurement choices it makes can have significant socio-economic or environmental implications, including consequences for the promotion of equalities, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. In procuring goods, works and services, NGS will make every effort to ensure there are no unjustifiable negative impacts as a result of our actions.

Procurement must be undertaken in line with the highest ethical standards and with fairness to suppliers. To this end NGS has signed up to the Suppliers Charter. It is an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act 1906 for those employed by NGS in their official capacity corruptly to accept any gift or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing, or refraining from doing, anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person. NGS has policies on bribery and acceptance of hospitality and gifts, and a staff Code of Conduct which offer advice in this regard.

- **Best Value**

The central aim of the procurement process is to ensure Best Value is achieved.

Best value should not be judged solely on the basis of the lowest initial cost. Design, reliability, maintainability, running costs (carbon footprint) and disposal, for example, will affect the total cost over the life of a product. Factors such as these may justify a higher initial cost and be deemed most economically advantageous. Purchasers should determine the appropriate balance between quality and ‘whole life’ costs when procuring goods, works and services, and must be able to justify why a particular purchase was made.

A competitive procurement process is essential for achieving Best Value.

- **Competition**

Procurement should be through open competition unless there are convincing reasons to the contrary. Further guidance on ensuring a competitive procurement process is available in the procurement procedures which accompany this policy.

- **Separation of Duties**  
In the interest of financial probity, the roles of budget holder/customer, purchaser and payment authoriser must be separated. In order to make a binding commitment the purchaser must be a *delegated approver* with an appropriate level of delegated financial authority. *Delegated purchasing authority* is required to be able to sign contracts on behalf of NGS.
- **Transparency and Accountability**  
In relation to public procurement, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 provides a general right of access to information about all public contracts and procurement activity held by NGS, subject to certain conditions and exceptions. NGS must therefore ensure all procurement is undertaken transparently and in such a way that would not bring any reputational damage to the organisation. NGS is accountable for its procurement decisions.
- **Contracts**  
Contracts must be in writing and in accordance with National Galleries of Scotland's Terms and Conditions.
- **Payment**  
Suppliers must be paid on time in accordance with contractual arrangements. The Scottish Government target for payment of invoices by public bodies is 10 working days.
- **External Consultancy**  
In all cases, consultancy must be procured in line with these guidelines. If consultants are employed by NGS to undertake procurement they must abide by the same rules and procedures as NGS staff.

#### **4. Delivering this Policy**

Once a requirement to purchase goods or services has been identified, the prospective purchaser must act in accordance with various practices and procedures in place within NGS to ensure legislative compliance, best value and sustainability. Full details are set out in the procurement procedures which support this policy, making reference to the following:

- *Budget Responsibilities*
- *Collaborative Contracts*
- *The competitive tendering process*
- *Contracts Procedure*

#### **5. Failure to Comply with Procurement Policy and Procedures**

Failure to comply with NGS' procurement policy and procedures may result in the organisation incurring unnecessary or excessive expenditure and not achieving best value for the public. Any breaches will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action against the individual(s) concerned, in line with our Discipline and Grievance procedures.

## 6. Contacts

For further information on procurement within NGS please contact the following people:

Michael Browne  
Estates Operations Manager  
0131 624 6214  
[mbrowne@nationalgalleries.org](mailto:mbrowne@nationalgalleries.org)

Kathryn Farrell  
Policy and Communications Officer  
0131 624 6473  
[kfarrell@nationalgalleries.org](mailto:kfarrell@nationalgalleries.org)

Brian Doneghan  
Head of Operations  
0131 624 6209  
[bdoneghan@nationalgalleries.org](mailto:bdoneghan@nationalgalleries.org)