

The NETpositive Supplier Engagement Tool (HE) and the Flexible Framework

How using the tool helps you demonstrate progress

Using the NETpositive Supplier Engagement Tool (HE) brings many benefits. Embedding the tool as part of your procurement process and practice will ensure you get the best possible value.

We have created a series of practical guides to make this as easy as possible.

This document *outlines practical ways the tool demonstrates progress against the Flexible Framework.*

What are the challenges of supplier engagement?

- Unsure which suppliers to target
- Limited time and team capacity
- Unclear about topics to engage them with!

Most of the procurement professionals we work with will admit that their supplier engagement around sustainability is patchy at best and that is where it is happening at all!

We usually hear about ‘meet-the-supplier’ events when we ask procurement teams about their supplier engagement activities and although these may be very well attended this is often the only measure of success.

How using the tool helps

The NETpositive Supplier Engagement Tool (HE) provides a vehicle to engage and support ***all of your suppliers online***, which is both efficient and effective.

You are providing them with an opportunity to create a customised action plan, relevant to their business context at a time that is convenient to them. This flexibility is especially valuable to smaller suppliers who may struggle to find the time or capacity to attend events.

The tool offers a two-way mechanism for engagement that you can link directly into your procurement process; from discussing the plans as part of contract management meetings to using the data from the tool to identify supplier best practice. No longer a one-off event or ‘add-on’ activity this integration provides a rich data set to help you offer more targeted support.

In addition to helping to reduce supply chain risks this evidence-based engagement enables a more focused and efficient relationship to develop; ***a move towards supplier development.***

The Flexible Framework includes a section relating to Engaging with Suppliers. Here we outline the elements and how the tool delivers what is demanded in this section.

From the Flexible Framework (Levels 4 and 5)

Key suppliers targeted for intensive development

- The tool can be used with all suppliers so deciding who to target is unnecessary

Sustainability audits and supply chain improvement programs in place

- We do not claim that the tool provides an audit but it does enable suppliers to explore their own impacts and associated supply chains. It also establishes a base line for improvement.

Achievements formally recorded

- The data from the tool goes beyond simply recording achievements, it provides insights that can be used for a range of purposes in support of supplier development and institutional progress in relation to sustainability

CEO involved in supplier engagement programme

- We would encourage users of the tool to update colleagues (including the CEO) about the programme and also the data in reporting progress. Messages from a CEO could form part of the communications to suppliers.

Suppliers recognised as essential to delivery of sustainable procurement

- Supplier conversations at contract management can, in part, be focused on the use of the tool and demonstrating progress is central to this. More detailed guidance on how the tool supports supplier conversations [can be found here](#).

Best practice shared with other organisations

- The data enables you to identify best practice and report on progress easily. We support and encourage users to use this data as part of their reporting processes.

Suppliers must continually improve

- Supporting supplier improvement and progress is at the very heart of the tool

We are confident this will clarify the link between the Supplier Engagement Tool and the Flexible Framework.

If you have any questions or are interested in any support packages please [get in touch](#).