

---

# Responsible Business Procurement Guidelines

06 February 2018  
Version 2.0



---

Dear Freshfields Supplier,

For many years we have sought to have a positive impact on the communities around us. We do this through our pro bono legal advice, our approach to diversity, community investment, and how we manage our environmental footprint. Together, these activities form our approach to Responsible Business, which you can find out more about on our website.

This approach to responsible business is at the heart of these sustainable procurement guidelines, which enable us, through our own procurement, to minimise our environmental footprint while improving our positive impact on society.

We trust you will integrate the guidelines in the delivery of products and services to Freshfields and look forward to working with you in achieving the objectives set out in this document.

Yours sincerely,

**Oliver Dudok van Heel,**  
Head of Corporate Responsibility

---

# Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Freshfields' operating principles	4
3	Supplier operating principles	5
3.1	Society	6
3.2	Environment	8
3.3	Ethics	9
4	References	10

---

<b>Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Freshfields' operating principles</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Supplier operating principles</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1 Society</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.2 Environment</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3.3 Ethics</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. References</b>	<b>11</b>

---

# 1. Introduction

Freshfields (the firm) seeks excellence in every aspect of its business and is committed to minimise the social, environmental and ethical impacts of its supply chain. We participate in the UN Global Compact which asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption. We aim to follow these principles and this document provides guidance on our expectations from our suppliers in relation to this.

We endeavour to make a positive contribution to the environment and society whilst meeting our business needs when purchasing goods and services.

To this end, we have developed operating principles that are applicable to both our suppliers and to ourselves. These principles seek to ensure that we and our suppliers act in a responsible manner and set out our expectations of how our suppliers will manage their own supply chains responsibly.

Where it is found that a supplier's conduct is not in accordance with the Responsible Business Procurement Guidelines and Operating Principles, we will seek to engage with that supplier and encourage improvement in their environmental, social and ethical performance. In critical cases we will terminate our business relations with immediate effect.

In support of the Guidelines and Principles, Freshfields will:

- assign responsibility for the Responsible Business Procurement Guidelines and the associated Operating Principles to appropriate named responsible individual(s) and provide senior leadership oversight of both Guidelines and Principles;
- measure and monitor the application of the Guidelines and Principles;
- review the Guidelines and Principles on an annual basis; and
- conduct an environmental, social and ethical assessment of selected suppliers utilising Freshfields' or external resources as appropriate.

Freshfields aims to maintain high standards of health, safety and environmental management in areas that are under the firm's control. The firm recognises its responsibility for the health and safety of its employees as well as those working on the firm's sites but not in their employment.

This document forms part of the firm's environmental and energy management system (EEMS) and its occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) (which are based on the requirements of ISO 14001, ISO 50001, and OHSAS 18001).

---

## 2. Freshfields' operating principles

Freshfields' Responsible Business Procurement Operating Principles sit within our Global Procurement practices that ensure a fair procurement process in line with all applicable laws and regulations. To implement the Responsible Business Procurement Guidelines, we will seek to:

- work collaboratively with suppliers to improve environmental, social and ethical standards with the aim of realising continuous improvement in all three areas for both our suppliers and ourselves;
- protect the confidentiality of information entrusted to us, as far as is legally possible;
- recognise the supplier's own standards where they are working to environmental, social and ethical standards similar to those stipulated in the Freshfields Operating Principles;
- ensure that all relevant employees are aware of the Responsible Business Procurement Guidelines;
- seek to exert commercial influence where we are confident that improvements can be made in environmental, social or ethical performance of suppliers;
- ensure that supplier's staff that work on our premises are treated with respect;
- base our supplier selection on objective and transparent criteria that include appropriate consideration of environmental, social and ethical performance. We will not use our relationship with clients to inappropriately influence our decision on the selection of suppliers;
- cease trading with suppliers showing persistent disregard for important elements of environmental, social and ethical performance;
- act as an advocate for responsible supply chain practices within our industry sector; and
- focus on those areas where the risk is greatest and maximum impact can be achieved.

---

### 3. Supplier operating principles

Freshfields expects that all its suppliers adhere to the Operating Principles set out below:

- suppliers are expected to have appropriate management systems in place for delivering compliance with the Operating Principles in their own operations and those of their suppliers;
- suppliers should comply with all relevant legislation in the countries in which they operate and all relevant International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions;
- suppliers are expected to communicate their expectations for compliance on all the issues raised within the Operating Principles to all relevant employees and suppliers;
- suppliers should, on reasonable request by Freshfields, provide evidence to enable assessment of their implementation of the Supplier Operating Principles by Freshfields; and
- suppliers should seek to demonstrate continuous improvement in their approach to responsible procurement.

---

## 3.1 Society

Freshfields seeks to ensure that the working conditions at the suppliers of the products and services we purchase meet the standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and international human rights, which include but are not limited to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

We expect our suppliers to adopt and demonstrate the following standards of social compliance and ensure that they also apply within their supply chain:

- **Child labour:** There shall be no use of child labour, and specifically there will be compliance with relevant ILO standards. Specifically, Freshfields upholds ILO Convention 138 on the Minimum Age, and Convention 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and expects all our suppliers and contractors to work in line with these standards.
- **Forced labour:** There should be no forced, bonded or involuntary labour and no workers are required to lodge 'deposits' or identity papers with their employers and should be able to leave after giving reasonable notice.
- **Health, safety and hygiene:** All employees should work in an environment that is both safe and healthy. Adequate steps should be taken to prevent accidents occurring in the normal course of work. Workers should receive suitable health and safety training and have access to clean toilet facilities and clean drinking water as required.
- **Discipline:** Physical abuse or discipline, the threat of physical abuse, sexual or other harassment and verbal abuse or other forms of intimidation is not acceptable. Disciplinary and grievance procedures shall be clearly documented and communicated to all employees. All disciplinary measures of a serious nature shall be recorded.
- **Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining:** All workers and employers have the right to form and join a trade union of their choice and use collective bargaining as a constructive forum for addressing working conditions and terms of employment and relations between employers and workers, or their respective organisations.
- **Working hours:** Working hours should not be excessive and shall comply with relevant national laws.
- **Equality of treatment:** Organisations will have a clear policy which seeks to eliminate discrimination in access to employment opportunities, training and working conditions, on grounds of race or racial group (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins); gender (including marital status, gender reassignment / gender identity, pregnancy,



---

maternity, and paternity); sexual orientation; religion or belief; age; or

disability, and promote diversity and inclusion.

- 
- **Remuneration:** Wages and benefits afforded to workers should meet national and local standards. Workers should be provided with clear written information on their pay and conditions. Excessive deductions on wages shall not be permitted as a disciplinary measure.
  - **Employment terms:** All workers should be provided with written contracts that must detail the terms and conditions of their employment. Contracts should be clearly understandable to each worker. Work required to be performed should be on the basis of recognised employment law and practice.

- **Community impact:** Organisations should operate in a manner that creates the least negative impact on their local communities and are encouraged to support the communities in which they operate through appropriate community initiatives.

It is understood that organisations must comply with all applicable laws and regulations and where there is conflict between these and this policy then the highest standards linked with such laws and regulations will be applied. Where there is no such conflict we would expect that the provisions that give the greatest protection to workers will be applied.

---

## 3.2 Environment

We seek to ensure that appropriate attention is paid to environmental issues when Freshfields purchases products and services.

Where relevant, suppliers should be able to demonstrate:

- environmental policies and management systems sufficient to ensure continuous improvement in environmental performance and promote greater environmental responsibility;
- the ability to monitor and review environmental performance;
- the degree to which operations are covered by recognised environmental management systems or the organisation's intentions towards such accreditation;
- the awareness of potential environmental risks inherent in their production, service or sourcing activities;
- the implementation of any appropriate mechanisms and processes in place to mitigate or minimise potential environmental risks; and
- the degree to which products and services have been designed with environmental considerations in mind.

Where possible, suppliers should seek to:

- minimise the use of energy, water and raw materials where practical;
- maximise the use of recyclable and renewable materials including energy where possible;
- make practical efforts to minimise waste and dispose of it in a safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible manner; and
- avoid contamination of the local environment and ensure that emissions, air, noise and odour pollution is, as a minimum, within nationally defined limits.

---

## 3.3 Ethics

Freshfields has clear ethical standards and arrangements to promote and encourage compliance. Similar standards are expected of our suppliers.

Suppliers should be able to demonstrate the existence of processes and procedures to implement appropriate staff guidelines and codes of conduct.

Suppliers should ensure that management systems and practices are in place to ensure the prevention of:

- money laundering;
- insider trading;
- conflicts of interest;
- fraud, bribery and corruption and other improper payments or gifts; and
- unauthorised access to personal and business information.

---

## 4. References

- The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) – Asks companies to ‘embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption.’
- The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This sets ‘a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations’ and represents a set of core international ethical standards.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This has been ratified by almost every member state in the United Nations and provides a framework for interpreting the best interests of the child.
- The Conventions of the International Labour Organisation. The ILO incorporates government, employer and employee representatives and is responsible for setting international labour standards. The ILO Conventions have the force of international law and are binding for states that have ratified them.
- The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work require all 174 ILO member states to respect, promote and realise the Principles contained in the seven core ILO Conventions, regardless of ratification.

These are:

- Conventions 29 and 105 and Recommendation 35 (Forced and Bonded Labour).
- Convention 87 (Freedom of Association).
- Convention 98 (Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining).
- Conventions 100 and 111 and Recommendations 90 and 111 (Equal Remuneration for male and female workers for work of equal value; Discrimination in employment and occupation).
- Convention 138 and Recommendation 146 (Minimum Age).
- Convention 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour). Money laundering.

Although not core ILO conventions, the following ILO standards are especially relevant:

- Convention 135 and Recommendation 143 (Workers’ Representatives Convention).
- Convention 155 and Recommendation 164 (Occupational Safety & Health).
- Convention 159 and Recommendation 168 (Vocation Rehabilitation).
- Convention 177 and Recommendation 184 (Home Work).

This material is provided by the international law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP (a limited liability partnership organised under the law of England and Wales) (the UK LLP) and the offices and associated entities of the UK LLP practising under the Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer name in a number of jurisdictions, and Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP, together referred to in the material as 'Freshfields'. For regulatory information please refer to [www.freshfields.com/support/legalnotice](http://www.freshfields.com/support/legalnotice).

The UK LLP has offices or associated entities in Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, China, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, Singapore, Spain, the United Arab Emirates and Vietnam. Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP has offices in New York City and Washington DC. This material is for general information only and is not intended to provide legal advice.

© Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP 2016