



**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**  
**SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING**





# What are Guiding Principles?

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In order to manage our environmental and social performance as a company, we have developed a series of guiding principles outlining the standard practices we ask all our staff to adhere to whilst at work.

By following these principles, you will be helping us to maximise our positive impacts and minimise any negative impacts ensuring we are a responsible and sustainable business.

We also encourage you to think about how you can apply these principles to your life outside of work and hope that this will also enable you to reduce your personal footprint.

## Scope of this document

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Whilst purchasing goods provides a great opportunity for positive economic impact, it also results in the use of natural resources, the production of emissions to produce the goods, the generation of waste associated with packaging and disposal of leftover/excess goods, and emissions associated with the transport of the goods.

These guiding principles outline GTI's policies around purchasing for the purpose of maximising the positive impacts and minimising the negative.

These principles should be applied by all GTI employees purchasing goods on behalf of the company, but we also encourage you to consider applying them for your personal purchasing.





## Before you buy...

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Whilst GTI has to purchase goods in order to operate, we believe this can be done in a responsible way. Doing this requires putting sustainability at the top of the list when it comes to making purchasing decisions. Most people consider price and quality when purchasing, but it is less common for people to think about the possible impacts that purchasing creates.

At GTI we are committed to making sustainability a primary decision making factor when purchasing goods. To do this we ask all employees who make purchasing decisions to follow these principles.

Before you buy, consideration should be given to:

- ✓ The necessity of buying the goods

Does GTI or the client really need the goods? Are they essential or a 'nice to have'? Will the item definitely be used? These questions should always be asked to avoid unnecessary purchasing.
- ✓ Finding the most sustainable alternatives
- ✓ is the item for single use? Can existing goods/items be reused? Are the goods made from organic/fair trade or recycled materials, are they made in Australia? Do they meet the relevant certification standard?
- ✓ Some examples of alternative include using crockery and glassware rather than buying single use, disposable items. Asking your colleagues if they have spare items you can reuse such as folders and stationary. Consider giveaways made from home grown recycled products rather than plastic items transported long distances from overseas countries.
- ✓ Certification standards also exist for a number of goods – for paper products look for the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) label, for organic products look for ACO (Australian Certified Organic), the Australian Energy Rating Programme gives star ratings for appliances, APEAT for electronic products, Water Efficiency labelling and standards.

See [here](#) for more.



- ✓ The amount of goods that need to be purchased

For one off items, can less be purchased? When buying regular items, can they be consolidated into a bulk purchase to reduce the amount of packaging and the amount of transportation?

- ✓ The packaging and transport required for delivery

Target goods with minimal packaging or bio-degradable packaging and avoid goods using plastic packaging. This will usually require you to speak to the supplier, asking them what alternatives they have to reduce packaging. Will they accept the packaging back? If they have no alternatives, ask them to consider this for the future.

Check where the goods are located and prioritise local suppliers as this will reduce emissions associated with transport, and also ensure GTI is supporting the local economy (see below).

Consider whether suppliers implement sustainable business practices – they may have an environmental management system certified under ISO140001, they may have environmental policies or other initiatives in place to reduce packaging and emissions. Suppliers that don't have any of these things or talk about their environmental performance should generally be avoided. If they ask why you are not buying from them, tell them.

- ✓ Buying locally wherever possible

Buying locally not only reduces the impacts from transportation, it also ensures GTI is supporting the local economy. Local suppliers should always be prioritised (ie Sydney or within your city/town), however if local suppliers aren't feasible, consider other Australian suppliers before considering overseas suppliers.

GTI will select preferred suppliers for all regularly purchased goods taking these principles into account.

GTI staff working remotely should consider how they can implement these measures in their home office such as purchasing and using recycled paper products and avoiding the purchase of single use items.



## Supplier Questions

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If you are responsible for selecting GTI suppliers – use the following crib sheet to guide your decision making

1. Do some online research to find possible suppliers.

- Look at where they are located/and or where they source their products from
- Do they talk about sustainability or their environmental performance?
- Take a look at their policies and any other initiatives they might be taking to reduce their environmental impact and improve their social impact.
- Do they have any relevant certifications?

Narrow down a short list of suppliers using this information.

2. Contact your shortlist

- Make sure you're speaking to someone who knows their products, if in doubt ask to speak to a senior sales person.
- Tell them GTI only considers purchasing from responsible suppliers
- Ask them about the goods you are interested in, question where they source their products/materials from and what sort of packaging they use.
- Ask them how they deliver the goods

3. Make your decision

Use all the information gathered along with these guiding principles, and considerations of price and quality, to make a decision about which supplier to use.



Thank You

