



Aire Rivers Trust Procurement Policy

This Policy and associated documents enable Trustees to discharge their personal responsibility on issues of procurement risk and expenditure and Employees to undertake procurement to a defined and consistent good standard.

Principles

Procurement effectiveness means the quality and value of goods and services delivered and includes, where opportunities are identified, the local economic, social, and environmental benefits accruing from the contract.

Value for money means the most advantageous combination of cost, quality, and sustainability over the life cycle of the project and is defined specifically for each contract.

Procurement is conducted by **competitive process** unless

- it has a whole-life value of less than £500, or
- there is only one supplier in the market who can meet the essential parts of the specification, or
- there is only one supplier with essential historical knowledge or experience with a particular issue or was the original provider, or
- the supplier has the capacity and willingness to respond to an emergency.

Suppliers will be **treated fairly and without unfair discrimination**, including protection of commercial confidentiality where required and without imposing unnecessary burdens or constraints on suppliers or potential suppliers.

There will be **no corruption or collusion** with suppliers or other persons involved in a procurement project.

ART will base its procurement decisions on **accurate information, monitor procedures and standards** to ensure that they are being met and keep records to support openness and clarity in our practices.

This policy and associated procedures and standards will be reviewed and updated to maintain legally compliant, robust, and effective procurement practice.

Procedures

Contract values are calculated as the sum of all lots over the lifetime of the contract.

Value less than £500

Small purchases, typically for less than £100, do not require any saved evidence of alternative costs, but the exhortation to consider value for money and remain within agreed budgets still applies.

Staff members may, at the discretion of the Operations Manager, be provided with access to a company debit or trade account card. This must be used for purchases of less than £500 whenever possible. Similarly, petty cash from the office or van should be used for purchases under £10 where access to a debit card is not possible.

For purchases between £100 and £500, evidence must be gathered and saved showing that at least two alternative sources of supply have been looked at and prices obtained. This might, for example, be copies of internet searches for suppliers of goods or services of similar specifications. Subject to the expenditure being within a pre-agreed budget it must be authorised by the relevant “project manager.” Amendments to project budgets must be authorised by the “project executive” (typically the Operations Manager or a sponsoring Trustee), and the funder (if applicable).

Value over £500 but less than £10,000

All goods, works and services procurement within these values requires a minimum of three written quotations. The expenditure must be within a pre-agreed budget and approval for expenditure must be given in the first instance by the “project executive” overseeing the specific project for which the purchase is being made. A purchase order must be raised for them to demonstrate this approval.

Where possible these items should be paid by invoice.

Where we find we are frequently buying similar goods or services we may set up Framework Agreements to enable us to quickly and easily procure from a pre-selected pool of suppliers who meet our standards and accept our terms and conditions. These can be useful for values below and above the £10,000 threshold.

Value over £10,000

All goods, works and services procurement over £10,000 requires a minimum of three competitive tenders. Contracts will be advertised on the “work for us” page on our ART website.

Tenders should be prepared using the Aire Rivers Trust Standard Tender Document Pack.

Tender documents will need to be approved by the “project executive” overseeing the project and either the Treasurer or Chairperson before being issued.

The completed tender evaluation should be provided to the “project executive” overseeing the project and either the Treasurer or Chairperson and before the contract is awarded.

No contract must be awarded before written approval is given by and all contracts must be signed by the Operations Manager (up to £50,000), Treasurer or Chairperson on behalf of the Trust.

1. Single Source Suppliers

In respect of all items costing more than £500 and **in exceptional circumstances**, which must be approved by the Treasurer plus one other Trustee prior to any contractual commitment, **a Single Source may be approved**. The reasons for this approach must be documented and approved in advance. As part of this process, it must be checked and recorded that ART is not contradicting the requirements of a particular funder by doing so.

Examples of potentially acceptable reasons for single source quotations might be:

Evidence that there is only one supplier in the market who can meet the essential parts of the specification.

Capacity and willingness to respond to an emergency.

Continuing an existing relationship with a strategically important supplier.

Experience with a particular issue and this vendor has the historical knowledge or was the original provider.

Experience with similar projects at other organisations.

Standard documents

Standardisation enables trustees and employees to act with confidence.

Templates exist for tendering minor capital works and evaluating them include templates for:



- Information and Instructions for Tendering (including timetable and evaluation criteria)
- Specification
- Terms and Conditions
- Pricing
- Checklist of documents for tender submission (e.g. environmental/sustainability statement)

Where necessary we will develop similar template documents or frameworks for other services (such as community engagement). We will take care to make this appropriate for our scale of operation and the nature of our supplier market.