



# Procurement Policy

Approved: Audit Committee, 20 August 2019  
Approved: NIMC Board of Directors, 24 September 2019  
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| <b>Policy Title</b>               | Procurement Policy  |
| <b>Policy Sponsor &amp; Owner</b> | Director  |
| <b>Committee</b>                  | Audit Committee - Board   |
| <b>Date Approved</b>              | Audit Committee – 20 August 2019<br>Board – 24 September 2019   |
| <b>Review date</b>                | March 2021  |
| <b>Related Policies</b>           | Fraud and Bribery Prevention Policy<br>Gifts and Hospitality Policy<br>'Raising Concerns' Policy  |
| <b>Related Procedures</b>         | Procurement Procedures<br>Fraud and Bribery Prevention Response Plan<br>Code of Conduct for Staff<br>Code of Conduct for Board Members  |
| <b>Related Guidance</b>           | Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy<br>Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy Handbook   |
|                                   | Procurement Guidance Notes (PGNs)<br><a href="https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/procurement-guidance-notes-pgns">https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/procurement-guidance-notes-pgns</a>                |
|                                   | Dear Accounting Officer letters (DOAs)<br><a href="https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/dear-accounting-officer-letters-daos">https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/dear-accounting-officer-letters-daos</a> |
|                                   | Finance Director letters (FDs)<br><a href="https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/finance-director-letters-fds">https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/finance-director-letters-fds</a>                         |
|                                   | NIMC Management Statement and Financial Memorandum  |
|                                   | FD (DFP) 07/12 att (revised 16 Oct 2017) – DoF guidance – use of professional services including consultants  |
|                                   | Managing Public Money NI<br><a href="https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/managing-public-money-ni-final-version">https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/managing-public-money-ni-final-version</a>   |

| <b>Revision Control</b> |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Revision date</b>    | <b>Details</b> |
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## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** At its meeting on 16 May 2002, the Northern Ireland Executive agreed to a revised public procurement policy for Northern Ireland (NI) Departments, their Agencies, non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) and Public Corporations.

**1.2** The Northern Ireland Museums Council (NIMC) is listed as one of the public bodies covered by this policy.

**1.3** The Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy (NIPPP) document sets out the public procurement policies adopted by the NI Executive and the organisational structures that have been established to implement them.

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dfp/NI-public-procurement-policy.pdf>

## **2. Purpose**

**2.1** The purpose of this policy is to set out the approach taken by NIMC towards its implementation of the NIPPP.

## **3. What is Procurement?**

**3.1** The NIPPP defines procurement as:  
“the process of the acquisition, usually by means of a contractual arrangement after public competition, of goods, services, works and other supplies by the public service”.

**3.2** The public procurement process spans the whole life cycle from initial conception and definition of the needs of the public service through to the end of the useful life of an asset or the end of a contract.

## **4. What does “Best Value for Money” mean?**

**4.1** The NIPPP defines “Best Value for Money” as:  
“the most advantageous combination of cost, quality and sustainability to meet customer requirements”.

**4.2** In this context, consideration means the whole life cost; quality means meeting a specification fit for purpose and sufficient to meet customer’s requirements; and sustainability means economic, social and environmental benefits, considered in the business case, in support of the Programme for Government.

## **5. Principles of Public Procurement**

**5.1** There are 12 guiding principles to govern the administration of public procurement. The NI Executive believes that these principles reflect the statutory obligations related to equality of opportunity and sustainable development, and link to the Programme for Government.

These 12 principles are:

**Accountability:** Effective mechanisms must be in place in order to enable

Departmental Accounting Officers and their equivalents in other public bodies to discharge their personal responsibility on issues of procurement risk and expenditure.

**Competitive Supply:** Procurement should be carried out by competition unless there are convincing reasons to the contrary.

**Consistency:** Suppliers should, all things being equal, be able to expect the same general procurement policy across the public sector.

**Effectiveness:** Public bodies should meet the commercial, regulatory and socio-economic goals of government in a balanced manner appropriate to the procurement requirement.

**Efficiency:** Procurement processes should be carried out as cost effectively as possible.

**Fair-dealing:** Suppliers should be treated fairly and without unfair discrimination, including protection of commercial confidentiality where required. Public bodies should not impose unnecessary burdens or constraints on suppliers or potential suppliers.

**Integration:** In line with the NI Executive's policy on joined-up government, procurement policy should pay due regard to the Executive's other economic and social policies, rather than cut across them.

**Integrity:** There should be no corruption or collusion with suppliers or others.

**Informed decision-making:** Public bodies need to base decisions on accurate information and to monitor requirements to ensure that they are being met.

**Legality:** Public bodies must conform to European Union and other legal requirements.

**Responsiveness:** Public bodies should endeavour to meet the aspirations, expectations and needs of the community served by the procurement.

**Transparency:** Public bodies should ensure that there is openness and clarity on procurement policy and its delivery.

## **6. NIMC Procurement Activity**

**6.1** All procurement activity in the NIMC will seek to deliver best value for money for the organisation, in a way which is consistent with the NIPPP, any other relevant legislation or directives, Procurement Guidelines issued by the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD), and any guidance issued by the sponsor Department.

**6.2** Procurement undertaken on behalf of NIMC will be done directly, or in conjunction with, the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) or a relevant Centre of Procurement Expertise (COPE).

**6.3** NIMC will use collaborative contracts and existing framework arrangements, where

possible, to deliver efficiencies.

- 6.4** A Direct Award Contract (DAC) involves risk as regards compliance with legislation or in ensuring value for money. NIMC is familiar with *PGN 03/11 (as amended)*, *Direct Award Contract* (August 2016).

Note: Purchases up to £5,000 awarded without competition are not considered to be DACs if they comply with *PGN 04/12, Procurement Control Limits and the Basis of Contract Awards* (February 2019).

- 6.5** Some areas of expenditure are not deemed public procurement or a DAC:

- Subscription to professional bodies;
- Subscriptions to professional journals;
- Attendance at training courses and conferences;
- Payments to Statutory bodies;
- Payments to bodies licensed by Government;
- Charges for connection to electricity, gas and water networks;
- Corporate memberships; and
- Participation in trade events or similar activity.

- 6.6** NIMC needs to engage the services of experts that relate to the museum profession and sector, for example, for its annual training programme. The need for experts will be identified in a business case. In addition, an expert must meet the following criteria:

- Be recognised as highly knowledgeable in their field;
- Be linked to a unique subject/professional area;
- Proven track record of success; and
- Be personally responsible for any tax and insurance liabilities resulting from payment for their services

- 6.7** NIMC will operate within the guidance *PGN 03/11 on Direct Award Contracts*, Section 4, Permissible Transactions which require Accounting Officer Approval.

- 6.8** NIMC is cognisant of the advice and guidance on the direction and policies on public procurement issues by CPD and that contained within *Managing Public Money NI* (Appendix 4.4 Procurement)  
<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dfp/managing-public-money-ni-2012-annexes.pdf>

## **7. Authority**

### **7.1 Policy Sponsor and Owner**

The Director, as Accounting Officer for the NIMC, is responsible for developing policy, the procurement of ICT and related services, and for the procurement of all other goods and services.

### **7.2 Policy Contacts**

The Business Executive Officer as designated Procurement Officer has day to day responsibility for the implementation of the policy in respect of goods and services and for providing advice and support on procurement related issues.