

Social Value Policy

V1

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Approved: University Sustainability Executive Committee

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UWE BRISTOL SOCIAL VALUE POLICY

1. Introduction: A Modern Civic University

- 1.1 UWE Bristol is a modern, civic university with a clear sense of purpose—locally rooted, globally connected, and driven by impact. Our students, our relevance, and our responsibility to the communities we serve are at the heart of everything we do. We are proud to play a leading role in shaping local priorities, improving lives, and contributing to the economic, social, and cultural vitality of the West of England.
- 1.2 As an anchor institution, we recognise the power of our education, research and enterprise to create lasting, meaningful change. We generate jobs, drive innovation, support public services, and help reduce inequalities by opening up opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds to realise their full potential.
- 1.3 Further information can be found on the University's website, for example through our volunteering and community engagement:
<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/life/activities/volunteering>
- 1.4 This Social Value Policy builds on our civic commitment and sustainability ambitions. It defines how we will embed social value into our procurement of goods, works and services—ensuring that every pound we spend delivers wider benefits for people, places and the planet. In doing so, it strengthens our alignment with regional priorities and our 2030 Strategy, enabling our suppliers and partners to contribute directly to UWE's mission of transforming futures and enriching the communities we serve.
- 1.5 The Social Value Policy underpins our Responsible Procurement Strategy—together providing a clear framework for ethical, inclusive and impactful procurement.

2. Commitment to Social Value

- 2.1 UWE Bristol is committed to embedding Social Value from the outset into all relevant procurement activity, fulfilling both its statutory duties (Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012) and broader ethical and sustainable responsibilities as a modern civic university. Through our role as a major public institution, we aim to maximise the positive impact of our procurement spend—supporting inclusive economic growth, enhancing community wellbeing, and protecting the environment.
- 2.2 Social Value, as defined by the Sustainable Procurement Task Force, is *"a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis, in terms of generating benefits to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment."* At UWE Bristol, we adopt this definition as the foundation for our approach.
- 2.3 As a significant purchaser of goods and services, UWE Bristol recognises the role it plays in driving positive change. Beyond compliance, we are committed to embedding economic, social and environmental value consistently across the institution. Social Value considerations are integrated at every stage of the

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procurement lifecycle—from project inception and specification development to tender evaluation and contract management.

- 2.4 Aligned with the National Procurement Policy Statement, we use our procurement activities as a tool to promote positive outcomes for the environment, economy and society—locally, regionally, and globally. In doing so, we also seek to deliver meaningful benefits for our students and graduates, including opportunities for employment, skills development and community engagement.

3. Strategic Themes for Social Value

- 3.1 UWE Bristol aligns with the **National Social Value Measurement Framework (TOMs)**, which identifies five core themes that guide how social value is defined, created, and measured. These themes shape our broader approach and help inform both internal planning and supplier engagement:
- **Promoting Skills and Employment:** Creating opportunities for individuals to access training, upskill, and gain meaningful employment—contributing to inclusive local growth.
 - **Supporting the Growth of Responsible Local Businesses:** Enabling SMEs, social enterprises, and local suppliers to build capacity, access supply chains, and play a greater role in delivering public value.
 - **Creating Healthier, Safer, and More Resilient Communities:** Strengthening ties with voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sectors while empowering local citizens and promoting equity.
 - **Protecting and Improving Our Environment:** Promoting sustainable practices that reduce environmental harm, support carbon reduction, and foster long-term environmental stewardship.
 - **Promoting Social Innovation:** Encouraging new ideas, partnerships, and ways of working that tackle complex social, economic, and environmental challenges.
- 3.2 During the procurement process, suppliers may be asked to demonstrate how their operations and proposals align with these themes—potentially using the **Higher Education TOMs (HE TOMs)**—to evidence their social value contributions.

4. Delivering Social Value Through Procurement

Embedding Social Value within procurement enables suppliers to deliver wider benefits to our communities and students alongside the core objectives of their contracts. Far from being complex, integrating Social Value into procurement is a practical, impactful approach that amplifies the value of every pound spent.

The adoption of this policy brings a range of tangible benefits, including:

- **Promoting Supplier Diversity:** Encouraging a broad and inclusive supply base, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), third sector organisations, and local suppliers.

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- **Fair Employment Practices:** Supporting workforce equality and diversity across supply chains by promoting inclusive recruitment, fair pay, and safe working conditions.
- **Targeted Recruitment, Skills, and Training:** Creating opportunities for employment, apprenticeships, and skills development, particularly for underrepresented groups and local communities.
- **Ethical Sourcing Standards:** Ensuring supply chain compliance with UK, EU, and international standards, including commitments to fair trade, anti-corruption, animal welfare, and the elimination of child labour.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Minimising waste and pollution, supporting carbon reduction and energy efficiency, and contributing to broader sustainability goals through responsible sourcing and circular economy principles.
- **Modern Slavery Compliance:** Requiring all suppliers to comply with the [Modern Slavery Act](#), including completion of the MSA toolkit. Larger suppliers are expected to publish a Modern Slavery Statement outlining actions taken to address forced labour and exploitation within their supply chains.
- **Embedding Social Value in the Procurement Lifecycle:** Considering Social Value from project inception through to contract management—including specification development, tender evaluation, and ongoing supplier engagement.
- **Local Economic Impact:** Strengthening the regional economy by working with local businesses and organisations to create jobs, retain value within the community, and enhance local supply chains.
- **Community Wellbeing:** Supporting initiatives that promote health, inclusion, and social cohesion, helping to build stronger, more resilient communities.
- **Innovation and Continuous Improvement:** Encouraging suppliers to develop innovative approaches to social, economic, and environmental challenges—driving continuous improvement and long-term value.

How We Will Achieve This

- All tenders will include a minimum of 10% of the evaluation criteria dedicated to Social Value and Sustainability.
- Where appropriate, the TOMs (Themes, Outcomes, Measures) model will be embedded in tender documentation and used to inform ongoing contract management.
- Through our procurement activity, we aim to direct approximately £40 million in spend to SMEs within a 50-mile radius of the University—representing at least 40% of our total supply base.
- By working collaboratively with key stakeholders across the University we will ensure that Social Value commitments made by suppliers are meaningful, measurable, and aligned with the priorities of both UWE Bristol and the wider community.
- By recognising and leveraging the interconnection between Social Value, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), Modern Slavery, and Sustainability we aim to maximise positive impact across all areas of responsible procurement.
- Social Value delivery will be tailored to reflect the specific needs and priorities of each procurement, with a focus on the most relevant social, economic, and environmental outcomes. This ensures alignment with local and regional priorities—such as improving

health, enhancing wellbeing, and reducing inequality—while maintaining full compliance with procurement legislation and national guidance.

- When bidding for tenders we will look to tailor our response to both align with the Buyers Social Value objectives and those of the University.

5. Governance

The implementation and monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the **University Sustainability Executive Committee (USEC)**, which reports directly to the **Vice-Chancellor's Executive**. The policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with both institutional priorities and current legislative requirements.

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