Public authorities from across Europe were recognised for exemplary procurements at the 2016 edition of the European Procura+ Awards, which were held in Malmö (Sweden) last month, as part of the Sustainable City Development conference.

The Conference was an international event dedicated to looking for ways in which cities could play their part in the implementation of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 12 asks us to work towards responsible consumption and production: sustainable procurement is one very practical way of doing this, something each of the Procura+ Award winners have demonstrated.

There are three Procura+ Awards in total, recognising outstanding tenders in the categories of Sustainable Procurement of the Year, Innovation Procurement of the Year and Tender Procedure of the Year.

Meet the Winners

- Sustainable Procurement of the Year

The City of Copenhagen is dedicated to the procurement of healthy, sustainable, biodiverse and appetising food and has a broader aim that 90% of all food procured by the Municipality should be organic. The City went to great lengths to ensure that bids for its fruit and vegetable contracts would include a variety of different sorts, varieties and types of fruit and vegetables.

Procurers engaged with suppliers through open debates to communicate needs of future food supply and provided “seasonal wheels” to bidders to help balance costs and ensure seasonality of produce. The procurement rewarded those suppliers who offered the most different varieties of each type of produce reflecting the procurement focus on seasonality and diversity of products.

Through this contract, the City procured 100% organic fruit and vegetables as well as sourcing many different varieties of each type of produce.

“In Copenhagen Municipality we have discovered a way to sustainably procure for the city’s citizens without increasing costs, and our method has inspired other cities in Europe to follow suit. By sharing our experiences, we can reduce food waste, utilise our resources better and shorten the producer-to-consumer chain,” said Deputy Mayor of Copenhagen for Children and Youth Issues Pia Allerslev, who was at the ceremony to collect the Award.

By Giuliana Longworth
ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability
In 2015, Transport for London (TfL) sought to reduce the whole life-cycle cost associated with lighting the expansive London Underground network. With support from the EU funded Procurement of Lighting Innovation and Technology in Europe (PRO-LITE) project, TfL carried out extensive early market engagement with over 80 manufacturers and analysed the whole life cost of lighting system for better understanding of potential cost saving areas. The process introduced a procurement approach which calculated a range of external costs as well as unit price, including installation, maintenance, energy use, carbon and cleaning costs.

Project Manager Leon Smith explained: “For this procurement, we really took a long-term view. Rather than the usual project-by-project procurement undertaken, spending for example £10k or £15k at a time, we looked out to the next 8 years and approached the market with a potential spend of £8 million. As a result, we are now installing products across the network that are genuinely better for the environment as well as the public purse.”

Indicative results suggest a 25% saving on whole life-cycle costs, and significant reductions in energy consumption.

The Dutch Ministry for Infrastructure Rijkswaterstaat (RWS) used a DBFM-contract (Design, Build, Finance & Maintain) to procure the works and services necessary to widen the A6 motorway and aimed at an energy neutral road reconstruction with significant CO2e savings.

The project team wanted the motorway to be energy neutral after construction, and therefore used two purpose-built instruments to calculate the CO2 equivalent emissions of the project: the CO2 Performance Ladder to limit emissions within the company’s supply chain; and the DuboCalc programme to calculate the sustainability value of design and materials. RWS selected a tender using a combination of price and quality according to the EMAS (economically most advantageous submission) approach.

The procurement will achieve a predicted 52,800 tonnes of CO2e savings and a predicted 15,048 toe (tonne of oil equivalent) energy saving over 50 years.

The 2017 edition of the Procura+ Awards will be open for applications in February, with all European public authorities eligible to apply. More information is available at www.procureplus.org/awards

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