

## GEC Purchaser Guide for Circularity

Institutional purchasers, especially public procurement representatives in the EU, are being challenged to support “circular economy” with their procurements. This is challenging because there is still significant confusion about what constitutes “circular economy” and how does a large-scale institutional purchaser support it? Much attention has been given to the reusability and recycled content of a product, with some purchasers looking at supplier behavior (such as use of closed loop within the production processes).

*GEC’s Purchaser Guide for Circularity* is focused on helping purchasers understand how their procurement decisions can contribute to their organizational circularity goals. We are launching a working group with the purpose of 1) helping define what circularity is from the context of procurement and 2) translating that definition into questions that can be used by purchasers and 3) developing an appendix that helps purchasers understand how “sustainable procurement”, “purchasing in support of Circularity” and “purchasing in support of the Sustainable Development Goals” align as well as differ from each other.

The output of the working group will be the core data for the *Purchaser Guide for Circularity*. This Guide will be the third in the GEC Purchaser Guide series. For this Guide, GEC is pleased to partner with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USCCF). USCCF has hosted its Sustainability and Circular Economy Summit for the last four years and makes a number of relevant sustainability and circular economy [presentations, webinars, and research reports freely available](#). As part of the partnership, USCCF will provide space in Washington, D.C. either at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Headquarters or at the Chamber’s Capitol Hill Office for two working group meetings. Per the project timeline, one of those working group meetings will be held as a side event at the USCCF Sustainability and Circular Economy Summit taking place August 15-16, 2019 in Washington DC. USCCF will provide a discount to all working group members who register for the Summit.

The Guide will be comprised of three core elements:

### 1. Overview of Circularity

This section will identify existing definitions for circularity and provide a “working” definition to be used in the Guide. This “working” definition will align with Circularity from a purchaser’s perspective.

### 2. Translating Circularity into Procurement Questions

This section will translate the concept of Circularity into questions that can be used by purchasers throughout the procurement process. The goal is to create consistency in both the questions asked of suppliers and the documentation provided in response. The intent is that the data captured by purchasers in response to the procurement questions can also be used as part of the purchasing organization’s sustainability reporting process.

### 3. Comparative Analysis between Sustainable Procurement, Circularity and Purchasing in Support of the Sustainable Development Goals

This section will provide purchasers examples of how their sustainable procurement activities could be modified to also align with Circularity and support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

#### Working Group Timeline

- **April:** Confirm working group participants. Send invitations and background materials for June xx in-person working group launch meeting. Background materials include:
  - Overview of existing Circularity definitions, circular procurement initiatives and purchaser guidance.
  - Examples of how purchasers are assessing “circularity” in procurements
- **June 17th, 2-5pm:** In-person working group **launch meeting** at the Circularity 19 conference hosted by GreenBiz in Minneapolis. You do not need to register for Circularity 19 conference to attend the launch meeting. Discussion of background materials developed to date.
- **July - October:** Ongoing working group discussions
  - **August 15 - 16:** second in-person Working Group meeting to coincide with USCCF Sustainability and Circular Economy Summit in Washington DC.
- **November:** Draft Purchaser Guide distributed to working group participants for review.
- **December/January 2020:** Finalization and launch of *GEC Purchaser Guide for Circularity*.

#### Working Group Membership

GEC welcomes representatives from industry, academia and the purchasing community to join the Working Group. Please note that GEC is able to provide travel support to international organizations seeking to participate in this initiative.

If you are interested in joining, please contact:

**Green Electronics Council**

Nancy Gillis, CEO

[ngillis@greenelectronicscouncil.org](mailto:ngillis@greenelectronicscouncil.org)

**US Chamber of Commerce Foundation**

Scott Breen, Associate Manager

[SBreen@USChamber.com](mailto:SBreen@USChamber.com)