

Sustainability 2020 Committee Project Proposal Abstract

Fixed-Term Labor for USC Purchasing Baseline Performance Research, April 2017

Project Description – Purchasing decisions have major socio-economic and environmental implications, both locally and globally. To minimize the impact and ensure a long-term approach is applied to all purchasing decisions, sustainability needs to be integrated into the procurement process. USC Business Services needs to engage a fixed-term Senior Procurement Specialist to assist with an approach to procurement sustainability policy, integration strategy, and benchmark sustainable surplus sales programs.

Objectives – The proposed expenditure for specialized labor (one senior procurement specialist with background in sustainability) will allow us to:

- Adopt a holistic approach to sustainability
- Engage and influence 75% of USC departments and offices in responsible purchasing practices by 2020.
- Increase awareness of current sustainable purchasing practices.
- Implement audience-appropriate educational campaigns designed to modify behavior and increase campus school/department participation.

Benchmarks

- Harvard – has adopted [guidelines](#) aimed at reducing the environmental impact of purchasing decisions and ensuring that they are aligned with university-wide sustainability goals.
- Duke has adopted environmentally [preferable purchasing guidelines](#) to reduce their environmental impact in six strategic areas: source reduction, forest conservation, recycled content, landscaping, energy and water, and toxics and pollution.
- University of California – The UC system centralizes its purchasing power and mandates certain purchases be made in an [environmentally and socially responsible manner](#). This leverages their purchasing power state-wide and guarantees responsible purchasing outcomes.

Risks

- Schools and departments are not required by policy to use preferred suppliers.
- The primary risk we take if we do not enable this approach is that USC may not attain the 75% departmental engagement required by the 2020 Sustainability Plan.