



The Growth Company Supply Chain Procurement and Fees Policy

Purpose and Policy Statement

The Growth Company (GC) works with diverse cross-sector Supply Chains and partners who add value to our capabilities and help us deliver better outcomes for our customers.

We promote and invest in Supply Chain excellence and aim to ensure the fair, transparent and open treatment of partners. We are committed to effectively managing our Supply Chain to ensure the very best outcomes for our customers and the communities we work in.

The **purpose** of this policy is to clearly set out:

- The reason GC has subcontractors (also referred to as Supply Chain Partners)
- Our commitment to nurturing diverse Supply Chain capabilities
- A high-level overview of the Supply Chain procurement approach, adherence to fair and open practice and dealing with conflicts of interest
- Our due diligence processes and how we manage risk in our Supply Chain
- Supply Chain retention funding
- GC payment terms
- How we use our retained funding and Supply Chain development
- Publication and communication of the Policy

Policy Scope

This Policy applies to The Growth Company (in particular; our Education and Skills and Employment Divisions). It sets out the overarching approach to subcontracting and meet the contractual obligations of our funders, partners and commissioners. Where contractual obligations of funders and clients are more stringent, the regulations of these funders take precedence.

Why does The Growth Company (GC) have Supply Chain Partners?

There are several diverse reasons for including Supply Chain Partners or Delivery Partners (DPs) in our bids and delivery. These include:

- Widening participation and responding quickly to employer and learner demand, meeting our customers' needs
- Enhancing the quality and availability of the offer to Learners by ensuring programmes are diverse, innovative and bespoke services, delivered by first-rate providers
- Delivery of a wide sector offer that responds to local and regional priorities
- Supporting and complementing directly delivered provision
- Maintaining the delivery of niche or expert provision
- Reaching wider geographical areas and providing better access to training facilities and supporting needs specific to local communities
- Reaching and providing entry point for disadvantage groups and providing specialist support to those groups, and to ensure contracts have an impact on individuals who share protected characteristics.
- Responding to government priorities
- Meeting commissioners specified requirements around Supply Chains
- Mitigating risk across a range of provision
- Supporting smaller Supply Chain Partners and SMEs to access funding to help to build their capacity and quality



Diversity

GC aims to work with good quality partners who reflect the diverse economies and populations in which we operate.

This includes:

- Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) owned businesses
- Business owed/ managed by Women
- Suppliers demonstrating a diverse workforce composition; and
- A mix of private, voluntary and public organisation

GC will review the diversity of current Supply Chains, regularly review our networking/ marketing of opportunities by ensuring we attract a Supply Chain that represents our diverse communities.

Communication and Procurement of Opportunities

GC commits to conduct our procurement activities responsibly and with integrity. We will openly advertise opportunities to engage Supply Chain partners to support our delivery. This could be on either new or existing contracts, or as part of a bidding process where we are looking for partners to support our bids to commissioners.

The procurement process is designed to ensure that the Supply Chain partners we engage are good quality, innovative, and have sufficient capacity, capability and good business arrangements in place to effectively deliver. During this process we also ensure any conflicts of interest are managed.

All opportunities are openly advertised and communicated to attract the best Supply Chain partners and give potential providers the opportunity to partner with us.

We communicate with potential partners in the following ways:

- Through our People Services Partner Network. Partners are encouraged to join the People Services Partner Network as this will enable organisation (new or current partners) to be directly informed of any potential partnership opportunities
- Advertise all opportunities directly on the GC Website www.growthco.uk
- Advertise on the Government Contracts Finder (<https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>)
- Through our own and wider communication channels locally and nationally

Types of Opportunities:

- Specific individual contracts - We may procure directly for specific contracts, where GC are bidding as a Prime Contractor for a forthcoming opportunity or gaps in a current Supply Chain on existing programmes.
- Multi-Supply Chain Partner Frameworks – These frameworks are designed to provide GC with access to a pre-selected, quality assured, pool of best-in-industry Supply Chain Partners. Depending on the type of procurement process, we may open the Framework at multiple times to allow new Supply Chain Partners or previously unsuccessful Supply Chain Partners the opportunity to join the Framework.

Procurement Process:

Publication of our Procurement documents on GC's tender portal. These documents set out the specification, requirements, evaluation and scoring criteria, bidding instructions and contract award processes. Bids are evaluated and shortlisted following the scoring and evaluation criteria provided in the procurement documents including a moderation process to ensure consistency and fairness. All bidders will be contacted to communicate the outcome of the process and provide feedback.



Contracting processes

Specialist Intervention Partners: Should we require specialist support in any, but not limited to, the areas listed below and dependant on scope of the requirement, a separate process will be used for purchasing ad hoc/ "one off"/short term provision;

- Health Assessments
- Health support including Mental Health
- Functional and Entry Level Skills
- Drug and Alcohol service
- English for Speakers of Other Languages
- Ex Offender Specialist Services

Due Diligence

GC manages risk in our Supply Chain through a proportionate due diligence process. The due diligence requirements can change depending on the requirements of a specific service or contractual requirement.

As part of the due diligence process, potential Supply Chain Partners will need to meet a number of requirements (the list is not exhaustive and will vary depending on contract requirements and on the tier/ category of Supplier):

- Details of Partners/Directors contact names and addresses and company registrations
- Latest audited accounts to support a financial viability health check
- Insurance Details
- Safeguarding arrangements
- Information Security and Data Protection
- Information Handling, Retention & Disposal Policy
- "Non-disclosure Agreements for all 3rd party suppliers (Telephony providers, text messaging services, etc.)"
- Security Incident Reporting Policy
- Quality Assurance / Monitoring Policy
- Observational Framework / Activity
- Customer Complaints Procedure
- Modern Slavery Policy and/or statement on website
- Fraud Prevention Policy
- Cyber Essentials Plus (or equivalent)
- PREVENT compliance (where required)
- Eligibility criteria checks (where required, ROTO etc.)

Please note that all due diligence will be relevant and proportionate to the contract and to the needs of the relevant commissioner. Please note that due diligence may be conducted annually as required by the contract.

Supply Chain Partner Retained Funding

GC may enter into both fully subcontracted (provision) and joint delivery (mixed) arrangements.

Due to the diverse mix of subcontract arrangements GC have in place, the funding we retain to manage subcontracts does vary based on contract. GC ensure all funding and payment arrangements are fair, proportionate and do not cause undue financial risk for Supply Chain Partners.

Where funding is retained, we will outline what the Supply Chain Partner will receive in return for this. This information can be found in the section below "Supply Chain Retention Funding and Developing our Supply Chain Partners"

Rates for Supply Chain delivery will be explicitly covered in the individual contract.

Please see the **Contract Appendix** for individual contract funding rates retained to support the management of Supply Chain.



Funding is retained at source and before allocation and maximum contract value are confirmed in contracts. All funding claims must comply with the current Funding Rules/Commissioner Guidance and the terms of the contract with GC where relevant.

Payment Terms

GC will make payment 30 days following receipt of a valid and accurate claim/invoice.

Payment is subject to the correct evidence and data being provided to GC by the agreed monthly deadline.

Adjustments may be made to specific payments where evidence of eligibility, participation or achievement cannot be validated by GC.

Where funding claims cannot be substantiated, GC will adjust and reclaim any funds from the Supply Chain Partner and where required make appropriate repayment to the funder.

Supply Chain Retained Funding and Developing our Supply Chain Partners

Our Supply Chain Partners are supported from initial contract agreement and throughout the lifetime of the contract. The contract review processes highlight any specific development needs.

Due to the diverse mix of contracts with individual specific requirements and tier of providers the we have subcontract arrangements in place for, the support offered to our suppliers can vary. (The list is not exhaustive and will vary depending on contract requirements and on the tier/category of Supplier)

Our Supply Chain retained funding typically enables the following support for providers:

- Regular meetings and performance reviews - to support and improve Supply Chain Partners performance to enable them to grow the current provision they have on offer.
- Access to the required CRM
- A range of management information and performance reports. These will be used to support the effective and timely delivery of programmes/interventions to - participants and to monitor performance against agreed targets.
- Access to our systems such as Assessment tools (contract dependent)
- Support to Build Capacity - Supply Chain Partners are advised of appropriate and relevant opportunities as they arise via the Intend portal, newsletters and performance review meetings. Supply Chain Partners may also discuss potential new growth areas and seek our advice regarding appropriate funding opportunities
- Support to meet contractual requirements
- Support to allow submission of successful claims
- Quality of delivery to include IAG and teaching and learning - GC activity enables continuous improvements in the quality of teaching and learning for both GC and its Supply Chain Partners. This will be achieved through session observations, the sharing of effective practice across the Supply Chain and Self-Assessment Reports/Quality Improvement Plans.
- Supporting with performance management – Each Supply Chain Partners will be allocated an individual supply chain manager to support them with performance management, through regular reviews. This can also include regular networking meetings and events to help encourage collaboration.
- A range of opportunities that actively promotes and facilitates the development of staff within Supply Chain Partners e.g. GC deliver a number of face to face and online courses that are available to all internal staff and in the SUPPLY CHAIN PARTNERSs to attend. These can include:
 - OTLA, Compliance, Quality, SAR
 - Safeguarding, Prevent, E&D & Data Security
 - Going Green/ Environmental Sustainability, Modern Slavery
 - MI and Information Security systems training.
 - Mental Health Awareness
 - Paperwork and Procedures Workshops / Understanding Data.



- Self-employment.
- Skills Action Planning & Goal Setting, Interview Techniques & CV writing

Publication and Communication

This policy and the Supply Chain Fees are published and reviewed on an annual basis in November.

<http://www.growthco.uk/about-us/policies/subcontracting-policy/>

Associated Documents

1. The Growth Company Procurement Policy and Procedures
2. Supplier Risk Management Policy and Procedures
3. Supply Chain Management Framework
4. Contract Appendix (Retained Funding Rates)

Policy Owner and Approval

The GC SMT fully endorses this policy and the policy is shared with the GC Board.

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This version takes effect from: 01/12/2020

This policy is owned by GC Employment MD (Michelle Leeson) and will be reviewed by the GC Senior Supply Chain Manager annually or in line with relevant changes to legislation or contractual requirements.

Document Control

Date: November 2020

Version: 6

Comments: Reviewed for 2020 in line with ESFA requirements

Review Date: 01/11/2021