

# Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines

## Objective

To create guidelines for the procurement of products and services that support the university's commitment to sustainability.

## Applicability

All university agency orgs and all contracted and sub-contracted services shall adhere to these guidelines. The requirements herein shall be written into all Requests for Proposals, contracts, sponsorship agreements, and strategic alliance agreements that pertain to procurement of products or services. Any variances shall be approved in writing by the Executive Director of Supply Chain or by the Director of University Sustainability Practices.

## Background

Arizona State University is committed to advancing sustainability on campus, in the community, and globally.

The goal of these guidelines is to improve the sustainability impact of our procurement by purchasing goods and services that advance the achievement of ASU's sustainability goals, purchasing from manufacturers and suppliers who share our commitment to sustainability and leveraging the buying power of ASU to incentivize others to work towards our standards. Sustainable purchasing is the method whereby ASU strives to incorporate environmental, social, and economic issues equally and synergistically. Considerations are also given to the entire life-cycle of a good or service.

Sustainable purchasing is sometimes referred to as environmentally preferred purchasing, green procurement, affirmative procurement, eco-procurement, and environmentally responsible purchasing, particularly within United States federal government agencies, although those terms are not as comprehensive as sustainable purchasing.

The aim of this sustainability purchasing strategy is to develop policies consistent with these principles:

1. Eliminate the linear consumption of non-replaceable natural resources by reviewing current and proposed future usage and evaluating the pros and cons of alternatives from a life cycle lens.
2. Seek and support the development of and demand for alternatives to products and processes that are detrimental to the environment and society by using more environmentally friendly and socially friendly products and processes. Socially friendly attributes can include Fair Trade

Certified, Living Wage, employee safety, community embeddedness, and other efforts aimed at improving social justice and equality.

3. Eliminate waste, including: any packaging, waste produced by the product or service in question, and waste generated by the eventual disposal of the product.
4. For materials that cannot be otherwise avoided or eliminated, maximize their re-circulation within ASU and within the broader economy in such a way that maximizes their value through reuse, repair, re-manufacturing, recycling and composting.
5. Support a just and equitable society through living wages for the university, its suppliers and service providers.

Not following these guidelines may diminish ASU's sustainability performance and standings in international sustainability ratings.

## Guidelines

### Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire

1. All RFP's shall include the most appropriate version of the Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire as a mandatory form.
2. The evaluation scoring criteria for each RFP shall allocate 10 percent of total possible points to the scoring of responses to the Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire.
3. The RFP response evaluation team may:
  - a. Use the appropriate Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire scoring matrix to score supplier responses.
  - b. Request the assistance of USP in scoring supplier responses.
4. Non-RFP purchases involving three quotes or sole source are not required but are encouraged to utilize the Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire in their procurement process. Purchasers are encouraged to consider sustainability attributes when purchasing through SunRise.
5. The Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire pertains to the internal operational practices of the supplier, not to the sustainability attributes of the actual product or service being procured by ASU. The sustainability attributes of the actual product or service being procured through an RFP shall be evaluated and scored as part of the Scope in the evaluation team's proposal scoring matrix. The evaluation team may request that a representative of USP serve as a member of the evaluation team or as a technical advisor to assist in crafting the scope of the RFP and in evaluating and scoring the sustainability attributes of the goods and or services proposed by vendor respondents.

### Energy and Carbon

1. All desktop computers, notebooks, laptops, monitors, displays, slates, tablets, and imaging equipment purchased shall meet all Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool environmental criteria for certification at the gold level, as contained in the IEEE 1680 Standard for the Environmental Assessment of Personal Computer Products. All televisions and phones purchased shall meet the highest EPEAT rating available at the time of purchase. Mobile phones must be ECOLOGO, EPEAT certified.

2. All electrical products purchased shall have [US EPA Energy Star certification](#) if the Energy Star label is available for the product category. When Energy Star labels are not available for the product category, products purchased shall meet or exceed the upper 25% of energy efficiency [for their product category](#), as designated by the Federal Energy Management Program.
3. When acquiring or replacing interior or exterior lighting, the highest most energy efficient equipment available shall be purchased.
4. A [carbon offset shall be purchased](#) through the ASU travel system or another officially designated program by ASU for all ASU sponsored flights.
5. For energy using products and services with a price greater than \$10,000, the decision should consider all the costs associated with the purchase installation, commissioning, operation, replacement, end of life, etc. For products and services with a price greater than \$100,000, a full Life Cost Cycle Analysis should be completed and must include the university's proxy price on carbon for energy use calculations and a discount rate for future costs.

## Water

1. Only the most water efficient appliances available for a given use shall be purchased. This includes, but is not limited to, high performance fixtures like toilets, low flow faucets and aerators, and upgraded irrigation systems.
2. When drinking fountains are replaced, they shall be replaced with drinking fountains that also have bottle refilling capabilities. **Exception:** In the event of multiple water fountains in the same location at least one of them shall have water bottle refilling capabilities.
3. Water using products and services with a price greater than \$10,000, should be evaluated considering all the costs associated with the purchase installation, commissioning, operation, replacement, end of life, etc. For products and services with a price greater than \$100,000 a full Life Cost Cycle Analysis should be completed and must include the university's shadow price on carbon for energy use calculations and a discount rate for future costs.

## Toxins and pollutants

1. Amongst available comparable options, preference shall be given to products that perform best when evaluated against the International Living Future Institute's [Red List](#).
2. Cleaning solvents purchased and or used by ASU personnel and by janitorial contractors shall be biodegradable and phosphate free, unless such requirements will compromise quality of service. Citrus based or electrolyzed water cleaning is preferable versus other chemical cleaners.
3. Industrial and institutional cleaning products purchased and or used by ASU personnel and by janitorial contractors shall meet [Green Seal certification standards](#).
4. All surfactants and detergents purchased and or used by ASU personnel and by janitorial contractors shall be readily biodegradable and shall not contain phosphates.
5. Vacuum cleaners purchased and or used by ASU personnel and janitorial contractors shall meet the requirements of the Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label Testing Program Vacuum Cleaner Criteria capable of capturing 96 percent of particulates measuring 0.3 microns and operating with a sound level less than 70dBA.
6. Products and equipment purchased shall not contain lead or mercury unless there is no available alternative. For products that contain lead or mercury, preference shall be given to

those products with lower concentrations of these metals and to suppliers with established lead and mercury recovery programs.

7. Pest control shall be managed through prevention, physical and mechanical, and through the purchase of environmentally friendly products. As a last resort, use of the least toxic pest control substance is required.
8. Cleaning and janitorial paper products purchased by ASU personnel and janitorial contractors shall meet one or more of the following criteria:
  - a. [Forest Stewardship Council certified](#)
  - b. [Green Seal certified](#)
  - c. [UL ECOLOGO certified](#)
  - d. [U.S. EPA Safer Choice labeled](#)

Cleaning products include general purpose bathroom, glass and carpet cleaners; degreasing agents; biologically active cleaning products enzymatic and microbial products; floor-care products e.g. floor finish and floor finish strippers; hand soaps and hand sanitizers, disinfectants, and metal polish and other specialty cleaning products. Janitorial paper products include toilet tissue, tissue paper, paper towels, hand towels, and napkins.

9. Total expenditures on cleaning and janitorial paper products and expenditures on certified green cleaning and janitorial paper products for the fiscal year must be reported annually to USP.

## Bio-based products and renewable fuels

1. Whenever available, renewable fuels such as used vegetable oils, biodiesel, biogas, or renewably produced synthetic fuel shall be purchased for vehicles that can operate using such alternative fuels without voiding applicable warranties or creating detrimental maintenance issues.
2. Amongst available comparable options, preference shall be given to bio-based paints, stains, adhesives, sealants, strippers and cleaning products.

## Forest conservation

1. All wood and wood contained within the products that ASU purchases except paper shall be, in order of preference:
  - a. Reclaimed or salvaged.
  - b. Recycled content with the highest percentage recycled content available.
  - c. Certified as sustainably harvested by a comprehensive, performance based certification system. The certification system shall include independent third-party audits with standards equivalent to, or stricter than, those of the FSC certification.
2. All wood and wood containing products shall also not contain any added urea formaldehyde or the least amount available for that product category.
3. Standard 8.5" x 11" copy paper shall be purchased through ASU Materials Management. Refer to [FMS Work Instruction – Requisition Event Search Catalog](#) for instructions on ordering supplies from Materials Management that are available. Other paper needs may be purchased through SunRise. Furthermore, unless unavailable, all paper purchases shall be:

- a. Paper that contains 90 to 100 percent post-consumer content and/or agricultural residue, OR
- b. “FSC Recycled” certified.  
*When neither 90 to 100 percent post-consumer content nor “FSC Recycled” paper is viable, a paper purchase shall be “FSC Mixed” certified or have the highest recycled content possible. Any paper that is purchased that does not meet these requirements will diminish ASU’s sustainability performance and standings in international sustainability rankings.*
4. Preference shall be given to uncoated and non-laminated paper products whenever possible.

## Zero Waste and circular resources

Departments shall source products responsibly and ensure that products meet the below requirements. Products that do not meet the requirements below ultimately cost ASU additional resources for waste management, costs which may be passed onto the department or supplier that is not in compliance:

1. Preference shall be given to:
  - a. Products that are durable, long lasting, reusable, or refillable.
  - b. Products containing high post-consumer recycled content.
  - c. Products that are easily recycled in ASU diversion programs. Incoming products must be verified as recyclable in ASU programs.
  - d. Packaging that is reusable and or recyclable in ASU diversion programs; eliminating packaging or using the minimum amount necessary while still protecting the product.
2. Suppliers are expected to take back packaging and either reuse or recycle it. At the discretion of ASU Zero Waste Department, suppliers may be asked to track take-back tonnages.
3. Suppliers shall source products containing conflict minerals and other raw materials generated in conflict and high-risk areas only from companies participating in Responsible Minerals Initiative certification.
4. Multifunction devices, copiers and printers shall be purchased through Canon, SunRise, or ASU Surplus.
5. Multifunction devices, copiers and printers shall be compatible with the use of recycled content paper and remanufactured toner cartridges.
6. Desktop printing devices shall only be purchased with written approval from Purchasing. Desktop printing devices represent a serious Information Technology network security threat, have higher life cycle costs, and environmental impacts than centralized multifunction devices in consultation with ASU’s Information Security Office.
7. Shredding services shall be obtained through Materials Management to ensure materials are recycled and tracked.
8. Service ware made from expanded polystyrene, or Styrofoam™, including, but not limited to cups, to go containers, clamshells, and plates, shall not be purchased or used by ASU personnel and or suppliers unless elimination of these materials compromises health and safety or interferes with research functions.
9. Products containing microbeads or other microplastics shall not be purchased or used unless the elimination of these materials compromises health and safety or interferes with research functions.
10. Food service providers and caterers are expected to participate in the following and track where applicable:

- a. Diversion of fats, oils, grease from sewers and landfills
- b. Local food overage donation programs.
- c. Elimination of prepackaged silverware sets, single serve condiments and other pre-packaged single use foods and food packaging.

- d. Use, exclusively, of paper products that are compostable meeting ASTM D6868-03 where relevant, and meet one or more of the following criteria:
    - i. FSC Certified
    - ii. Green Seal certified
    - iii. UL ECOLOGO certified
    - iv. U.S. EPA Safer Choice labeled
  - e. Take back of any materials that are not recyclable in an ASU diversion program.
  - f. Adherence to recyclability and waste reduction guidelines.
11. For electronic equipment, including but not limited to computers, monitors, printers, and copiers, preference shall be given to suppliers who have a take back program for reuse or recycling through an eStewards-certified facility deemed appropriate by ASU Zero Waste department.

## Buildings and landscaping

1. Sustainable purchasing practices shall be integrated into architectural and landscape designs, final construction documents, and the actual construction, maintenance and renovations of all property and facilities owned by or otherwise contracted by or for the university. All buildings, renovations, and facilities maintenance undertaken by the university or otherwise contracted by or for the university shall follow sustainable building practices for design, construction, operations, and maintenance, as described in the [Facilities Development and Management Project Guidelines](#).
2. Furnishings, building fixtures, building finishes and construction products purchased by ASU personnel must be authorized by FDM and purchased through an ASU-contracted provider. Products must be made of the highest possible post-consumer recycled content and meet all other sustainability purchasing guidelines.

## Transportation

1. Departments and other units seeking to acquire a vehicle shall consider ASU's contracted car-sharing company first. When purchasing a vehicle, [PUR 211](#) shall be followed.

## Food

1. Preference shall be given to food and food service suppliers that provide local and or community-based products and healthy and nutritional foods.
2. Preference shall be given to products that are sustainably and or ethically produced as determined by one or more recognized food and beverage [sustainability standards](#).
3. Food waste contractors and food service suppliers shall participate in a robust program to minimize food waste and maximize the recovery of remaining food waste.
4. When purchasing food for an event or other activities, purchasers shall follow recommendations outlined in [ASU's Sustainability Certification for Events](#) and review Sun Devil Dining's Decidedly Green Catering Menu.

## Garments and linens

1. Preference shall be given to suppliers and their business partners who respect fundamental individual and employee rights and are committed to adopting responsible practices
2. Providers and servicers of garments and linens shall provide detailed information on chemicals used in the cleaning process and identify any alternative products that could be used to reduce the negative impacts on the environment.
3. Providers shall source textiles, clothing and other goods from manufacturers participating in Fair Labor Association supply chain initiatives, Fair Trade Certification or another third-party anti-sweatshop monitoring.