Frameworks for Sustainable procurement – summary

Sustainability is one of the university's strategic priorities. Sustainable and social procurement is an effective tool to contribute to this priority. TU/e wants to be a forerunner in this field, an example for other organizations and play a stimulating role, encouraging and challenging suppliers to sustainable and innovative solutions and sustainable business operations.

Procurement with sustainability impact
Sustainable and social purchasing is the new normal and must be addressed in every procurement process. This means, among other things, more often:

- tendering based on ambitions;
- use market exploration and dialogue with the market to be able to use the latest insights;
- where possible, invite suppliers with good sustainability performance for tenders;
- consider the life cycle costs of a product or service instead of just the purchase price;
- opt for a functional description or description of the purpose rather than a detailed technical description of the product or service, in order to use the knowledge of the supplier;
- describe sustainability performance as concretely as possible and have the supplier report on this.

Wherever possible (‘comply or explain’), Sustainability Impact is included as an award criterion, besides Price and Quality. So Sustainability is a separate, third award criterion, to which a significant value is assigned. This will vary from tender to tender, but where opportunities lie, at least 20-30% is envisaged.

Opportunities
Given the diversity in procurement categories within TU/e, there is no generic approach. Focus is on the categories with the greatest opportunities:

- ICT-hardware (laptops, i-phones, AV equipment, servers, etc.)
- Housing (new and renovation, maintenance, campus grounds)
- Facilities (everything related to facility services)

In addition, opportunities that arise in other categories are always taken into account and there is general attention for transport movements and packaging materials.

Themes
Following themes are formulated:

- **Climate**: Preventing or minimizing emissions of CO2 and other greenhouse gases. Saving energy and contributing to the transition to sustainable energy resources.
- **Circularity**: Stimulating a circular economy. This means minimal application of new materials and fossil raw materials, both in the production process and during the use of products and services and maximum commitment to a long service life and then high-quality reuse of the product or materials used. Value destruction and waste flows must be prevented.
- **Environment**: Protecting biodiversity and the living environment by, among other things, combating environmental pollution, air pollution and the use of harmful substances and pesticides. This theme also includes avoiding food waste and reducing water use.
- **Chain responsibility**: Encouraging chain responsibility of companies. This means preventing or tackling abuses in the field of working conditions, human rights and the environment (international social conditions).
- **Innovative strength**: Stimulating the development and application of innovations necessary for solving societal challenges.
- **Social sustainability**: Stimulating a diverse and inclusive society and stimulating labour participation of people with a distance to the labour market (social return).
Ambitieweb
The ambition web is used throughout the (procurement) process. The themes are the starting point, for each project they can be adjusted, refined and explained in more detail. A random example:

Concrete per project/tender
• Preliminary phase: During visioning and planning, sustainable possibilities are a point of attention. Sometimes the university has to make choices and set policy. Other sustainable ambitions can be included as part of the procurement process.
• Procurement strategy: this strategy elaborates on the goals to be achieved and the way in which the tender takes shape. Sustainability impact is always addressed and the completed ambition web is included.
• Demand specification: the minimum requirements in terms of sustainability must be included and/or there must be room for the tenderer to offer sustainable solutions. It must be determined what should be included as a requirement and what can better be part of the award criteria.
• Award criteria: The award criteria always look at:
  - What does the provider do to shape its own business operations sustainably and what is the effect of this on the services provided to TU/e.
  - What does the provider do when delivering or providing services to TU/e in this field.
• Award advice: the sustainability results are included using an ambition web.
• Contract management: the agreements are actively monitored. Often a growth plan is agreed upon and this requires that the contract manager and buyer actively enter into a dialogue with the supplier about the sustainable measures. In longer-term relationships, ambitions must grow with new possibilities.

Sustainable procurement is a central policy decision, but support from all parties involved and the entire TU/e is needed to really achieve results!