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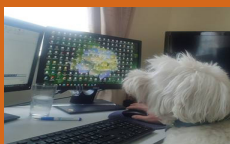
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To our Education Procurement Service Community, COVID-19 is changing everything about life and work as we know it. We're all focused on how to best protect and support our families, employees, customers and communities in the face of this unfolding crisis. On behalf of all EPS employees, I want to let you know that our thoughts are with those who have been impacted by Covid-19 and all those frontline workers who are putting themselves at risk to help others.



All of us at EPS are working remotely. We are focused on enabling our customers to be productive and collaborative during this challenging time.

PHILIP GURNETT, EPS Director

EPS response to Covid-19 Crisis

The Education Procurement Service has been mandated by the Sec Gen of the Department of Education and Skills to put our procurement resources and expertise at the disposal of the HSE to source supplies and services for the community assessment hubs being set up around the country.

Nine regional Area Crisis Management Teams (ACMT) are in place, they have responsibility for 35 Community Assessment Hubs and the supply and provisioning of the hubs along with ICU centres, the sourcing campaign is coordinated by the HSE with the EPS sourcing requirements for two regional ACMT. The unique expertise of the EPS staff, the laboratory supplier base and the procedures employed by EPS were well suited to deliver the sourcing requirements for Community Assessment Hubs.

TIPS FOR COMPLIANT SPEND

- 1** Use last year's completed MAPP for inter-departmental communication
- 2** Identify areas of recurring spend across departments
- 3** Identify how many contracts are in place for similar requirements
- 4** Check contract expiry dates
- 5** Follow the procurement guidelines set out in your institution's CPP
- 6** Check the EPS website and social media links for news and useful information
- 7** Regularly check the <https://bz.procurement.ie/> for updates on new frameworks

Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) links to category councils

Following the successful rollout of the Corporate Procurement Planning programme in higher education, EPS received the first round of Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) submissions in November 2018. The initial analysis produced an aggregated birds-eye view to give a 3 year forecast of procurement requirements across the sector. EPS was able to map this under the 16 x OGP categories of spend and start to build a comprehensive procurement database. The MAPP data provides critical linkage between the needs of the individual education body, the education sector as a whole and the performance of the centralised model. Individual feedback institute reports were shared with the HEI's in a series of MAPP clinics led by EPS in 2019 and key areas identified were subsumed into Category reports which will be fed to the Category Councils to represent education sector requirements in planning future central frameworks and arrangements.

Category Councils: Operate under the central procurement model with responsibility for planning future frameworks and arrangements. The EPS MAPP reports feed the education sector scope of requirements to the Category Councils.

MAPP Data Analytics: Supports good planning, opportunity for aggregation, supplier management,

inter-departmental communications and compliant procurement practices

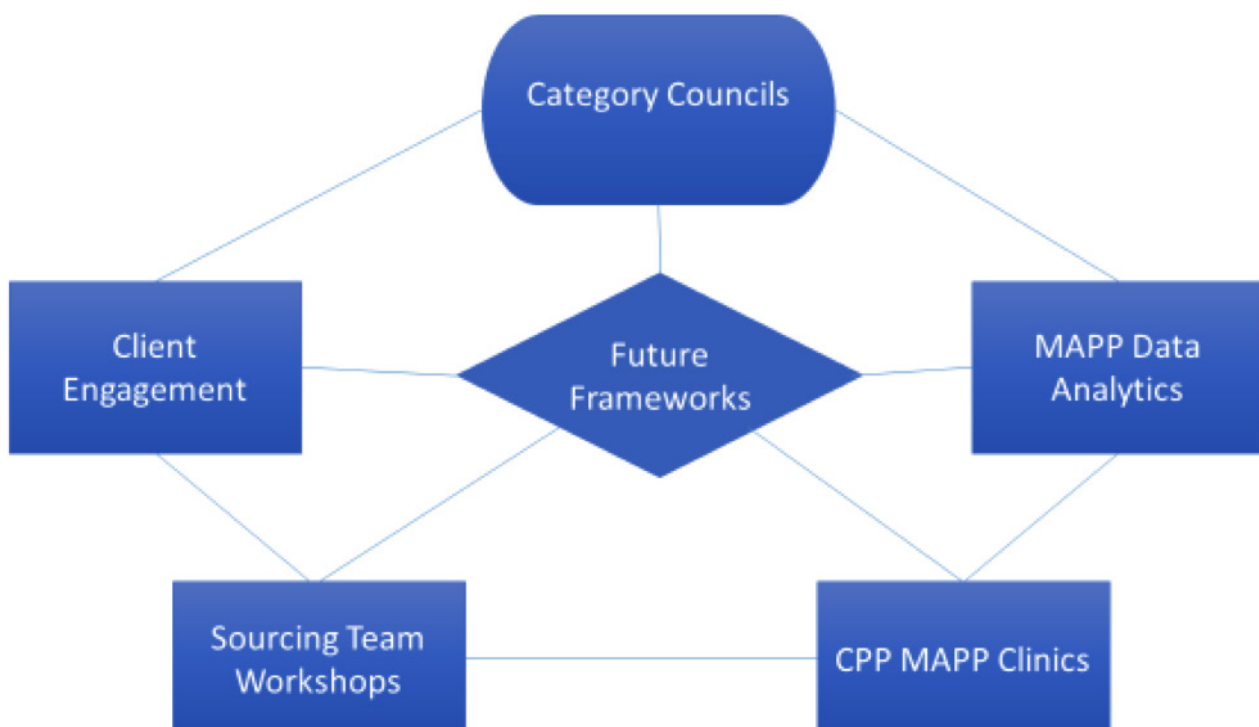
CPP MAPP Clinics: Client clinics provide a forum for discussion around planning & scoping future requirements of the individual education PSB.

Client engagement: Crucial to identifying any issues in the operation of the model.

Sourcing Team Workshops: Workshops with Portfolio and Category Managers provide the opportunity to assess the performance of existing frameworks and arrangements.

Some key benefits:

- Communication - CPP supports communication of the procurement structures and procedural guidelines and policies in place
- Contract status - MAPP view supports planning ahead to expiration date of contracts
- Spend - MAPP gives aggregated view of institute thresholds and supports supplier management
- Scope - Early opportunity to communicate and plan for education sector requirements
- C&AG audits - Compliance under the national procurement model and EU Directives



Category Management Strategy – Update

In our last newsletter, we introduced our Category Management Strategy template and the ongoing work that our internal project team is doing for this project. The objective of this exercise is to realise category management benefits in practical terms; to support procurement managers to develop robust Category Sourcing strategies by driving compliant spend and maximising value-for-money for the public sector.

As part of the Category Management exercise, EPS engaged with many stakeholders, suppliers and customers in the Laboratory/Research space. We also presented initial findings and recommendations to the Laboratory category strategic think tank, the Category Council.

The template itself is designed to provide a working methodology for any category of public sector spend and to provide step-by-step guidance to Portfolio and Category Managers at each section of the programme.

The Laboratory/Research category management strategy exercise was conducted over a number of months and was presented to OGP Executive by the EPS Director

in Q3, 2019. Based on the Laboratory/ Research draft submission, EPS has since been tasked to develop a broader generic Category Management template (User Guide) to help procurers adopt Category Management and Planning for their respective spend categories. EPS is currently drafting the generic Category Management template and will make this template available for all stakeholders once complete. Keep in touch with EPS through our regular communications channels and social media for progress updates on this project!



Stay tuned to the EPS website, Twitter handle and LinkedIn pages for updates on the progression of Category Management strategy and all news related to EPS operational projects!

CATEGORY COUNCIL - STRUCTURAL REVIEW Q1,2020



EPS Category Sourcing Workshops

EPS has continued its series of category sourcing workshops successfully into a remote workshop facility to meet with the OGP teams in Fleet and Plant, Marketing, Print and Stationery and Utilities. There was a detailed discussion on the performance of the existing OGP frameworks and arrangements in these categories and how they are operating within the education sector. The MAPP 2019-2021 reports formed the basis of the discussion and the detailed information relating to the specific requirements in the sector provided a sound basis for an informed analysis of the data.

EPS has also recently conducted a successful workshop with the LGOPC in the categories of Minor Building Works & Civils and Plant Hire. The workshops commenced in late 2019 with Laboratory, Library, Agriculture & Veterinary and Facilities Management & Maintenance. The next workshops are scheduled with ICT and Office Equipment, Professional Services and Travel/HR Services. EPS will issue reports from each of these workshops to our Education Sector stakeholders which will outline existing and upcoming frameworks, complexity level/timeframe to contract finalisation and output from the workshop discussions.

Working Remotely

COVID-19 led EPS to recommend all employees to work from home. For many, remote work is a new reality and one that takes some getting used to. EPS very quickly put systems and processes in place to make the most of the situation.

Below are a few tips that EPS considered when setting up their remote working procedures and guidelines

Over-communicate

The key to being successful in any professional role is communication. Since you're no longer a few desks down from your co-workers or your manager, it's your

job to schedule one to one check-in meetings with them on a weekly basis to connect on your goals, upcoming projects and daily tasks.

Just one of the tools EPS are using is Microsoft Teams for virtual meetings and team calls and of course the all important virtual coffee on a Friday!

Invest in reliable technology

We all know that access to consistent WiFi is integral but there is more to a successful setup than an internet connection. Other tools to invest in are noise cancelling headphones, wireless keyboard and mouse or even a second monitor to help with working efficiently.

Consider your workspace

Set yourself up for success in a place where you can focus on the tasks at hand.

Know when to log off

You may receive emails and chat notifications at any hour, it's important to develop a habit of setting a time when you officially log off for the night.

EPS supports Daffodil Day



Daffodil Day is the Irish Cancer Society's biggest fundraiser, taking place each year in March and raising millions of euro to support cancer patients and their loved ones.

This year's Daffodil Day was due to take place on 27th March but due to COVID-19 pandemic all street sales and events were cancelled. However, the Irish Cancer Society were very thankful to Twitter Dublin and Rothco, part of Accenture Interactive for organising a digital Daffodil Day on Friday, 20th March. EPS donated to this charity and received a Digital Daffodil to support cancer patients and their families across Ireland.

For your general enquires, specific feedback or suggestions on how we can improve our service to you, please contact us:

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