

RPN FACTSHEET: Buying Green on Cooperative Contracts

What are Cooperative Contracts?

Cooperative, or group, purchasing contracts are agreements between buyers and vendors designed to reduce the administrative burden of contracting while leveraging volume to negotiate preferred pricing and service for members of a group or consortium.

What are the Benefits?

- ▶ Reduced contracting costs due to limited:
 - RFP development
 - Advertising & solicitation
 - Evaluation, negotiation & contract award
 - Protests
 - Contract management
- ▶ Leveraged purchasing power:
 - Attains competitive pricing
 - Encourages responsive service
 - Shifts the marketplace toward greener products by demonstrating demand

What are the Possible Hurdles?

- ▶ Real or perceived conflicts with your internal contracting rules
- ▶ Availability of desired products or services
- ▶ Participation fees
- ▶ Purchasing commitments/minimums
- ▶ Changes in delivery schedule/location

Who Offers Green Group Purchasing?

The attached chart describes five groups organizing cooperative purchasing agreements.

Access these Contracts




Use the hyperlinked version of this factsheet, available on www.ResponsiblePurchasing.org, to access the group purchasing organizations listed in the following chart. Also use [RPN's online product database](#) to directly access green products available on U.S. Communities contracts.

Helpful Terms

Competitive Bidding/Solicitation is a transparent procurement method in which bids from competing contractors, suppliers, or vendors are invited by an openly advertised scope, specifications, terms and conditions of the desired contract, as well as the criteria by which the bids will be evaluated. Competitive bidding aims to obtain goods and services at the lowest prices by stimulating competition, and by preventing favoritism.

Green Purchasing/Procurement is affirmative selection and acquisition of products and services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared to other products and services that serve the same purpose, a.k.a environmentally preferable or responsible purchasing

Lead is the organization conducting a cooperative solicitation and centrally administering any price agreement and award, a.k.a. lead state, lead agency, and so on.

	Educational and Institutional Cooperative Purchasing (E&I)	Delta Institute and Sustainable Research Group (SRG)	General Services Administration (GSA)	National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO)	US Communities Government Purchasing Alliance
	Through E&I	Through WMSPC	Through GSA	Through NASPO/WSCA	Through US Communities
Who are they?	 <p>E&I is the not-for-profit buying cooperative established by members of the National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP)</p>	 <p>Delta, a Midwest non-profit, and SRG manage the West Michigan Sustainable Purchasing Consortium (WMSPC) and are convening the Great Lakes Green Purchasing Consortium</p>	 <p>GSA is the operations arm of the US federal government</p>	 <p>NASPO, a non-profit, and its Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA) organize cooperative purchasing for its members.</p>	 <p>US Communities is a non-profit co-founded by 5 national government associations, whose mission is to provide purchasing solutions to its constituents</p>
Who's eligible to use their contracts?	Educational 501 (c)(3) non-profits. Other non-profits are eligible for non-voting, contract only memberships.	Businesses and organizations in the Great Lakes region	Federal agencies may use any schedule. State and local agencies may use Supply Schedule 70, Consolidated Schedule, and Supply Schedule 84.	Authorized state or local government entities. Authorization can be obtained through the state's chief procurement official, i.e. state NASPO representative	State and local agencies, non-profits, higher education and K-12
Are there fees to participate?	YES, NAEP membership dues plus \$5 cooperative dues.	NO FEE	NO FEE	NO FEE	NO FEE
What is the minimum purchasing requirement?	NO MINIMUM	Information unavailable	Varies from vendor to vendor	NO MINIMUM, but some prices are tiered to obtain volume discounts	NO MINIMUM

Cont'd...	Educational and Institutional Cooperative Purchasing (E&I)	Delta Institute and Sustainable Research Group (SRG)	General Services Administration (GSA)	National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO)	US Communities Government Purchasing Alliance
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Are the contracts competitively solicited?	YES Follow link to read more about bidding process	YES Follow link to read more about bidding process	YES Follow link to read more about bidding process	YES Follow link to read more about bidding process	YES Follow link to read more about bidding process
What are some examples of green products available on this contract?	Recycled paper, green cleaners, third-party certified products Search product database using key words, e.g. 'recycled', 'zero VOC', or 'Green Seal'	Recycled paper Delta is soliciting currently working to expand its contract offerings	CPG and ENERGY STAR compliant products, low-VOC paints, bio-based products, toner cartridges, recycling services	Greenguard and Green Seal certified cleaners, EPEAT computers, retread tires	Recycled paper, green cleaners EPEAT computers, ENERGY STAR qualified equipment, low VOC paints, STMC certified remanufactured toner & ink cartridges, bio-based products, recycling services
Links to contract and product information	Click here details about the green products on these contracts	Click here for details on paper products	Click here for details about the green products on these contracts. Click on "Environmental" under Special Programs	Click here for details about current contracts	Click here to use the RPN Green Products Database to find paper and cleaners available on US Communities contracts Click here for more US Communities contracts
Does it track participants' green purchases?	NO	Unknown	YES, Recovered material and EPA designated purchases available from FPDS	Unkown	YES
Contact	General inquiries	Abigail Corso	Customer Service	Lee Ann Pope	Connie Kuranko