

# Antioch University New England<sup>1</sup>

## Responsible Purchasing Policy

Antioch University New England (AUNE) is committed to the use and procurement of environmentally sustainable, ethically produced and socially responsible and inclusive products.

AUNE will consider social justice and sustainability (SSJ) criteria as well as cost, convenience and quality in decisions regarding procurement and other business relationships. Given AUNE's strong and clear commitment to sustainability and social justice, as expressed in our mission statement, those engaging in purchasing decisions are strongly encouraged to prioritize SSJ criteria when there is a tension amongst competing purchasing criteria.

### Policy Goals

- **Maintain High Social Justice and Sustainability Standards:** Procure products and services that meet the highest and most credible ethical, social and environmental standards without compromising quality, effectiveness, cost or convenience.
- **Access/Safety:** Ensure that the products and services purchased by AUNE support or improve the accessibility, health and safety of AUNE students, employees and visitors.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensure that the products and services purchased by AUNE support or improve the inclusivity of AUNE students, employees and visitors.
- **Waste & Greenhouse Gas Reduction:** Develop and maintain a supply chain and purchasing process through which waste and greenhouse gas emissions are first avoided or eliminated and where remaining waste can serve as feedstock/inputs for new product development.
- **Strengthen the Local Economy:** Support the local Keene and larger regional economy by purchasing goods and services from local vendors.

### Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The VP for Finance & Administration will be responsible for overseeing implementation of the Responsible Purchasing Policy by all those at AUNE who engage in purchasing on behalf of the institution. The Assistant to the President for Sustainability and Social Justice will work with the VPFA and purchasers to support implementation of the policy with technical research assistance and outreach to the AUNE community.

### Implementation Guidelines

Those responsible for making purchasing decisions at AUNE are encouraged and expected to support AUNE's commitment to environmentally, ethically and socially responsible and inclusive purchasing. To support these purchasing decisions, an appendix is attached that details specific preferred attributes and that provides a resource list of vendors & third-party certifications. This appendix is updated at the beginning of each fiscal year by the Assistant to the President for Sustainability & Social Justice. **If you have questions, suggested additions or changes, please contact that office.**

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by President on 9-22-09

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**Implementation Guidelines  
Appendix**

**Preferred Social Justice and Sustainability Attributes**

When determining whether a product or service is socially and environmentally preferable, all phases of the product's or service's life cycle should be considered, including: raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, operation, maintenance, disposal, potential for reuse and ability to be recycled.

To the greatest extent possible – and while meeting the criterion of effectiveness for the use intended – the purchase of materials, supplies, services and equipment for use at AUNE should:

- be accessible and safe for people of all abilities;
- be inclusive for people of all backgrounds and orientations;
- be ethically produced;
- be the most energy-efficient products/services in their field;
- contain the least toxic materials available; and
- generate the least waste disposal.

To the greatest extent possible, these materials, supplies, services and equipment should be sourced from companies that:

- adhere to labor practices that are sweatshop-free;
- provide a fair/living wage to their workers;
- demonstrate a commitment to environmental and social responsibility;
- guarantee the recycling of the products at the end of their life; and
- source materials sustainably and as locally as possible.

To the greatest extent possible, AUNE should source materials, equipment, services and supplies from local and regional distributors in order to strengthen the local economy of the Monadnock Region and to reduce the greenhouse-gas emissions associated with the transport of goods and provision of services.

All new campus construction and renovation, including lighting, should be built to at least the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standard or equivalent.

To the greatest extent possible, AUNE will not purchase or use bottled water for any of its campus operations, except in the event that City of Keene tap water is unavailable or unsafe to drink. Every effort also will be made to avoid the purchase/use of bottled water at all off-campus events and to use, in its place, filtered municipal tap water.

The following attributes are considered preferable:

- *Accessible Design\**
- *Barrier-Free*
- *Biodegradable*
- *Carcinogen-free*
- *Chlorine-free*
- *Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC)- free*
- *Compostable*
- *Durable*
- *Energy efficient*
- *Ergonomic*
- *Fair Trade Certified*
- Fragrance-free
- Gender Neutral
- GMO-free
- Heavy metal-free (no mercury, lead, cadmium)
- Less hazardous
- *Locally grown or manufactured*
- *Low or no volatile organic compound (VOC) content*
- Low toxicity
- Lower embodied energy
- *Minority Business Enterprise*
- Non-toxic
- Organic
- *Renewable materials*
- *Persistent, bioaccumulative toxin (PBT)- free*
- Pre-owned
- *Post-consumer*
- Preservation and enhancement of local economy
- Recyclable
- Recycled post-consumer content
- Reduced *greenhouse gas emissions*
- Reduced packaging
- Refurbished
- Resource efficiency
- Reusable
- Sweatshop-free
- Third party sustainability certification (i.e. “Green Seal”, “Fair Labor Association”, “FSC” & “BPI”)
- Union made
- *Universal Design*
- Upgradeable
- Used
- *Water efficient*
- Women’s Business Enterprise

\* Italicized bold terms are defined in the section below.

### **Responsible Purchasing Preferred Attribute Definitions**

*Accessible Design* – see “Universal Design” below

*Barrier-Free* – see “Universal Design” below

*Biodegradable* – The ability of a substance to decompose in the natural environment into harmless raw materials. To be truly biodegradable, a substance or material should break down into carbon dioxide (a nutrient for plants), water, and naturally occurring minerals that also do not cause harm to the ecosystem. In terms of environmental benefits, a product should take months or years, and not centuries, to biodegrade.

*Buyer* – Anyone authorized to purchase on behalf of the organization or its subdivisions.

**Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)** – Any of a group of compounds that contain carbon, chlorine, fluorine, and sometimes hydrogen and have been used as refrigerants, cleaning solvents, aerosol propellants and in the manufacture of plastic foams. The uses of CFCs are being phased out because they destroy the planet's stratospheric ozone protection layer.

**Compostable** – A product that can be placed into a composition of decaying biodegradable materials and eventually turn into a nutrient-rich material. It is synonymous with "biodegradable," except it is limited to solid materials. (Liquid products are not considered compostable.)

**Durable** – A product that remains useful and usable for a long time without noticeable deterioration in performance.

**Energy efficient product** – A product that is in the upper 25 percent of energy efficiency for all similar products, or that is at least 10 percent more efficient than the minimum level meeting US federal government standards.

**ENERGY STAR**- Developed and promoted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Energy Star currently certifies and labels appliances, heating and cooling systems, clothes washers, dehumidifiers, dishwashers, commercial and residential refrigerators & freezers, commercial food service equipment, room AC, lighting, office equipment, and manufactured homes. Criteria for product categories are updated regularly and designed to reduce energy use. In addition, Energy Star and the EPA provide information for reducing the costs of operating buildings through their website and informational material.

Website: [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

**EPEAT**- Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool is a self-declaration system operated by the Green Electronics Council to help purchasers in the public and private sectors evaluate, compare and select desktop computers, notebooks and monitors based on their environmental attributes. EPEAT was developed with funding from the EPA and the Zero Waste Alliance. EPEAT evaluates products based on: material selection, design for end of life, product longevity/life cycle extension, energy conservation, end of life management, corporate Performance, and packaging. EPEAT™ Performance Tiers evaluates electronic products according to three tiers of environmental performance – Bronze, Silver and Gold. The complete set of performance criteria includes 23 required criteria and 28 optional criteria in 8 categories. To qualify for acceptance as an EPEAT product, it must conform to all the required criteria. Environmental groups were active participants in the EPEAT development process along with other key stakeholders. Manufacturers voluntarily announce what performance criteria they meet based on good faith and pay an annual fee. Dell, Apple, Samsung, Sony, Gateway and many other manufacturers participate in EPEAT. Website: [www.epeat.net/](http://www.epeat.net/)

**Ergonomic** – designing the job, equipment, and workplace to fit the worker. Proper ergonomic design is necessary to prevent repetitive strain injuries, which can develop over time and can lead to long-term disability.

**Fairtrade Labeling Organization** – [www.fairtrade.net](http://www.fairtrade.net).

**Fair Labor Association** – [www.fairlabor.org](http://www.fairlabor.org)

***Fair Trade Certified*** – is a product certification system designed to allow people to identify products that meet agreed environmental, labour and developmental standards. Overseen by a standard-setting body, [FLO International](http://www.flo-international.com), and a certification body, [FLO-CERT](http://www.flo-cert.com), the system involves independent auditing of producers to ensure the agreed standards are met. Companies offering products that meet the Fairtrade standards may apply for licences to use the [Fairtrade Certification Mark](http://www.fairtrade.org) (or, in North America, the applicable [Fair Trade Certified Mark](http://www.fairtrade.org)) for those products.

***FloorScore***- is a program for testing and certifying hard floor services compliance with California's indoor air quality emission requirements laid out in California Section 01350 program. Scientific Certification Systems developed the program with the Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI). US Green Building Council approved FloorScore Certification as an indicator for LEED Credit in November 2006.

Website: <http://www.scscertified.com/gbc/floorscore.php>

***Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)***- FSC creates the standards for SmartWood and Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) (third-party certifying organizations) to certify forests and chain of custody forest products. As of 2005 FSC has three different labels for wood products: "FSC Pure," "FSC Mixed Sources," and "FSC Recycled." FSC also certifies paper products. Website: [www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)

***Greenhouse gases*** – Any of several dozen heat-trapping trace gases in the earth's atmosphere that absorb infrared radiation. The two major greenhouse gases are water vapor and carbon dioxide; lesser greenhouse gases include methane, ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), CFCs, and nitrogen oxides.

***Greenguard***- Greenguard is a for profit company that rates the indoor air quality of a variety of products. Greenguard certified office furniture earns LEED credits for Commercial Interiors Rating System. Companies pay to be Greenguard certified. According to Environmental Building News, "the most any one company has paid to date is \$180,000 per year." When considering the indoor air quality of products it is important to remember that after the first few months of occupancy, emissions from furnishings diminish to very low levels, and emissions from maintenance and cleaning products are the real issue in terms of air quality (EBN Volume 12, No.10)

Website: [www.greenguard.org](http://www.greenguard.org)

***Green Label Plus***- The Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) developed the Green Label in 1992 as a label for carpets and adhesives that pass their independent testing program for indoor emissions from carpets. The program was updated with stricter standards and called Green Label Plus in 2004. "[C]arpet must be tested by Air Quality Sciences, Inc. of Atlanta (the only certified testing laboratory)." 1 There are 109 certified products from 25 different companies, including: Atlas Carpet Mills Inc., Beaulieu of America, Blue Ridge Commercial Carpet, C&A Floor coverings, Inc, Camelot Carpet Mills,

Constantine, Millikin and Company, Lees Carpets by Mohawk Industries, InterfaceFLOR Commercial. Website: [http://www.carpet-rug.org/drill\\_down\\_2.cfm?page=8&sub=3](http://www.carpet-rug.org/drill_down_2.cfm?page=8&sub=3)

**Green Seal**- Green Seal is a non-profit formed in 1989 that began certifying products in 2000. Green Seal certifies Hand Cleaners, Electric Chillers, Cleaners, Fleet Vehicle Maintenance, Floor Care Products, paints, papers, newsprint and windows and doors. Green Seal is a member of the Global Ecolabeling Network (GEN).

**Reputable:** Product standards are developed with the input of the public and industry stakeholders, academia and government agencies. Standards must meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements, International Standards Organization (ISO) requirements and the requirements of third party certifiers. Green Seal cites Ecolab as having Green Seal approved products.

**Widely Used:** All Federal government contracts reference Green Seal Standards for Industrial and Institutional Cleaners (GS-37) for cleaning products. Green Seal certification is required for all industrial cleaning products bought by schools, and local July 2004. Carpet Industry and California Agree on New Green Label *What's Happening. Environmental Building News.* and state agencies in Minnesota, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York. Montana, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Washington are considering adopting Green Seal standards. Ecolab, a leading cleaning supply manufacturer, launched a line of products that meet Green Seal criteria in 2005. Maplewood-based 3M Co, Johnson Wax Professional, Benjamin Moore, Dutch Boy and Anderson Corporation product Green Seal certified products. Website: [www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)

**LEED rating system** – A self-assessment system developed by the US Green Building Council for rating the environmental preferability of new and existing commercial, Institutional, and high-rise residential buildings.

Website: [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

**Life cycle cost** – The amortized annual cost of a product or service, including capital costs, installation costs, operating costs, maintenance costs, and disposal costs discounted over the lifetime of the product or service. (Compare with Product Life cycle.)

**Locally grown or manufactured** – Manufactured or grown within 100 miles of Keene, NH

**Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)** – Written or printed material about a product that includes information on the product's physical and chemical characteristics; physical and health hazards; exposure limits; whether the product contains carcinogenic ingredients above a certain threshold; precautions for safe handling and use; control measures; emergency and first aid procedures; the date of preparation of the MSDS or the last change to it; and the name, address, and telephone number of the manufacturer.

**Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)** – is a term used in the United States which is defined as a business that is at least 51% owned, operated and controlled on a daily basis by one or more (in combination) American citizens of the following ethnic minority classifications:

1. African American
2. Asian
3. Hispanic American

#### 4. Native American, including Aleuts

MBE's can be self identified, but are typically certified by a city, state or federal agency. The predominant certifier for minority businesses is the [National Minority Supplier Development Council](#) with its 35-40 regional affiliates.

***Persistent, bioaccumulative, toxic compounds (PBTs)*** – Toxic chemicals that persist in the environment and increase in concentration through food chains as larger animals consume PBT laden smaller animals. They transfer rather easily among air, water, and land, and span boundaries of programs, geography, and generations. As a result, PBTs pose risks to human health and ecosystems. They are associated with a range of adverse human health effects, including effects on the nervous system, reproductive and developmental problems, cancer, and genetic impact. They include heavy metals and chemicals such as mercury, dioxins, and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls).

***Post-consumer recycled content*** – Percentage of a product made from materials and by-products recovered or diverted from the solid waste stream after having completed their usefulness as consumer items and used in place of raw or virgin material.

***Product life cycle*** – The culmination of environmental impacts for a product, including raw material acquisition, manufacturing, distribution, use, maintenance, and ultimate disposal of the product. (Compare with Life cycle Cost.)

***Recyclable product*** – A product that after its intended end use can be diverted from the solid waste stream for use as a raw material in the manufacture of another product.

***Recovered materials*** – Waste materials and by-products that have been recovered or diverted from the solid waste stream.

***Recycled materials*** – Material and byproducts that have been recovered or diverted from solid waste and have been utilized in place of raw or virgin material in manufacturing a product. It is derived from post-consumer recycled materials, manufacturing waste, industrial scrap, agricultural waste, and other waste material, but does not include material or byproducts generated from, and commonly reused within, an original manufacturing process.

***Refurbished product*** – A product that has been completely disassembled and restored to its original working order while maximizing the reuse of its original materials.

***Renewable materials*** – Materials made from plant-based feedstock capable of regenerating in less than 200 years such as trees and agricultural products. Rapidly renewable resources, such as grain-based feedstocks, regenerate in less than two years.

***Sustainable*** – An action is said to be sustainable if it satisfies present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

***SCS Sustainable Choice***- Scientific Certification Systems certifies selected carpets and

floor coverings for compliance with the NSF 140 Carpet Assessment Standard. The criteria is stipulated by the Sustainable Carpet Assessment Standard and California Gold Sustainable Carpet Standard, California Department of General Services. Eight major carpet companies offer a total of over 25 different products that are SCS Sustainable choice certified. About 190 companies have products that meet SCS's other environmental standards. SCS does not identify products that meet their standards with any label that end users can see. Based in Emeryville, California. SCS is a private for-profit company and independent third-party certifier that claims no financial, management or ownership connections between their staff and the clients they certify.

**Universal Design** -- Universal design is a relatively new paradigm that emerged from "[barrier-free](#)" or "[accessible design](#)" and "[assistive technology](#)." Universal design strives to be a broad-spectrum solution that produces buildings, products and environments that are usable and effective for everyone, not just people with disabilities. Moreover, it recognizes the importance of how things look. For example, while built-up handles are a way to make utensils more usable for people with gripping limitations, some companies introduced larger, easy to grip and attractive handles as feature of mass produced utensils. They appeal to a wide range of consumers.

As life expectancy rises and modern medicine has increased the survival rate of those with significant injuries, illnesses and birth defects, there is a growing interest in universal design. There are many industries in which universal design is having strong market penetration but there are many others in which it has not yet been adopted to any great extent.

Universal design is a part of everyday living and is all around us. The "[undo](#)" command in most software products is a good example. [Color-contrast](#) dish ware with steep sides that assist those with visual problems as well as those with dexterity problems are another. Additional examples include cabinets with pull-out shelves, kitchen counters at several heights to accommodate different tasks and postures and low-floor buses that kneel and are equipped with ramps rather than lifts.

**Upgradeable product** – The ability to increase a product's performance or features without replacing the product.

**Virgin material** – Any material occurring in its natural form. Virgin Material is used in the form of raw material in the manufacture of new products.

**Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)** – Chemicals that readily evaporate and contribute to the formation of air pollution when released into the atmosphere. Many VOCs are classified as toxic and carcinogenic.

**Water efficient** – A product that is in the upper 25 percent of water efficiency for all similar products, or that is at least 10 percent more efficient than the minimum level meeting US federal government standards.

### **Latest and Most Credible Social and Environmental Certification Standards**

Apparel	<i>Fair Labor Association</i> certified
Appliances	<i>ENERGY STAR</i> approved
Cleaning Supplies and paint, windows, doors, etc.	<i>Green Seal*</i> certified
Coffee/Tea	<i>Fair Trade Certified (TransFair USA), Fairtrade Labeling Organization</i>
Computers	<i>EPEAT</i> certified
Floorings	<i>Floor Score</i> certified, <i>Green Label Plus</i> , or <i>SCS Sustainable Choice</i> certified
Food	<i>Organic</i> (e.g., <i>USDA, Quality Assurance International</i> certified), <i>Fair Trade Certified</i> (TransFair USA)
Lumber	<i>Forest Stewardship Council</i> certified
Paper	<i>Forest Stewardship Council</i> (or 100% post-consumer fiber)
Products for indoor environments (paints, bedding, furniture, etc.)	<i>GreenGuard; ISO/IEC Guide 71</i>

### **What Antioch Uses & Related Sources for Responsibly Purchased Products:**

#### **Cleaning Supplies & Other Materials:**

- *paper towels*  
<http://www.prolinkhq.com/documents/ProLink.pdf>
- *toilet paper*  
<http://www.prolinkhq.com/documents/ProLink.pdf>
- *washroom cleaner*
  - <http://www.prolinkhq.com/documents/ProLink.pdf>
  - <http://www.enviro-solution.com/productselection/washroom.html>
- *cotton wiping cloths* \*not found
- *plastic liners (garbage bags)*
  - <http://www.worldcentric.org/store/bags.htm> \*not Green Seal certified
  - <http://www.all-greenjanitorialproducts.com/Garbage-Mailing-Paper-Shopping-Bags-s/50.htm>
- *hand soap*
  - <http://www.prolinkhq.com/documents/ProLink.pdf>
- *disinfectants for toilet*
  - <http://www.enviro-solution.com/productselection/disinfectants.html>
- *bleach (% water) for tile floors* \*not found

- *hard floor cleaner*
  - <http://www.enviro-solution.com/productselection/floorcare.html>
  - <http://www.essind.com/FloorCare/08513FC.htm>
  
- *carpet shampoo*
  - <http://www.enviro-solution.com/productselection/carpetcare.html>
  
- *glass cleaner*
  - <http://www.prolinkhq.com/documents/ProLink.pdf>
  
- *general peroxide based cleaner*
  - <http://www.essind.com/Concentrates/00519DCS.html>
  - <http://members.afflink.com/scripts/memord.go/memord/npitemdet.htm?mbritm=0x000000000136ac24&mem=1222>

### **General Info on Suppliers Listed Above:**

#### *ProLink* (<http://www.prolinkhq.com/products.html>)

- distributors in Vermont and Massachusetts
- view full catalog at: <http://www.prolinkhq.com/documents/ProLink.pdf>
- offers paper towels, toilet paper, bathroom cleaner, hand soap, and glass cleaner

#### *EnviroSolutions* (<http://www.enviro-solution.com/productselection/index.html>)

distributors in Burlington, VT and Portland, ME

- all products Green Seal certified
- offers bathroom cleaner, toilet disinfectant, hard floor cleaner, toilet disinfectant, and carpet cleaner

#### *Essential Industries, Inc.* (<http://www.essind.com/Green/GR-intro.htm>)

- great selection
- based in WI
- offers hard floor cleaner and peroxide cleaners

#### *JAD* (<http://www.jad.com>)

- based in New York
- offers peroxide cleaners
- JAD's product guide – easy way to find Green Seal certified options  
<http://members.afflink.com/scripts/memord.go/memord/npclist.htm?cat=100>

#### *World Centric* (<http://www.worldcentric.org/about/index.htm>)

- non-profit, offer many “green” products
- based out of Palo Alto, CA