

Neilcott Construction, Etec Group and McLaughlin & Harvey worked in partnership to improve their Procure Partnership Framework projects' social impact through the co-design and co-creation of a supplier onboarding event. From the outset, the collaborative working group identified the key challenges they face as contractors. A common theme was the need for a more diverse supply chain with the ability to tender effectively for projects.

As a group, we agreed on a Supplier Engagement and Meet the Buyer event that introduced each other's supply chain. This would help us engage with a diverse supply chain while also supporting the recovery of businesses from the impacts of COVID-19 and tackle economic inequality through business growth and improved supply opportunities, plus increase supply chain resilience through expert business advice. A timed action plan was designed with each company's allocated deliverables. The group met bi-monthly to review the plan and deliverables.

Tackle economic inequality through the supplier engagement event by inviting a diverse selection of potential new suppliers.

Planning

Neilcott Construction, Etec Group, and McLaughlin & Harvey procurement teams created a list of 100 micro, SMEs and start-ups to participate in the event and identified appropriate tendering opportunities and packages to suit this supply chain. We collaborated to ensure there was no duplication of organisations invited, and there was a selection of different suppliers to meet the tendering opportunities.

The event was advertised as an invitation-only to ensure it was targeted at Micro & SMEs, start-ups and growing businesses.

To improve accessibility, we used an online invitation and booking application, planned the event timing for micro and SMEs, allocated specific time slots and ensured all attendees met with their preferred contractors at a time that suited their working day.

The meet the buyer event delivered meaningful social impact by tackling economic inequalities, creating opportunities for business growth, and increasing supply chain resilience and capacity.

Each contractor had three procurement representatives in attendance who met with the 60 suppliers for their allocated networking slot. During the meeting, the contractors

- Advertised upcoming opportunities and raised awareness of future opportunities
- Provided guidance on how to become a prequalified supplier
- Provided expert advice on how to tender effectively contracts

The suppliers promoted their business, expertise, experience and capabilities to the buyers.

Outcome

In the four weeks from the event, there have been 12 suppliers from the event prequalified or requested to tender for packages.

The event has improved the diversity of our supply chains, and we have a better understanding of the types of businesses in the market and the level of participation of start-ups, Micro and SMEs.

Through advice and guidance, we have created a more resilient supply chain and improved tendering capabilities of start-ups, Micro and SMEs

The collaborative approach of Neilcott Construction, Etec Group and McLaughlin & Harvey to onboarding SME's allowed them to share resources, expertise and costs that allowed each main contractor to maximise the social impact and added value for our clients.