

Procurement Policy

Effective procurement of goods and services is crucial to achieving value for money and essential to providing a high-quality service to our supporters and beneficiaries. This Policy outlines our procurement process including strategy, rules for tendering and ordering items and services for employees.

This policy applies to:

All staff, including permanent and temporary colleagues, volunteers, trustees as well as colleagues on fixed term contracts.

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1.Introduction

This policy covers all aspects of the procurement process, and the rules relating to tendering, purchasing/ordering of goods and services for employees of Stroke Association.

2.Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to:

All staff, including permanent and temporary colleagues, volunteers, trustees as well as colleagues on fixed term contracts. This Policy is intended for:

- **Executive Directors, Senior Leaders** - To lead, challenge and monitor the way ethical and sustainable procurement is implemented.
- **Managers and Budget Holders** - To manage their department or team's adherence to the principles and rules that must be followed when carrying out procurement activities.
- **Procurement Team and Staff** - To support Stroke Association's aims and values by conducting or helping others to conduct their procurement projects in the right way.
- **Staff and Volunteers** – To understand the ethos behind Stroke Association's decisions to procure goods, services and works to show value for money is being obtained in line with our values.
- **Current and Potential Partners and Supporters** - To understand Stroke Association's procurement policies which underpin our ethical and efficient use of funds.

3. Purpose

As set out in our Corporate Strategy, we want to be the trusted voice of stroke survivors and their families. We want to drive better outcomes in stroke prevention, treatment, and lifelong support for everyone affected by stroke.

That commitment is supported by our Procurement Policy, this responsible policy supplements that by setting out in more detail how we intend to contribute to a future world which is the best for our stroke survivors. Our procurement decisions also provide us the opportunity to secure benefits which will help us to achieve our corporate strategy outcomes.

4. Principles

Every purchase placed with a supplier or contractor will have an official purchase order accompanied by [Terms and Conditions](#) relating to the Supply of Goods or Services. Invoices received will only be paid against valid purchase orders.

- All purchases of goods and services that are in common use will have a framework/contract in place. The end user will pull off their requirement from this existing framework/contract. Where a supplier is obtained under a third-party framework the provisions of the framework including the Terms and Conditions of Contract take precedent over the requirements of this Policy and Procedures document since they will have formed part of the tender evaluation carried out by the Procurement Team or framework owner.
- If no framework/contract exists, end user is to always use the Preferred Suppliers list, which will be published on the intranet.
- If neither of the above exists, end users are to purchase locally, ensuring that best value for money is always obtained and the expenditure thresholds are adhered to as per paragraph 17.
- Ensure that in the purchasing of equipment, goods or services, Health and Safety obligations are incorporated and fully detailed in the Specification of Requirements. **(Applies to all contracts excluding commissioned contracts).**
- Incorporate sustainability, equality and diversity, quality, and safety as important criteria in the provision of all services procured. **(Applies to all contracts excluding commissioned contracts).**
- Expect that all purchases take full account of ethical considerations and embrace equality and fairness requirements appropriate for a diverse workforce and community.
- Where appropriate consult with its staff in accordance with its established methods and ensure that the views of staff are considered when making procurement decisions that affect them.

- Each supplier contract/agreement will be uploaded onto a supplier & contract management platform. Training and guidance will be provided, once this system and platform has been agreed.

5. Process Management

In managing the procurement process it is required that:

- Records and procedures are properly maintained, decisions are recorded, and clear audit trails exist to ensure openness, compliance, and probity.
- Resources relating to procurement will be kept under review as part of the Best Value cycle. The use of electronic and other means to reduce acquisition and transaction costs will be encouraged.
- The Procurement Team must retain all quotations or tenders for 6 years.
- Procurement Waiver Certificates are valid and retained for 3 years.

6. Procurement Procedures

Each contract/purchase order will be authorised in accordance with the Stroke Association's delegated authority limits and shall comply with requirements of this Policy and Procedures document. [Delegation of Authority](#)

A purchase order will be raised through the finance system - please see finance process for further details. [Finance Guidance](#)

Before placing an order with a contractor for the execution of works or the supply of goods and services, the Procurement Team or authorised employee shall obtain an estimate of the probable cost of executing the work in a suitable manner and of any probable associated annual cost.

No exception from any of the requirements of this Policy and Procedures document shall be allowed unless exceptional circumstances prevail, or a [Procurement Waiver Certificate](#) is granted.

7. Tendering and Framework Agreements

Where a framework agreement (**Applies to Procurement**) or preferred supplier does not exist the following expenditure thresholds and subsequent actions apply to aggregated expenditure. Where there is an on-going requirement for goods or services aggregate expenditure should be calculated over the life of the contract or four years whichever is the shortest.

8. Expenditure Thresholds

- 8.1 £0 up to £10,000 – local purchasing delegated to the end user (**the principles of Best Value apply**). In addition, you must seek the best deal for the Stroke Association and obtain a minimum of two competitive quotations and follow Procurement guidance on [Procurement Guidance Page](#)
- 8.2 £10,001 to £50,000 – Please follow the Procurement guidance on the [Procurement Guidance Page](#). End user will obtain a minimum of three written quotations and/or market evidence of best value. A mini competition may be considered. If Procurement support is required, then e-mail procurement@stroke.org.uk
- 8.3 £50,001 to £500,000 – Procurement Team/The end user will conduct a full tender process, following the Procurement guidance on the intranet page. Procurement Team/End User will obtain at least three tender responses, where practicable. [Procurement Guidance Page](#)
- 8.4 Above £500,000 – Pass to Procurement Team, who will conduct a full tender process, working with the end user. Procurement Team will obtain at least five tender responses.
- 8.5 If any of these processes are not followed, then a [Procurement Waiver Certificate](#) must be granted.

9. Key/Preferred Suppliers

9.1 **Key (critical)** Suppliers are suppliers whose performance materially affects the ability of Stroke Association to deliver its Vision, Aims and Objectives and whose failure as an organisation could prevent the delivery of important services to Stroke Survivors. Our supplier/contract management system will identify key/preferred suppliers.

9.2 Preferred suppliers are suppliers who have previously delivered goods/services to our organisation to an acceptable standard. We have also carried out due diligence on this supplier, by obtaining compliant documents such as insurance/employment/modern slavery policies and statements. We will also run financial health check if spend is above £5k, by using a credit reference agency. These suppliers' terms and conditions have been accepted by us, or they will accept ours.

10. Supplier/Contract Management

10.1 Procurement Team/Contract Owner is responsible for:

- Obtaining a Business Continuity Plan (**BCP**) for each key supplier identifying what actions would be taken to ensure service continuity in the event of the failure of that supplier.
- When a supplier qualifies for a risk listed in our Business Continuity principles, we are to obtain a copy of the key supplier's Business Continuity Plan and up-load onto our Supplier & Contract Risk Management System. (**Training and guidance will be provided to support this**).
- If a supplier fails to provide a copy of their BCP, we will either disengage with this supplier, seek to find an alternative supplier, failing this, we will enter onto Supplier/Contract Risk Register (**to mitigate risks**).
- Holding an annual review meeting (**or more frequently if appropriate**) to review contractual performance (**including Service Level Agreements**), the market position of the supplier, future developments of both parties etc.
- At the end of each contract term, a review is carried out, with the intention of revisiting marketplace, extending the contract or re-tendering. (**Training and guidance will be provided to support this**).

11. Invitation to Tender (ITT)

All bidding suppliers must provide company registrations details, to allow Procurement to run a full credit check. Poor financial credit checks could result in bidding suppliers being withdrawn from the process.

12. Tender Process and Thresholds

12.1 Instructions for the receipt of quotations and tenders shall be contained in the invitation documents.

12.2 Electronic copies of **Procurement led** tender responses are requested to be sent to Acquisition@stroke.org.uk by the response deadline date with the subject title "tender name response, bidders name". Upon receipt of a submission the bidder is sent an acknowledgement email to confirm receipt. The electronic ITT response is then saved to the relevant MS Teams folder for the evaluating team to review by the deadline advertised within the ITT.

Acquisition@stroke.org.uk email account is managed by the Procurement Team. Only the Procurement Officers have access to this account and all correspondence mailed from the account is also copied to the account to provide a full audit trail of communications.

We no longer request tenders to be submitted in hardcopy.

It is suggested that where SME's (**Subject Matter Experts**) are running their own tender process, the above process is replicated within the SME's team, using a generic email account that all relevant staff have access to, to prevent delays in the process.

12.3 Please see thresholds below relating to who opens tenders:

- £50,000 to £500,000 – Procurement Team and/or Contract Manager/Team/Expert
- £500,001 and above - Procurement Team, and/or Contract Manager/Team/Expert, Director/Corporate Governance or Trustee
- High impact on organisation – Procurement Team, Corporate Governance, EDT and/or Trustee

13.Contracts Requiring Stage Payments

Where stage payments (**a payment schedule where funds are released in instalments based on specific milestones or project progress**), required the tender specification, contract and purchase order should explicitly state the timing of each stage payment and the deliverables related to each payment.

14.Contract Renewal or Extension

Where a contract is renewed or extended, over the contract life the contract management team/owner should ask Procurement to run a credit check to validate the contract continuing. This applies to awards under frameworks. Contract renewals are to only take place once without going through competitive process and will only be for a period of 12 months, unless advised by Procurement Team. For advice on contracts follow checklist for contracts [Contract Guidance Checklist](#)

15. Rules and Best Practice

In respect of the rules and best practice, the following apply:

15.1 Stroke Association has set and published standards for the conduct of employees and will always require adherence to these. In all dealings, those concerned with suppliers will ensure the highest standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and objectivity. Refer to Bribery and Corruption Act 2010. Any person who does not comply may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees are encouraged to complete Bribery Act module on Learn.

15.2 In dealing with suppliers and providers Stroke Association will ensure that there is an equal opportunity, for all who meet the stated criteria, to participate in the bidding for requirements. Whenever requested unsuccessful applicants will be provided with the reasons why, and unsuccessful bidders will be given feedback.

15.3 In appointing contractors, Stroke Association will appraise offers received, based on whole life costing and will seek an appropriate balance between value, cost and quality in the evaluation see [Procurement Guidance Page](#)

16. Prevention of Bribery and Corruption

16.1 Stroke Association complies with all aspects of the Bribery and Corruption Act 2010. Any person who does not comply will be subject to disciplinary action. Employees are mandated to complete Bribery Act module on LEARN.

17. Purchasing Card

17.2 The use of the Purchasing Card will be governed by the Purchasing Card Policy [Purchasing Card Guidance](#)

17.3 Financial Control will review this Policy and Procedures documents at least once every two years to ensure that it remains relevant.