

Circular Procurement Framework

Most procurement rules were never designed with circular supply in mind. Used and refurbished furniture moves quickly and cannot match a fixed product specification written for manufactured goods. The result: **circular gets excluded before anyone asks whether it could meet the need.** Use this framework when writing a new brief or reviewing an existing one.

THE SIX-STEP FRAMEWORK

STEP	WHAT TO CHANGE	WHY IT MATTERS
1 Brief framing	Write a performance specification , not a product specification. Describe what the furniture must do, not what it must be.	Opens the brief to equivalent alternatives. Circular supply can meet functional requirements even when it cannot match a fixed product model.
2 Specification language	Use: "200 ergonomic task chairs meeting the following functional requirements." Not: "200 units of [specific model, manufacturer]."	Allows circular suppliers to compete on equal terms without reducing the standard required.
3 Equivalent alternatives	Add one sentence stating that equivalent alternatives will be assessed on functional grounds.	Standard in construction procurement. Rare in furniture. Prevents exclusion by default before any assessment takes place.
4 Timeline	Begin supplier conversations at project inception , not weeks before delivery.	Circular supply responds to planning. Stock moves quickly. Early conversation creates options. Urgency eliminates them.
5 Category scope	Add refurbishment and reuse as eligible supply categories alongside new. One line in the category strategy.	Most category strategies omit circular entirely. If it is not in scope, suppliers cannot bid and buyers cannot choose it.
6 Evaluation criteria	Add circular outcome weighting: items diverted from landfill , carbon avoided through reuse and refurbishment.	Gives sustainability commitments teeth at the point of decision, not just in the strategy document.

THE TIMING PROBLEM

A tender that takes four months will not find refurbished stock waiting at the end of it. **The point of leverage is the brief, not the award.** Engage circular suppliers before the spec is fixed.

THE SPECIFICATION PROBLEM

A brief for new furniture describes a product that does not yet exist. A brief for circular furniture describes **a need that already has an answer.** Reframe accordingly.

ONE QUESTION TO ASK TODAY

When will the brief be written? Not when the order needs to be placed. When the brief will be written. That is the point of leverage. If your organisation has a furniture requirement in the next six to twelve months, find that date and act before it.