

# ROCK

Cultural Heritage  
leading urban futures



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FACTSHEET N°3

**GREEN OFFICE GUIDANCE**

# PROCUREMENT

## WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF GREEN PROCUREMENT?

- Thoughtful and efficient purchasing can save you and your organisation/business money.
- Choosing local suppliers supports the local economy and creates new jobs.
- Purchasing green products and services reduces your environmental impacts and helps create wider demand for them.
- By using your purchasing power to choose goods and services with reduced environmental impact, you are making an important and positive contribution to wider society and the environment.

Everything you buy costs money and has an environmental impact. Buying green products and services can increase your organisation's efficiency, enhance its public image, and is an excellent way to reduce your organisation's impact on the environment.

Disclaimer: The sole responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the ROCK project and in no way reflects the views of the European Union.

## Introduction to ROCK

ROCK aims to support the transformation of historic city centres afflicted by physical decay, social conflicts and poor life quality into Creative and Sustainable Districts through shared generation of new sustainable environmental, social, economic processes. ROCK develops and apply an innovative circular systemic approach to connect different actors, places of cultural heritage value and systems, at a European level as well as at a local level, facilitating the innovation process and the adoption of environmentally and socially sound solutions to achieve sustainable growth.

## Cultural heritage at risk

In 2014, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's IUCN World Heritage Outlook declared climate change to be the most serious potential threat to natural World Heritage sites worldwide. The effects of climate change – from sea-level rise and higher temperatures to increasingly frequent extreme weather events such as floods and droughts – all threaten to rapidly degrade the natural and cultural heritage of humankind.

There is an urgent need for environmental support and resources to encourage cultural heritage leaders and practitioners to take action on climate change and the environment in order to safeguard cultural heritage and protect wider society from the effects of environmental breakdown. The safe-guarding of cultural heritage not only aims to protect heritage (including crucial habitats and biodiversity) – but also heritage as a driver for new and greener products, services, skills, and finance that can enhance the economic, social and cultural value which cultural heritage brings.

## Introduction to the ROCK 'Green Office' series

These guides will equip cultural heritage professionals to start their journey in taking environmental action – they are focused on developing good practice and include key steps for both organisational governance and operations.

The 'ROCK Green Office' series covers the following topics:

1. Environmental governance
2. Environmental policy
3. Green procurement
4. Waste Management

## Who should read this guide?

This guide is for directors, managers and practitioners of cultural heritage organisations who are looking to integrate environmental governance and practice within their buildings and sites.

## STARTING POINTS

Make a list of the things you buy, your suppliers and your annual spend. This will enable you to establish:

- Where you spend the most money
- What you buy the most of
- What you throw away most often
- Where changing your provider and/or product(s) could have the most impact
- Where you already know alternatives exist

Then ask yourself the following questions:

- In what way does or could your ordering system consider environmental sustainability?
- Is there an opportunity for staff to suggest more environmentally sustainable alternatives?
- Who decides how much and of what is purchased?
- Are you frequently making last-minute buying decisions?

From here you can set yourself a realistic plan and prioritise which areas have the highest environmental impact, the areas of biggest spend and the product/purchasing changes that are easiest for you to make.

## DOCUMENTING YOUR APPROACH

It is always useful to write out the decision making process you follow when purchasing things - it helps confirm the correct process for new and existing staff when/if they make purchases.

Keep the format of the document clear, simple and straight to the point, this will make it more likely that staff will adopt and use it, helping it to become a living document/process in your organisation that reduces your purchasing costs and environmental impact.

Further information about developing your procurement process is available free from Julie's Bicycle: <https://www.juliesbicycle.com/resource-procurement-guide-2015>

## CHOOSING GREENER SUPPLIERS

Every product and service has two parts to its environmental impact:

1. The service or product itself
2. The operational impact of the supplier

However, buying greener doesn't always mean you have to switch suppliers, so talk to your existing suppliers about what alternatives they can offer and always ask to see their environmental policy.

Sometimes suppliers make unsubstantiated claims about their environmental credentials, so look out for signs of 'greenwash' - for example, anything mentioning 'certified' should have evidence of independent certification; and "green" or "eco-friendly" claims should be clearly explained

## TOP PRINCIPLES FOR GREEN PROCUREMENT

Choose:

- Choose products that contain reused or recycled content and materials with a low environmental impact – if in doubt, ask the supplier
- Choose products that are sourced from ethical/Fairtrade producers with certified health and safety and/or environmental management systems
- Choose products that are long lasting and that can be reused and recycled
- Choose products with minimal packaging and packaging that is recyclable
- Choose products made locally where possible; this will reduce transport miles
- Choose only 100% recycled paper for printing paper and promotional materials, or fibre sourced from sustainably managed forests (look for the "FSC" or "PEFC" logo)
- Choose office equipment like printers or photocopiers that is energy efficient, multi-functional and repairable
- Choose appliances (fridges, ovens, washing machines etc.) that have an A++

or A+++ energy efficiency rating – they will save you money because they use less energy

- Rechargeable batteries rather than single-use batteries, and recycle used batteries
- Choose washable/reusable cutlery, crockery, napkins, storage containers etc.

### Consider:

- Do you really need it? Can you do without something, or upcycle existing resources?
- Buy only as much as you need to: over-ordering wastes money
- Consider hiring, borrowing or sharing resources before you buy something new
- If you do need to buy a vehicle, consider investing in a hybrid, or choose a fuel-efficient model
- Switching all lights to LEDs or low-energy bulbs (they cost less to run)
- Switching to a 100% renewable energy provider for your electricity supply.

### Avoid:

- Avoid glossy and laminated materials because they are difficult to recycle
- Avoid PVC materials for advertising banners
- Avoid polystyrene packaging
- Avoid single-serve sachets of pepper, salt, sugar, condiments, milk etc.
- Avoid plastic straws
- Avoid buying or selling bottled water by offering free tap water (and reusable cups/glasses)
- Avoid travel where possible by making use of video/conference calls and meetings and wherever possible, avoid air-freighted produce, products and delivery.

### Read more:

- How to buy Sustainably Sourced Power

<https://juliesbicycle.com/how-to-buy-sustainably-sourced-power/>

- Biofuels Guidance 2018

<https://juliesbicycle.com/biofuels-guidance-2018/>

- Merchandise Factsheet

<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource-merch-factsheet-2012/>

- Procurement Guide

<https://www.juliesbicycle.com/resource-procurement-guide-2015>