



**THOMPSON
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UNIVERSITY**

Sustainable Purchasing Guide

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Executive Summary

Sustainable procurement is about considering priority **environmental, ethical and social** risks and opportunities alongside price, quality, and service to get best overall value. This Guide has been created to help you consider sustainability in the many procurement decisions you make in your role on campus.

Why sustainable procurement? Most of TRU’s social and environmental impacts lie in its supply chain, so focusing on procurement is one of the most powerful ways to activate sustainability. Sustainable procurement also satisfies many objectives of TRU’s Campus Strategic Sustainability Plan (SSP) and contributes to our outstanding [STARS](#) rating. Some examples include:

- Purchasing certified green office paper
- Exploring reuse and recycling options for IT equipment
- Hosting green, low-waste events and reducing purchase of plastic
- Making TRU a Fair Trade Campus
- Shifting to locally-sourced produce and food supplies, and
- Buying from inclusive businesses, social enterprises, and local community-based businesses.

Sustainable procurement can apply to all TRU procurement activities. However, not all possible sustainability aspects will be relevant to every purchase, and it will not be possible to choose the most sustainable option every single time. Success is consistently considering relevant sustainability factors, so that the TRU community is making more sustainable choices more often.

This Sustainable Purchasing Guide provides simple steps and tools to help you consider sustainability in three main procurement processes (see table below for more details):

- Direct purchase—whether PCard purchases or low dollar value purchases under \$10k
- Getting multiple quotes—for purchases ranging from \$10k to \$30k, or
- Issuing a Request for Proposal.

How You Want to Purchase	How You Can Consider Sustainability
➤ Making a Direct Purchase with a PCard or low dollar value purchases under \$10k	Keep these four things in mind: buying durable products, avoid packaging, choose local and Canadian and choose products with ecolabels and certifications.
➤ Going out for multiple quotes —for purchases ranging from \$10k to \$30k	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify the need - creative thinking to repurpose existing supplies, refurbish, or right-size an order2. Assess available options – prioritize sustainability risks and opportunities using helpful tools3. Develop specifications – the most important sustainability considerations for this purchase
➤ Issuing a Request for Proposal	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Communicate sustainability performance expectations2. Supply tools to collect sustainability information3. Evaluate the sustainability performance of proposals4. Write sustainability performance into the contract

Share Your Success Story. We are excited about building a culture of sustainable procurement at TRU and are learning together how to do this. We look forward to your ideas on how we can continue to support your sustainable procurement practice and to share your achievements to inspire our students, staff, stakeholders and suppliers to make more sustainable choices.

About this Guide

This Guide has been created to help you consider sustainability in the many procurement decisions you will make in your role on campus. We know that you are busy. Instead of doing more, this Guide will set out a few ways you can do things differently to get more sustainability bang for your buck. You'll find simple recommendations on how to include sustainability in various types of buying processes, as well as accredited sustainability performance standards for common product categories. If you are looking for more detail on each type of buying process, refer to the Appendices. The Guide also has four helpful tools, located after the Appendices.

With some practice, it will become easy to consider sustainability when buying new goods and services. Everyone, across all business units of Thompson Rivers University, has an important role to play. We encourage you to ask for support and to share your successes and lessons learned with the campus community (see [Contact Us](#)).

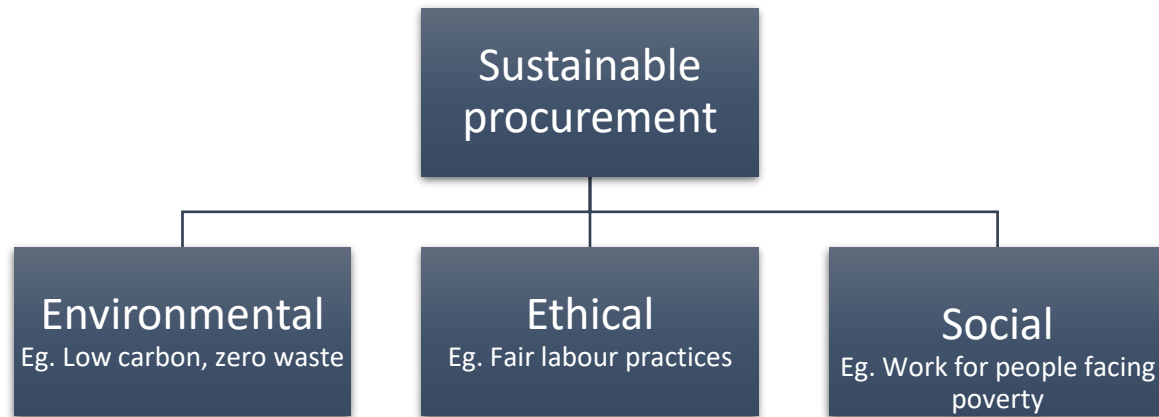
Let's get started!

What is Sustainable Procurement?

Most of an organization's social and environmental impacts lie in their supply chain, so focusing on procurement is one of the most powerful ways to reduce negative impacts and choose businesses that are working to address environmental, social and economic challenges. Sustainable procurement also looks for sustainability opportunities that can leave lasting, positive legacies for the campus and local community. In simple terms, sustainability is about getting best value. It's another factor to consider alongside price, quality, and service when you go out to purchase goods and services.



Sustainable procurement involves looking for risks and opportunities in three key areas:

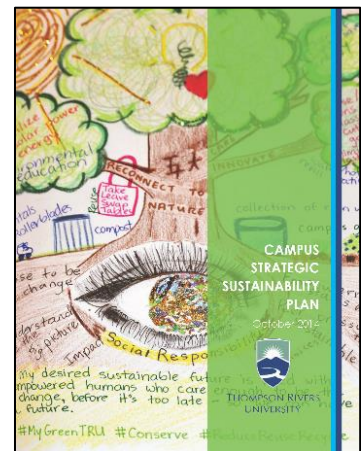


Shifting to a green and inclusive economy is possible only through demand from purchasers like you. TRU's annual spend of approximately \$35 Million can make a significant difference in shifting the local and global market towards investing in more sustainable business practices.

Why is Sustainability Important to TRU?

Universities have an important role to play in making the United Nation's [Sustainable Development Goals](#) a reality.

Thompson Rivers University has a Campus Strategic Sustainability Plan (SSP), which sets a new course toward realizing a healthy, prosperous and sustainable campus community. As part of the community consultation process for the SSP, faculty, staff and students shared phrases and concepts they felt represented TRU's vision for sustainability. Their combined responses form a collective vision for sustainability for the campus community, illustrated in the word cloud below:



purchase a more sustainable one. Refer to the Tools section for sample tools that will help you go deeper and carry out your own sustainability analysis.



Tip: Not all possible sustainability aspects will be relevant to every purchase, and it will not be possible to choose the most sustainable option every single time. Success is consistently considering relevant sustainability factors, so that the TRU community is making more sustainable choices more often.

Direct Procurement: Low Dollar Value and PCard

If you are making a purchase \$10,000 or under, this section is for you! In this category, you have the flexibility to assess best value and source from suppliers offering unique sustainability value¹.

Here are four things to keep in mind when making your purchase:

1. **Buy durable products**, not disposable ones. Durable products have a longer useful life and keep unwanted materials out of the landfill, especially those that don't break down easily like plastics.
2. **Avoid over packaging and plastic packaging.** Buy in bulk, decline individual packaging where possible or ask for reusable or recyclable packaging.
3. **Choose local and Canadian** where you can. This boosts the economy of the community, provides local work opportunities and reduces the carbon cost of transportation. Consider hiring local social enterprises and social purpose businesses that provide work opportunities for those who need it.
4. **Look for recognized ecolabels** that verify a product and supplier's environmental, ethical and social standards. Fairtrade, BCorp, FSC, EPEAT and Energy Star are some examples (see [Appendix C](#) for more details).

¹ From TRU Campus Staff and Faculty Purchasing Guide from Procurement Services, updated March 2017.

Multiple Quotes: Purchases from \$10k to \$30k

When your purchase is over \$30k and you need to obtain multiple quotes², consider the following steps:



Step 1: Identify the Need

The best time to influence the sustainability of your purchase is at the need identification stage. Set aside some time to consider: what is the need that we need to support? This is where some creative thinking, planning and research can help you make a more sustainable choice. See the diagram above and Appendix A for some additional questions to consider. You may find that a service provider is able to meet your need more sustainably (and often at lower cost) than if you were to purchase and maintain a product. One such example is uniform rental.

Step 2: Assess Available Options

Considering sustainability can be a big asset in helping you get the best value and may help you meet your need for less cost, especially if you consider the total cost of owning a product (see [Tool 4](#) for more on this). In this step, you are assessing your options, looking for sustainable solutions that also meet your other specifications and quality requirements. Here are some questions to consider:

- Are there sustainability certifications available to distinguish preferred products and suppliers?
- What are the sustainability risks of the available alternatives?
- Can this procurement add environmental or social value to the community?
- Could we meet the need through a service provider that handles product life cycle impacts?

² For purchases over \$10,000 but under \$30,000 that you would like to source directly, you must create a sole source justification and submit it with the Web Requisition to Purchasing. Purchasing will make every effort to find an alternative source and obtain a competitive quote. Purchasing and End User work on final award (10 TRU Purchasing Guide 2017).

- What are the sustainability opportunities among the available alternatives?

See [Appendix A](#) for guidance and tips on each of these questions, including a discussion of social procurement. Social procurement involves sourcing from organizations that create employment opportunities and build the local economy.

Step 3: Develop Specifications

Once you have identified sustainability risks—the features you do not want, like sweatshop labour or excessive packaging waste, note these down as criteria or specifications for your purchase. Likewise, document the features you consider sustainability priorities—these might include use of renewable energies, Fair Trade, or service providers that create work opportunities in the community. Use these specifications to inform your decision-making on low dollar value buying. Documenting your sustainability analysis helps you communicate the results and impacts of your purchase to your team.

For more on each of these steps, see [Appendix A](#).

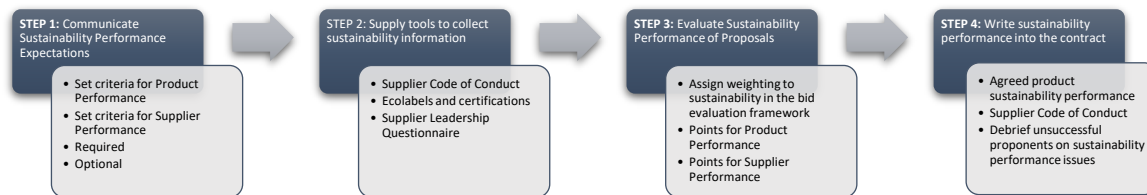
Requests for Proposal

You can use the Request for Proposal (RFPs) process any time you would like to go out for competitive bid to see what is available on the market. However, if you are expecting to spend over \$30,000, a competitive bid must be used. RFPs allow you to make a best value selection based on multiple criteria. These criteria may include innovation, design, price, quality, service and sustainability.

TRU Procurement Services will guide you through the RFP process, and work with you to determine scoring criteria, mandatories and specifications. You'll be working with Procurement Services to integrate sustainability into your RFP through these four simple steps:

1. Communicate sustainability performance expectations
2. Supply tools to collect sustainability information
3. Evaluate the sustainability performance of proposals, and
4. Write sustainability performance into the contract.

Each of these steps is shown in a little more detail in the diagram below.



Step 1: Communicate Sustainability Performance Expectations

You will need to develop specifications for your RFP that communicate your highest priority sustainability considerations. In this section, we will build on the steps that have been outlined in the previous section: Multiple Quotes: Purchases from \$10k to \$30k > Assess Available Options.

To determine your sustainability priorities, you can use the guidance and tools available in this Guide to assess relevant sustainability risks and opportunities relevant to this purchase. You will then write these into specification form. In the RFP process, you may want to set both mandatory and optional sustainability performance features. Take care to distinguish between the sustainability performance of the product you are seeking to purchase, and the sustainability performance of the supplier. For example, energy efficiency may be a desired attribute of the product, while commitments to low carbon modes of transportation may be a desired attribute of the supplier.

Step 2: Provide Tools to Collect Sustainability Information from Proposals

There are several tools you can use to collect sustainability performance information in proposal form (see [Appendix B](#) for more details). When you provide a clear framework that identifies the sustainability information you are looking for, prospective suppliers will find it easier to provide relevant answers. Consider providing questions and/or questionnaires that can be completed as part of the proposal.

Step 3: Evaluate the Sustainability Performance of Proposals

Create an evaluation framework to help you evaluate the sustainability value-add in each of the proposals you receive. In discussions with your team, you will need to decide how much weight you are going to give to sustainability performance. See [Appendix B](#) for a sample evaluation framework.

Step 4: Write Sustainability Performance into the Contract

Procurement Services will ensure any sustainability performance expressed in the proposal is a deliverable captured in the contract. This will provide a structure for ongoing contract management and can be the beginning of a deeper engagement on how you can work together to find innovative solutions to sustainability challenges and opportunities.

For more on each of these steps, refer to [Appendix B](#).

Share Your Sustainable Purchasing Story

You've incorporated sustainability into your purchase – great work! TRU Sustainable Procurement Leads would like to know about what you're doing. We are excited about building a culture of sustainable procurement and are learning together how to do this.

If you have a story to share, please send us an email (see [Contact Us](#) below). You may wish to consider the following questions:

- What were your sustainability priorities (environmental, ethical and social) for this purchase?
- Who were the main stakeholders involved?
- What did you buy? What is the approximate annual value of the contract?
- What was the method of procurement?
- What were your sustainability results and impacts?
- What did you learn?
- Are there resources or specifications available for others?

We look forward to your ideas on how we can continue to support your sustainable procurement practice and to share your achievements to inspire our students, staff, stakeholders and suppliers to make more sustainable choices.

Contact Us

For more information on sustainable procurement at TRU, please contact:

Eric Vandermeulen, Procurement Manager

Email: evandermeulen@tru.ca

James Gordon, Environmental Programs and Research Coordinator

Email: jgordon@tru.ca

Where to Learn More

Refer to the following resources for more information on sustainable procurement:

[AASHE STARS](#)

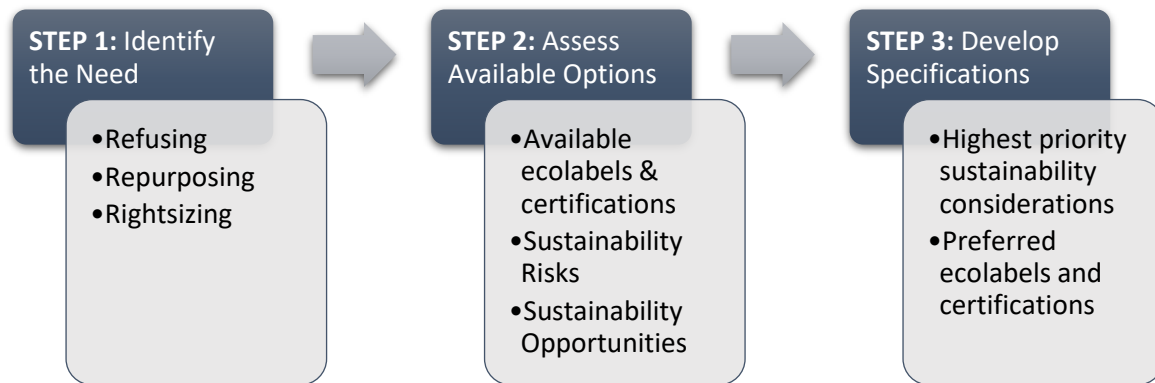
[Buy Social Canada](#)

[Municipal Collaborative for Sustainable Procurement](#)

[Sustainable Procurement Leadership Council](#)

Appendix A: Multiple Quotes: Purchases from \$10k to \$30k

When you need to spend more on your purchase, and may need to go out for multiple quotes³, consider setting aside a bit of time to walk through the following three steps:



Step 1: Identify the Need

The best time to influence the sustainability of your purchase is at the need identification stage. Set aside some time to consider: what is the need that we need to support? This is where some creative thinking, planning and research can help you make a more sustainable choice.

Some questions to consider as you consider your needs:

- **Is this purchase necessary?**

You may be able to extend the lifespan of your current assets or have them repaired or refurbished instead of replaced. Bonus if the repair supports enterprise and employment in your community. You may also ask your colleagues: could the need be met with existing (repurposed) resources? If you are looking to spend funds at the end of the year, plan your purchases strategically so that they are sustainable and deployed towards your team's priorities.

- **Can we reduce the amount of the order?**

What is the minimum amount necessary to meet your need? This can help you right-size your order so that your energy and material footprint is as small as possible. Check your inventory and plan ahead for upcoming events or programs that will require specific materials and supplies. You are looking for the sweet spot where you can obtain discounts from an increased order size, while

³ For purchases over \$10,000 but under \$30,000 that you would like to source directly, you must create a sole source justification and submit it with the Web Requisition to Purchasing. Purchasing will make every effort to find an alternative source and obtain a competitive quote. Purchasing and End User work on final award (10 TRU Purchasing Guide 2017).

avoiding any increased waste. Another example of right sizing is creating booking systems for vehicle fleets to optimize usage and reduce the overall number of cars.

You may find that a service provider is able to meet your need more sustainably (and often at lower cost) than if you were to purchase and maintain a product. One such example is uniform rental.



Tool: Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) is a method to help you consider all potential costs, both direct and indirect, in the acquisition of a good or service and over its useful life. For more information, see [Tool 4: Total Cost of Ownership Worksheet](#).

Step 2: Assess Available Options

Considering sustainability can be a big asset in helping you get the best value and may help you meet your need for less cost, especially if you consider the total cost of owning a product (see [Tool 4](#) for more on this). In this step, you are assessing your options, looking for sustainable solutions that also meet your other specifications and quality requirements. Here are some questions to consider:

- Are there sustainability certifications available to distinguish preferred products and suppliers?
- What are the sustainability risks of the available alternatives?
- Could we meet the need through a service provider that handles product life cycle impacts?
- What are the sustainability opportunities among the available alternatives?

For a discussion and examples around each of these questions, read on below.

Ecolabels and Certifications

- **Are there sustainability certifications available to distinguish preferred products and suppliers?**

The great news is that reliable ecolabels can do a lot of your sustainability homework for you, directing you to the products that are meeting high standards of sustainability. If you are short on time or your purchase is relatively small in scope, this may be all you want to do. For a list of some of leading ecolabels that align with TRU's Strategic Sustainability Plan priorities, see Appendix #.

Looking to find out more about a specific label? A good resource is the [Ecolabel index](#), which at the time of writing tracks 463 ecolabels in 199 countries, and 25 industry sectors (www.ecolabelindex.com).



Tip: Although many focus exclusively on environmental impacts, an increasing number now have ethical and social standards that relate to decent working conditions, worker health and safety, and fair market return on labour.

Assessing Sustainability Risks

- **What are the sustainability risks of the available alternatives?**

You may need to do your own quick assessment of the sustainability risks and opportunities of your purchase. You can also ask your current and prospective suppliers to provide additional information to help you assess risks (see section # for more information). Some basic questions you may want to ask your suppliers include:

- What is the item made of?
- Does it contain virgin or recycled material?
- How will the items be packaged?
- What is the country/region of origin of this product?
- How is it going to get to me?
- What recommendations can you give me for recycling this product?

You probably will not be able to address every sustainability consideration in your purchase, and you may need to make some trade-offs. Success is feeling confident that your purchase meets your sustainability priorities. You can use these two questions to help you prioritize:

1. What are the sustainability issues of greatest importance to my organization and business unit? What unique issues and opportunities are of specific concern to our operations?

[TRU's 2014 Campus Strategic Sustainability Plan](#) (SSP) provides key information on the institution's corporate sustainability goals and can be an important reference tool. Your business unit may have some specific goals that are close to your operations. For example, if you run a lab, your team may be keen to reduce reliance on single use plastics or reduce energy use. For best results, sustainable procurement pieces can form one element of a broader strategy to make operations more sustainable, working alongside other tools such as behavior change.

2. What are the known sustainability issues relevant to this industry, product or service?

Civil society organizations and industry leadership coalitions have raised broad-based awareness on industry specific sustainability issues—whether it is plastic food service ware clogging landfills and oceans, clothing and textiles produced in sweatshops with poor working conditions, or deforestation accelerated by reliance on virgin wood and paper products. In addition to these more easily flagged issues, you may find it helpful to set aside some time to get familiarized with current sustainability issues relevant to your planned purchase through some web-based research and through speaking with end-users or any of the sustainability experts within your organization.



Tip: There's a lot of information available, and it can be easy to get bogged down or avoid considering sustainability altogether. Don't let perfection be the enemy of good! What is most important is to take a high-level scan and go into your purchase with confidence that your most important priorities have been addressed.



Tool: Refer to [Tool 1](#) for a sample of a Sustainability Risk Assessment checklist you can adapt to your own needs.

Reducing single use plastics

Did you know that the global production of plastics has increased twentyfold in the past 50 years? Research by the leading sustainability think tank, the [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#), finds that only 14% of plastic packaging is collected for recycling globally. Given projected growth in production, in a business-as-usual scenario, by 2050 oceans could contain more plastics than fish (by weight)¹. The Foundation, in collaboration with UN Environment, is encouraging industry and buyers to pledge support for a New Plastics Economy Global Commitment. Organizations around the world are now pledging to ban or dramatically reduce their purchase of single use, disposable plastic products.

TRU SSP Spotlight on Plastic Beverage Containers

Goal: Reduce waste material associated with drinking containers by lobbying suppliers for alternatives and limiting the distribution of disposable plastic bottles on campus.

Assessing Sustainability Opportunities

- **What are the sustainability opportunities among the available alternatives?**

Remember to look for opportunities to get strategic sustainability value from your purchases! You may be able to obtain valuable information, funding, and technical support from your major suppliers. As one example, the University of British Columbia used sustainable procurement to transform its research footprint this year as part of its [Green Labs Program](#). With financial support from suppliers such as Fisher Scientific and VWR International, UBC set up cross-functional teams, mobilized a network of Sustainability Coordinators, and created resources (including an update to its [Sustainable Purchasing Guide](#)) to help labs green their operations.

One major area of opportunity is to contribute to local economic development and positive social and community impact through procurement. The community capital model provides a helpful overview of how social purpose businesses contribute to building healthy communities (see diagram below, courtesy of Buy Social Canada).



Companies build community capital and help to reduce poverty by creating training and work opportunities for people with barriers to employment, sourcing from local businesses and building the local economy, providing healthy workplaces, sponsoring community assets and resources. Shifting to locally-sourced produce and food supplies will have significant impacts to the surrounding economy. As a large institution, TRU can have a very significant impact on the local economy.

Sourcing from Diverse Suppliers

Purchasing from diverse suppliers is another powerful way to support the economic development of under-represented, marginalized, or equity-seeking populations. It is standard to consider a supplier diverse if it has majority ownership or control by women, Indigenous individuals or communities, underrepresented ethno-cultural groups (minorities, newcomers, or immigrants), persons with disabilities, and/or LGBTQ+ persons. There are a number of associations that provide supplier directories and can be helpful partners in efforts to engage with diverse suppliers (see inset). However, you may have excellent results from keeping an ear to the ground for diverse suppliers within the community of Kamloops, Williams Lake and surrounding region, including the [Shuswap Nation Tribal Council](#), [Northern Shuswap Tribal Council](#), and [Carrier-Chilcotin Tribal Council](#).

Selected Diverse Supplier Associations

- [Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council](#)
- [Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business](#)
- [Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Canadian Veteran Business Directory](#)
- [Inclusive Workplace Supply Council of Canada](#)
- [Indigenous Business and Investment Council](#)
- [Supplier Diversity Canada](#)
- [Women Business Enterprises Canada](#)

Sourcing from Social Enterprises and Cooperatives

Buying from social enterprises and cooperatives is another way to contribute to a positive social and community impact. In addition to providing a good and/or service, social enterprises embed a social,

cultural or environmental purpose into the business, and they reinvest the majority of profits into their social mission. In British Columbia, there are social enterprises that provide the following goods and services:

- Catering and Coffee
- Couriers
- Garbage Removal
- Glass Repairs
- Graffiti Removal
- Groundskeeping
- Interior Renovations and Painting
- Janitorial Services
- Parking Lot Maintenance
- Office Supplies and Printing
- Recycling and Waste Management
- Window Cleaning

You may want to conduct a rapid scan of social enterprises available in Kamloops, Williams Lake and the surrounding region, identifying the goods and services that they may be able to supply to TRU. You may also want to monitor [Akcelos](#), a new online marketplace for social and sustainable purchasing that is currently under development. Another good resource is [Cooperatives and Mutuals Canada](#), a member association that maintains a directory of cooperative organizations.

Finally, a reminder that some labels and certifications can help you identify businesses that are responsive to their stakeholders and communities and are striving to be good corporate citizens (see [Appendix C](#)). The BCorp certification is one cross-sectoral example, while other certifications are more industry specific.

TRU SSP Spotlight on Inclusive and Local Purchasing

Goal 1: Support and procure from inclusive businesses, social enterprises, and/or local community-based businesses and track compliance. Reduce waste and fuel consumption generated from transportation by specifying locally manufactured and extracted products, where feasible.

Goal 2: Support food security in the region by purchasing food and beverages that are local, seasonal, culturally appropriate, and/or certified.

Engaging Suppliers on Minimum Standards

Many companies now have Supplier or Vendor Codes of Conduct that commit them to meeting minimum standards for fair and decent labour practices set by the [International Labour Organization](#) (ILO) or [Fair Labour Association](#). You can ask your current and prospective suppliers if they have a Code. You may also want to ask your suppliers some additional questions:

- How well do you know your own supply chain?
- Have your manufacturing facilities ever been visited and rated by an independent third party?

TRU SSP Spotlight on Guidelines for Business Partners

Goal: Develop and act on policies, guidelines and/or agreements that set expectations about the social and environmental responsibility of business partners.

Engaging Suppliers on Leadership Practices

Not every great supplier is a social enterprise, certified, or listed on specific directories. You may be working with suppliers already who contribute to the community, but have never had the opportunity to talk with them and learn more about it. You can ask your current and prospective suppliers to share information on their workplace constitution and practices, and how they build community capital and create social impact.



Tip: Use open-ended questions to encourage full answers that capture a range of supplier programs and practices. You can pull some of the criteria from this list for your purchase specifications.



Tool: See [Tool 2](#) for a sample Supplier Leadership Questionnaire

Step 3: Develop Specifications

Once you have identified sustainability risks—the features you do not want, like sweatshop labour or excessive packaging waste, note these down as criteria or specifications for your purchase. Likewise, document the features you consider sustainability priorities—these might include use of renewable energies, Fair Trade, or service providers that create work opportunities in the community. Use these specifications to inform your decision-making on low dollar value buying. Documenting your sustainability analysis helps you communicate the results and impacts of your purchase to your team.

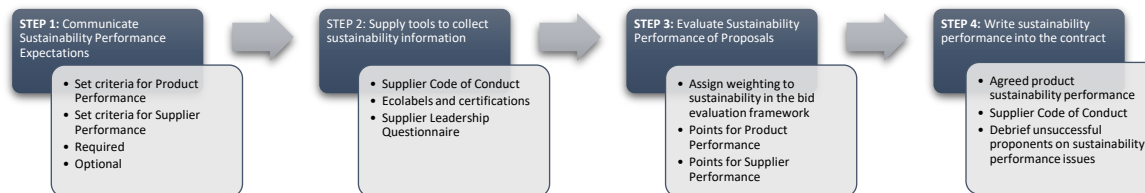
Appendix B: Requests for Proposal

You can use the Request for Proposal (RFPs) process any time you would like to go out for competitive bid to see what is available on the market. However, if you are expecting to spend over \$30,000, a competitive bid must be used. RFPs allow you to make a best value selection based on multiple criteria. These criteria may include innovation, design, price, quality, service and sustainability.

TRU Procurement Services will guide you through the RFP process, and work with you to determine scoring criteria, mandatories and specifications. You'll be working with Procurement Services to integrate sustainability into your RFP through these four simple steps:

1. Communicate sustainability performance expectations
2. Supply tools to collect sustainability information
3. Evaluate the sustainability performance of proposals, and
4. Write sustainability performance into the contract.

Each of these steps is shown in a little more detail in the diagram below.



Step 1: Communicate Sustainability Performance Expectations

You will need to develop specifications for your RFP that communicate your highest priority sustainability considerations. In this section, we will build on the steps that have been outlined in the previous section: Multiple Quotes: Purchases from \$10k to \$30k > Assess Available Options.

To determine your sustainability priorities, you can use the guidance and tools available in this Guide to assess relevant sustainability risks and opportunities relevant to this purchase. You will then write these into specification form. In the RFP process, you may want to set both mandatory and optional sustainability performance features. Take care to distinguish between the sustainability performance of the product you are seeking to purchase, and the sustainability performance of the supplier. For

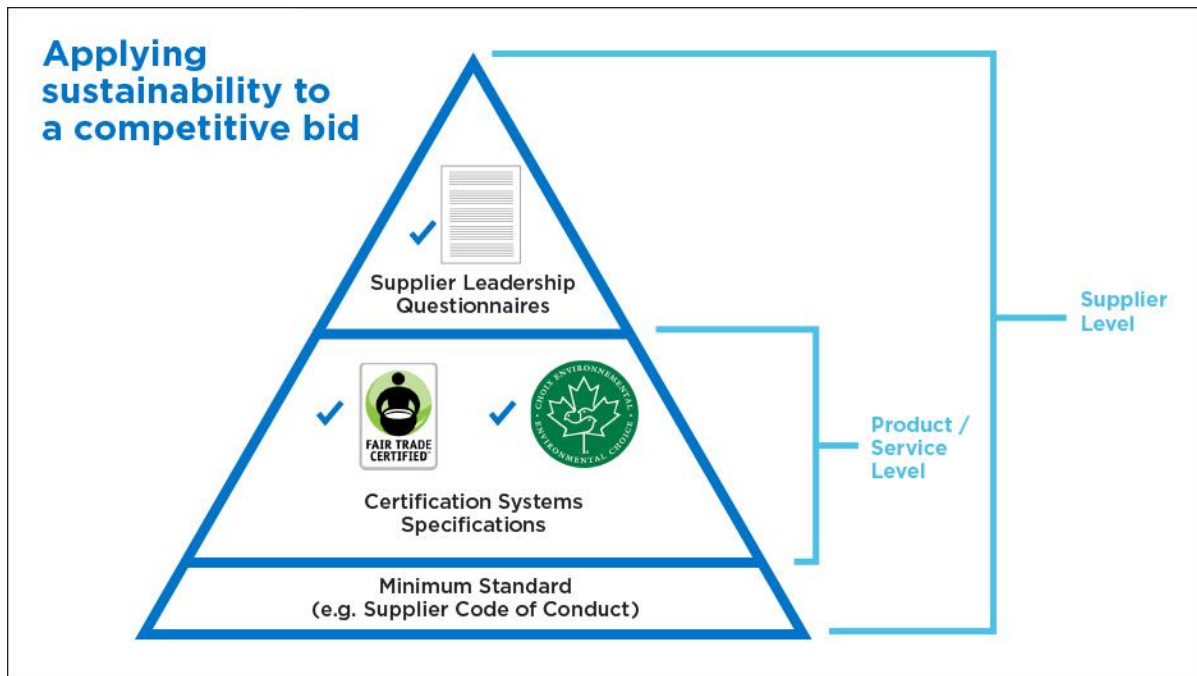
example, energy efficiency may be a desired attribute of the product, while commitments to low carbon modes of transportation may be a desired attribute of the supplier.



Tip: When developing criteria, try to involve all stakeholders from the beginning of the process. Help them think creatively around their need and find solutions to their challenges through using more sustainable products and services (see page # for more on this).

Step 2: Provide Tools to Collect Sustainability Information from Proposals

The diagram below provides a helpful model of three tools you can use to collect sustainability performance information in proposal form.



When you provide a clear framework that identifies the sustainability information you are looking for, prospective suppliers will find it easier to provide relevant answers. Consider providing questions and/or questionnaires that can be completed as part of the proposal:

RFP Questions and Attachments	Learn More in this Guide
<p>1. Compliance with Fair Labour Standards Several approaches you can take:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ask: Do you have a supply chain monitoring program? b) Ask: Do you have a Supplier Code of Conduct? Yes/No 	<p>See page 17 for more information on this.</p>

RFP Questions and Attachments	Learn More in this Guide
c) Require sign off on a Supplier Code of Conduct ⁴	
2. Ecolabels and Certifications: a) Is this product certified? Which label(s) and/or certification program(s)? b) Does your company or organization have any relevant sustainability certification? If so, please describe.	See page 13 for more information on this and Appendix A for selected ecolabels and certification programs.
3. Supplier Leadership Questionnaire This form allows suppliers to share their leadership practices. Include some open-ended questions to allow for information sharing that goes beyond your stated sustainability criteria.	See page 18 for more information on this and Tool 2 for a sample Questionnaire.

Step 3: Evaluate the Sustainability Performance of Proposals

Create an evaluation framework to help you evaluate the sustainability value-add in each of the proposals you receive. In discussions with your team, you will need to decide how much weight you are going to give to sustainability performance. Your evaluation framework might look something like this:

RFP Evaluation Framework	Percentage
1. Experience of Proponent	15%
2. Experience of Key Personnel	10%
3. Project Understanding and Methodology	20%
4. Project Schedule	5%
5. Price	30%
6. Sustainability Value-add	20%
7. Compliance with Fair Labour Standards/Code of Conduct	Pass/fail
8. Required sustainability performance criteria	Pass/fail



Tip 1: Break down the available points for sustainability value add. If there are 20 points in total for sustainability, you may want to allocate a total of 10 points for sustainability features of the product or service, and 10 points for the sustainability performance of the supplier. Be flexible with your weighting from contract to contract. Find the proportion that is most relevant to each purchase.



Tip 2: If you see an opportunity that may be suitable for local or social purpose suppliers, consider unbundling large purchases to allow smaller suppliers to compete. Rather than one large bid, you can break it into several smaller contracts or carve out a small section for a

⁴ The majority of organizations use Supplier Codes of Conduct as statements communicating desired business ethics without a system in place to verify compliance. A best practice Code of Conduct has clear methods of implementation and enforcement such as auditing mechanisms and grievance and complaint procedures.

social enterprise. You can also encourage your major suppliers to examine their supply chains to find space to subcontract to social enterprises.



Tip 3: TRU is party to a number of trade agreements that restrict language that gives preference to local suppliers over certain dollar thresholds. Procurements under \$25k fall outside trade agreement restrictions and can be an opportunity to work with local social purposes businesses or social enterprises. See **Where to Get Help** section if you have any questions about complying with trade agreements in your procurement.



Tip 4: Solicit bids from your targeted suppliers. Be pro-active in finding suppliers to bid on your RFPs and reach out to them directly. Let them know that you evaluate bids using a sustainable procurement framework.

Step 4: Write Sustainability Performance into the Contract

Procurement Services will ensure any sustainability performance expressed in the proposal is a deliverable captured in the contract. This will provide a structure for ongoing contract management and can be the beginning of a deeper engagement on how you can work together to find innovative solutions to sustainability challenges and opportunities.

Appendix C: Selected Ecolabels and Certification Systems

A few examples that have become standard guidance for Canadian sustainable procurement include:

- **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)**. FSC certifies wood and



paper products from forest operations that meet sustainable management standards. FSC tracks certified material through the production process, from harvesting to processing, manufacturing and distribution. To meet FSC standards, operations must also meet important

social principles: maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of workers; upholding Indigenous Peoples' legal and customary rights of ownership, use and management of land, territories and resources affected by management activities; and contributing to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of local communities. You can purchase FSC certified products made of 100% post consumer recycled material for added sustainability impact.

TRU SSP Spotlight on Office Paper

Goal: Purchase office paper that has recycled and/or rapidly renewable (e.g. wheat) content, is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and/or is certified to similar and track compliance.

- **Fairtrade**. The Fairtrade label identifies suppliers that have committed to better prices, decent



working conditions and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers. Fair Trade certification also requires environmental standards and promotes training for farmers to encourage environmentally sustainable production. Fairtrade also provides grants to farmer groups to fund education and healthcare projects, access to water, road building, and other investments in communities. Fairtrade is a global movement (see [here](#) for more information), with Fairtrade Canada is a member of Fairtrade International and responsible for the label in Canada.

Fairtrade Canada runs the Fairtrade Campus program, encouraging post secondary institutions to make commitments to supporting and educating about fair trade. Supporters ensure that as many Fairtrade products as possible, including food and drink, are available in as many places as possible in and around their campus. Increasing the use and sales of Fairtrade products can have a huge impact for producers and their communities. They also raise awareness of fair trade with students and staff and the benefits that it brings to workers and farmers in the Global South. Fairtrade Canada runs this program and provides tools and resources for partners [here](#).

TRU SSP Spotlight on Fairtrade Campus

Goal: Designating TRU a Fair Trade Campus with respect to all procurement decisions is a goal in TRU's Campus Strategic Sustainability Plan (SSP).



- **EPEAT.** EPEAT is a leading global ecolabel for the Information Technology sector. The label is based on several international sustainability standards specific to electronic devices that address the full product lifecycle, from design and production to energy use and recycling (see inset diagram). EPEAT rates products from bronze to gold:



- Bronze-rated products meet all of the required criteria in their category;
- Silver-rated products meet all of the required criteria and at least 50% of the optional criteria;
- Gold-rated products meet all of the required criteria and at least 75% of the optional criteria.

The EPEAT program is managed by the [Green Electronics Council](#), which provides independent verification of manufacturers' claims and maintains the EPEAT online Registry, which lists sustainable products from a broader range of manufacturers.

Figure 1: EPEAT Product and Corporate Criteria



TRU SSP Spotlight on IT Products

Goal 1: Purchase computers and/or other electronic products that are EPEAT registered or similar and track compliance.

Goal 2: Explore reuse and recycling options for IT equipment that has reached the end of its life, including laptops, tablets, smart phones, PCs, etc.

- **Energy Star.** Energy Star is an international standard for energy efficient consumer products that originated in the United States. Qualifying appliances and equipment are generally in the top 25% most energy efficient products on the market. In Canada, the Energy Star label is administered and promoted by [Natural Resources Canada](#). NRCan also maintains a list of [Energy efficient product information](#).



- **Certified Benefit Corporation.** Known as BCorp for short, this label is for private companies that meet standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability. All BCorp members complete a B Impact Assessment and share their scores on their public profiles on [bcorporation.net](#). Public companies and their subsidiaries have extra transparency requirements. The [standards for B Corp Certification](#) are overseen by B Lab's independent Standards Advisory Council and examines a company's impact on their workers, community, environment, and customers; corporate governance structure; and accountability.



Tool 1: Sample Sustainability Risk Assessment Checklist

Review the questions below and tick off the relevant risk level. You may want to take some time to research or ask questions of your suppliers for each issue checked as potentially high risk. Note that this sample contains a selection of environmental issues, but could also include ethical and social issues.

TRU Sustainability Risk Assessment Tool Potential Environmental Sustainability Issues	Risk/Opportunity Level
1. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions: Does the production and use of this product or service create significant GHG emissions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat – Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> No – Low risk
2. Toxic/Hazardous Chemicals: Does the product / service contain / use toxic chemicals that could have a negative effect on human health and safety?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat – Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> No – Low risk
3. Energy Use: Is the potential energy use of the product over its lifetime likely to be significant?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat – Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> No – Low risk
4. Recycled Content: Is the product made from a potentially scarce resource or a non-renewable resource?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat – Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> No – Low risk
5. Product Recycling and Disposal: Can the product be easily recycled at the end of its life, or will it be collected by the vendor in a ‘take-back’ program?	<input type="checkbox"/> No - High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Partially - Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – Low risk
6. Packaging: Does the product come with non-recyclable packaging or difficult to recycle packaging? Or will the packaging be costly to manage and handle?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat - Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> No - Low risk
7. Water Use: Does the product or service require a significant amount of water use over its lifetime? Note: Some agricultural products have large water footprints, e.g. coffee and cotton.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat – Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> No – Low risk

Tool 2: Sample Supplier Leadership Questionnaire

A useful tool to support engagement with your suppliers is a Supplier Leadership Questionnaire. Refer to the table below for a sample of how you can set up your own questionnaire.

Note: The sample below contains social questions, but can also include environmental and ethical questions.

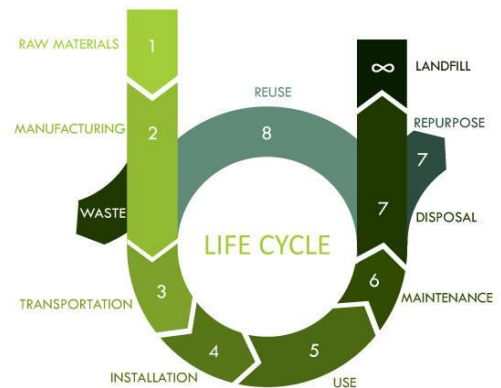
Supplier Leadership Questionnaire Social Impact & Community Contributions	
<p>1. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Has your organization adopted any documented policies, practices, or programs to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion for minorities or underserved groups (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, indigenous persons, new immigrants, youth-at-risk, and/or those with other barriers to employment)?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Specific efforts to employ individuals from minority or underserved groups (see above). Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide training, mentorship, apprenticeship, or capacity-building opportunities to minorities or underserved groups (see above). Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Specific efforts to purchase from minority-owned suppliers or social enterprises. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Specific efforts to subcontract to minority-owned businesses or social enterprises. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other practices related to equity, diversity, and inclusion (describe):</p>
<p>2. Local Economic Development Does your organization use any specific strategies to support local economic development where you work?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide training, mentorship, or apprenticeship opportunities to the local workforce. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have partnerships with local educational or vocational institutions. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sub-contract to local suppliers. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Purchase from local suppliers. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have targets for local purchasing and/or job creation. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Measure progress in local purchasing and / or job creation. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other practices related to local economic development (describe):</p>
<p>3. Employee Wellness and Work-Life Balance Does your organization promote wellness, active living, or work-life balance programs to all employees?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A wellness, active living, or work-life balance program for employees. Summarize / Explain (and provide documentation): _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No defined program, but we provide support to our employees (financial or otherwise) to promote their wellness, active living, or work-life balance. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Allow our employees to have flexible schedules or to telecommute part-time. Explain: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide in-house or company-funded opportunities for employees to enjoy wellness or active living activities. Explain: _____</p>

**Supplier Leadership Questionnaire
Social Impact & Community Contributions**

	<input type="checkbox"/> Promote wellness, active living, or work-life balance to our employees. Explain: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other employee wellness practices (describe):
<p>4. Community Contribution Does your organization contribute to improving the social, economic, or environmental sustainability of the community or communities in which you operate?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Run or support community development program (including having a charitable arm to your business or operating a foundation). Explain: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> We are a non-profit. Explain: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> We are a social enterprise. Explain: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Promote employee volunteerism. Explain: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Provide monetary or in-kind contributions to charities, non-profits, or philanthropic organizations. Explain: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other practices related to community contribution or benefits (describe):

Tool 3: Life Cycle Analysis Assessment Tool

There are two types of Life Cycle Assessments (LCA): qualitative (where you assess the scale of impact) and quantitative (where you crunch the numbers). You may find it most helpful to do a qualitative LCA—a rapid tally and comparison of the estimated impacts between several product alternatives.



TRU SSP Spotlight on Life Cycle Analysis

Goal: Employ Life Cycle Cost Analysis (LCCA) when evaluating energy- and water-using products and systems.

Tip: Do some spot research, create some assumptions and make your best guess—you are looking for patterns and big picture insights that will guide you to the best option. There are some good online resources to help you with estimates. If it's a big purchase and you have the resources to do a quantitative assessment, there are a number of online tools to guide you.

Life Cycle Analysis: Rapid Assessment	Impacts	Impact Rating
1. Raw Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What raw materials go into the creation of this product? How and where are they harvested? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable resources <input type="checkbox"/> Non-renewable resources <input type="checkbox"/> Ecological impact/biodiversity	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
2. Manufacturing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the product manufactured? What types of fuels supply the plant? How are workers treated? Are there any toxins in the process or product? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Non-renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Safe working conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Unsafe working conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Human health impacts	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
3. Manufacturing Waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What happens to waste from the manufacturing process? Can the waste be reused? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Ecological impact/biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Human health impacts	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
4. Transportation and Packaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How far does the product travel to market and how is it transported? What kind of packaging is used? Is packaging recyclable? Will it be recycled? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Non-renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Ecological impact/biodiversity	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
5. Installation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What goes into the installation? Are there any health and safety issues? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Non-renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Safe working conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

Life Cycle Analysis: Rapid Assessment	Impacts	Impact Rating
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsafe working conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Human health impacts	
6. Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the material used? • Is it durable? • What is the typical lifespan? • Are options available to extend lifespan? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Non-renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Human health impacts	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
7. Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are chemicals needed to maintain this product? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Non-renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Ecological impact/biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Human health impacts	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
8. Disposal/ Repurposing/Reuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you dispose of the product? • Can it be reused or repurposed? • Is it recyclable? • Will manufacturer take the product back? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Ecological impact/biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Human health impacts	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

To learn more:

[ISO 14040:2006](#) (International framework for Life Cycle Assessment)

[American Center for Life Cycle Assessment](#)

[Sustainable Minds: Life Cycle Analysis Software](#)

Tool 4: Total Cost of Ownership Worksheet

We are accustomed to buying based on a comparison of the initial purchase price. Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) is a method to help you consider all potential costs, both direct and indirect, involved in the acquisition of a good or service and over its useful life. This is also known as life cycle costing, and it can be very helpful in determining best value. A quick TCO analysis may reveal that you are better off leasing or contracting with a service provider rather than acquiring the product itself.

Tip: Start this calculation with a quick brainstorm of the top 5-10 most relevant costs to your purchase—you are looking for patterns and big picture insights that will guide you to the best option.

Total Cost of Ownership Assessment	Costs	Expense Rating
1. Purchase	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff time for purchasing process <input type="checkbox"/> Taxes <input type="checkbox"/> Customs duties <input type="checkbox"/> Exchange gain/loss <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping cost <input type="checkbox"/> Financing cost (interest on loans)	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
2. Use	<input type="checkbox"/> Perishability – loss of product <input type="checkbox"/> Depreciation <input type="checkbox"/> Replacement cost <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of complementary items <input type="checkbox"/> Energy usage cost <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Potential brand risk/business loss <input type="checkbox"/> Potential legal costs	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
3. Storage	<input type="checkbox"/> External storage cost <input type="checkbox"/> Internal storage cost - facilities planning and retrofitting <input type="checkbox"/> Inventory carrying cost <input type="checkbox"/> Warehousing facility cost <input type="checkbox"/> Warehousing labour cost	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
4. Repair and Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance input costs (parts and other products) <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance service costs <input type="checkbox"/> Repair service costs <input type="checkbox"/> Warranty provided	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
5. Re-use or Disposal	<input type="checkbox"/> Modular re-use potential <input type="checkbox"/> Staff time to recycle/dispose <input type="checkbox"/> Take-back program available <input type="checkbox"/> Salvage/scrap value <input type="checkbox"/> Disposal/tipping fees <input type="checkbox"/> Disposal transportation costs <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling storage costs	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low