

## An Introduction to the Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool

### What is the NETpositive Supplier Engagement Tool?

The NETpositive Supplier Engagement Tool enables all of your suppliers to develop a NETpositive Sustainability action plan in line with your environmental, sustainability and institutional objectives.

### What does it do?

The Tool allows you to support all of your suppliers to go beyond a commitment to sustainability and provides them with a customised action plan, which can be monitored and measured. As the main client you are then able to interrogate the data this process generates to help plan your supplier engagement activities on sustainability, gather evidence of good practice and use the action plan developed to provide a clear and measurable focus for contract management discussions.

### How does it work?

Step 1 – the supplier receives an email link enabling them to register to use the Tool (this is free). We ask them to register to ensure that their data is safe and can be analysed as part of the reporting process. The supplier then enters some simple information about their company, where they are based and the type of goods or services they provide. We have utilised the Proc HE commodity codes for this purpose.

Step 2 – The system generates a simple NETpositive analysis, which identifies the positive and negative environmental, social and economic impacts of their company. This has been customised to be influenced by the size and core business activity. Once presented with their analysis the company can do three things; prioritise the impacts, add new impacts or delete impacts. The interface is simple and easy to use. Once this step is complete, and the company is satisfied with the priorities and the impacts, it generates an action plan by simply pressing the 'generate action plan' button.

Step 3 – The action plan generated reflects the impacts the company has identified in the priority order it has chosen. With each impact; positive and negative, there are a number of actions to keep, delete or add to in order to address the identified impact. They can share their action plan and it is automatically saved.

### Now for the clever bit!

1. The whole interface is bespoke to include your institution/company logo style and feel.
2. It only takes about 20-25 minutes to do the analysis.

3. We collect data at every stage of the process so we can interrogate what companies deleted, added, re-prioritised and have committed to (you get this data) – **evidence based supplier engagement**.
4. All the actions are tagged, to be basic, intermediate or have a transformational intent – and the data allows us to interrogate this and if required rank the level of commitment of the companies using the Tool.
5. At an action level the company is signposted via links back to your institutional activity and to any relevant publically available support.

The Tool also communicates to the suppliers that sustainability is not just about reducing energy or recycling but also about how sustainability relates to their core business practice and importantly how to maximise their social and economic impact through the choices they make and the things they do. This is implicit in our NETpositive approach.

### Benefits – Organisation

Institutions/Companies using the Tool will be able to:

- Provide a portal for *all suppliers* to consider their sustainability impacts
- Capture data relating to the sustainability impacts, decisions and commitments of their suppliers – allowing evidence-based supplier engagement.
- Achieve Level 4 of the Flexible Framework
- Demonstrate to internal customers and stakeholders how the environmental, social and economic priorities of the institution are being communicated through the value chain in a way that stimulates action.
- Gather evidence stories for communicating the positive impact of procurement and the supply chain whilst demonstrating clear leadership on sustainability

### Benefits – User

Suppliers using the tool will be able to:

- Undertake a simple sustainability analysis of their company impacts
- Create a bespoke action plan to help them become a sustainable supplier in line with your environmental, sustainability and corporate commitments
- Be signposted to business -relevant information, events and activities that will support their sustainability journey
- Demonstrate progress against their individual action plans
- Utilise the action plan to communicate what they are actually doing rather than what they are committed to at a policy level.
- Prepare for contract management discussions on sustainability.