



contracts  
service delivery  
**procurement**  
personalisation partnerships  
**consortia**  
commissioning **tendering**

Need help with  
commissioning  
& procurement?

# NAVCA's Local Commissioning and Procurement Unit



NAVCA's **Local Commissioning and Procurement Unit (LCPU)** was set up in 2008 as a direct result of requests from NAVCA members who needed help and support with the commissioning agenda.

Funded through the Big Lottery BASIS programme, LCPU supports the development of a diverse local third sector, able to influence service planning, win contracts, and deliver quality public services.

We provide practical information, advice and guidance to local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) - organisations that provide support and representation for local frontline groups. LCPU helps LIOs make sense of commissioning, be better equipped to decide what role they should play in commissioning and procurement, and in turn support their own members and local groups.

## The Unit aims to:

- improve the local third sector's understanding of commissioning and procurement and what it means for them
- help LIOs influence the commissioning and procurement practices of public bodies
- help LIOs widen the involvement of local third sector organisations in the design and delivery of local services
- support the development of service delivery partnerships
- offer the Government a well-informed voice on the implementation of its policies

*"NAVCA members listed "funding" as the biggest challenge that their organisation faced over the next 18 months. Commissioning, procurement and competitive tendering was the second most common answer".*

# What is commissioning and procurement?

**Commissioning** is the process of deciding what public services are needed, what priorities they are accorded and choosing what, why, how and where to allocate resources to provide services. Service users, communities and third sector organisations hold the knowledge, ideas and skills that can often be vital to the design and implementation of the best services possible.

**Procurement** is a method of purchasing services which results in contracts.

Public bodies should use a good commissioning approach to assess the needs of their local area and identify services that create better value and outcomes for service users, the public and the environment.

## Why is it important?

Many local third sector organisations will be interested in, or currently involved in, the delivery of services. Even more will have the knowledge to shape local services to best meet the needs of service users and communities.

LIOs are well positioned to make sure that the voices of third sector organisations and the people that use services are heard. LIOs can also play an important brokering role, working both with commissioners and third sector organisations.

*“Commissioning - the cycle of assessing the needs of people in an area, designing and then securing an appropriate service”.*

Partnership in Public Services: An action plan for third sector involvement

# How can LCPU help you?

We offer a number of services to local infrastructure organisations, including:

## **Commissioning and procurement**

**enquiry line:** Open for enquiries on commissioning and procurement from workers in LIOs, our enquiry line service offers information, advice and support. If you are struggling to provide support to a frontline organisation or just wondering what something means, get in touch:

Call us: 0114 289 3989

Email us: [lcpu@navca.org.uk](mailto:lcpu@navca.org.uk)

**Online resources:** We have developed a number of resources which are available online. These are regularly updated. Visit [www.navca.org.uk/lcpu](http://www.navca.org.uk/lcpu)

**News and updates:** Visit our news page regularly for developments in commissioning and procurement, as well as updates on the work of the LCPU team. You can also subscribe to our RSS news feed.

## **Networking:** We are launching a

commissioning and procurement online forum – a place to network and discuss commissioning and procurement with colleagues across the third sector – available via our website.

## **Influencing government:** As well

as helping you with local issues, we provide a voice nationally to government. We need your examples of both good practice and bad to help us shape future developments. If you would like to share your examples please email [lcpu@navca.org.uk](mailto:lcpu@navca.org.uk) or call 0114 289 3989.

## **Mailing list:** If you would like to join

our mailing list and receive news and updates from the LCPU team, please send your name, organisation and contact details to [lcpu@navca.org.uk](mailto:lcpu@navca.org.uk).

## The team

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local focus national voice

NAVCA is the national voice of local third sector infrastructure in England. We aim to ensure communities are well served by the local third sector by supporting our members and their work with over 160,000 local groups and organisations. NAVCA believes that local voluntary and community action is vital for healthy and inclusive communities.

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Registered charity no. 1001635  
Company limited by guarantee  
Registered in England no. 2575206  
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March 2009

Printed on recycled paper

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