# SME Statement

Introduction

NWUPC Ltd is a not for profit organisation limited by member guarantee working predominately in the North West region on behalf of Higher Education Institutions but with a commodity specific national reach. We have 22 full members who “own” NWUPC as well as additional associate and affiliate members who utilise our services but do not have voting rights.

The aim of NWUPC Ltd is to provide a structure for higher education institutions mutually to secure value for money in matters relating to the purchasing of goods and services.

We understand that to offer the best value for money for our members we need to engage with suppliers of all sizes and make it easier for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)[[1]](#endnote-1) to tender for HE Frameworks. We currently have a supplier base of 176 companies including organisations of various structures and sizes with currently 47% of these classed as SMEs. Whilst this is a significant figure we hope to grow this in the future.

# NWUPC’s Commitment to SME’s

NWUPC recognise that SMEs can offer members greater flexibility, expertise, service and customisation but often have difficulties accessing public sector contracts. NWUPC is committed to removing the barriers for SMEs to engage with our framework agreements and promote easier access for small businesses where they offer members better value for money.

NWUPC is committed to reducing the barrier for SME’s by:

* Rationalising the requirements of the PQQ for all Frameworks and ensuring that criteria set does not directly or indirectly disadvantage SMEs.
* Considering the business needs of the small enterprise and taking them into account when designing the procurement process on a commodity specific basis.
* Pre-engaging with SMEs to ensure they are aware of future opportunities and how to complete tender documents.
* Making opportunities easier to find by making them all accessible on one free of charge online portal.
* Mandating the use of e-tendering to reduce the administrative burden of completing and submitting tender responses.
* Making sure small firms are treated fairly by including prompt payment terms in the conditions of the Framework Agreement.
* Working with members to draw on their supplier base to generate interest in advertised opportunities.

# Endorsement

The SME Statement and the Commitment by NWUPC Ltd is led by the Sustainable Procurement Champion, Helen Dodd-Williams, Senior Category Manager and supported by the NWUPC Sustainable Procurement Group. It will be carried out by the Category Managers who will consider all relevant SME Commitments in their Frameworks and ensure they meet the objectives set. The work of the Champion is fully endorsed and supported by the Managing Director and NWUPC’s Board of Directors.

# Communication

The SME Statement is publically available on NWUPC Ltd’s website and is communicated via the NWUPC SPG, the e-newsletter and the Annual Sustainability Report.

Review Date: Dec 2016

1. The European Commission states the following factors determine an SME classification:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Company Category | Employees | Turnover | or | Balance Sheet |
| Medium | ≤ 250 | ≤ € 50m |  | ≤ € 43m |
| Small | ≤ 50 | ≤ € 10m |  | ≤ € 10m |
| Micro | ≤ 10 | ≤ € 2m |  | ≤ € 2m |

 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)