



Linking education to better buying

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Public bodies unite to enable schools and academies to achieve up to £1 billion procurement savings

Public sector procurement organisations ESPO, YPO and Government Procurement Service (GPS) have collaborated with the Department for Education (DfE) to provide a single online platform for academies and schools to access EU compliant contracts which can help them achieve efficiencies with their everyday purchasing requirements, and drive up to £1 billion savings back into the sector.

Schools across the UK currently spend approximately £9.2 billion on non staff costs.ⁱ and they could potentially make significant efficiency savings through smarter procurement. These savings are critical in the current climate, as funds can be redirected back to the frontline for teaching and learning priorities.

With the aim of linking schools to good deals and simplifying the buying process, a new free website dedicated to providing wider choice and value for the education sector has been developed. www.edubuy.org offers a collective portfolio of over 300 of ESPO, YPO and GPS's EU compliant contracts across core areas, including ICT, stationery, facilities management and energy. It contains practical procurement guidance and case studies to help schools, academies and the wider education market identify savings and efficiency opportunities.

Alyson Gerner, DfE Head of Procurement and chair of the EduBuy Steering Board said: "The EduBuy website will save schools time and money by simplifying and speeding up the buying process for everyday products and services so they can focus on what's most important - teaching and learning.

"The DfE listened to what schools wanted, understood their difficulties with complex EU procurement processes and worked with three major public sector buying organisations to simplify the system. The EduBuy website brings together a comprehensive and compliant set of contracts to make it easier for schools to buy more efficiently and save themselves, and the UK taxpayer, valuable resources."

Simon Hill, EduBuy board member added "Procurement can be a bewildering process for education establishments, particularly with so many contract options available in the market and speed is often of essence. This collaborative website provides a quick and easy solution enabling customers to view a comprehensive range of compliant public sector contracts available to them in a single place."

The website was launched on xx February 2013. It is the latest in a number of collaborative projects between the organisations looking to drive procurement efficiency savings across the whole of the public sector.

- Ends -

For all media enquiries please contact David Lunn on 01924 834907 or email david.lunn@ypo.co.uk.

For more information about EduBuy please visit www.edubuy.org.

Notes to editors:

- As publicly owned bodies, all EduBuy partners invest back into education and the public sector.

EduBuy Partners

About ESPO

- ESPO is one of the UK's largest public sector professional buying organisations. It operates on a self-financing basis and is committed to delivering best value to its customers, suppliers and local communities.
- Established in 1981 to provide a comprehensive procurement service to the public sector, ESPO has the purchasing power to achieve savings to pass on to customers.
- ESPO has a large customer base within the education sector and provides procurement services and supplies goods to schools, academies and further & higher education establishments throughout the UK. The value of ESPO's procurement activity in 2011/12 was more than £1 billion.

About Government Procurement Service

- As an executive agency of the Cabinet Office, Government Procurement Service works on behalf of public sector organisations to deliver significant and sustainable savings, service improvements and innovations in buying.
- GPS creates high quality commercial agreements for customers across common areas of spend covering energy, office solutions, communications services, professional services, travel, fleet, IT commodities (including telecommunications and networks), property and facilities management and eCommerce. All agreements are aligned with government policy and are fully compliant with appropriate European Union and national legislation, saving customers time as well as money.
- GPS works with over 14,500 organisations across the public sector, including nearly 4,000 education establishments. In the last year alone they managed over £8.4 billion of customer spend, and delivered £650m of savings to the public sector.

About YPO

- YPO is the largest public sector buying organisation in the UK, established and owned by 13 local government member authorities. The organisation has an expanding list of associate member authorities across the wider public sector.
- All surplus profit generated through YPO's trading operations are returned to the public sector, helping to protect frontline services. In 2012, YPO is set to pay back an estimated £1.76 million to its customers as part of its Share of Profits Loyalty Scheme.

About Department for Education (DfE)

- The Department for Education (DfE) is the UK government department with responsibility for infant, primary and secondary education, and children's services.

- Every year, schools collectively spend approximately £9.3 billion in areas other than teaching staff. Significant savings can often be made in these areas, which can be reinvested in the school's priorities for teaching and learning.
- The DfE is committed to supporting schools and education organisations to make well informed decisions about how to efficiently spend their budgets. It also offers deals for schools including a wide range of IT related frameworks and contracts.

Other collaborative projects

- A contract for the provision of Photocopiers, Printers and Scanners (Multifunctional Devices (MFD) and Services, Contract ID: RM1599) brought together GPS, YPO and ESPO in spring 2012. The partnership was established in response to reports that many organisations had ineffective and expensive contracts in place for their print requirements. A compliant and cost-effective contract solution was established as a result for the whole public sector, with a bespoke lot created for the education market in consultation with the DfE. The contract covers the provision of photocopiers, printers, scanners, multifunctional devices (MFD) and managed print services with options designed specifically to minimise the risk associated with the purchase of these high cost goods.

ⁱ Department for Education, 2012. Improving Efficiency in Schools. [online] Available at: <https://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/i/improving%20efficiency%20in%20schools.pdf> [Accessed 24 January 2013].

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