

# Learning resource #3: Recommendations for Public Procurement of Innovation (PPI)

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*Part 3 of the InnoHSupport learning resources series*



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# InnoHSupport learning resources

Public procurement is a powerful tool for driving innovation, but despite regulatory reforms and incentives, many healthcare systems across Europe struggle to adopt new solutions. InnoHSupport addresses these challenges by providing a structured framework and capacity-building resources that support the successful implementation of innovation procurement processes. Our mission is to create an inclusive, interconnected, and effective innovation ecosystem for healthcare procurement in Europe. We aim to empower healthcare procurers and suppliers by providing specialised advisory services and fostering a collaborative environment that bridges gaps, reduces barriers, and facilitates the adoption of innovative solutions.

To support our mission, we have developed 10 distinct InnoHSupport learning resources, all of which are freely accessible on the InnoHSupport AGORA platform (<https://innohsupport.eu/agora/>). This set of digital resources is relevant to all key stakeholder groups, with particular focus on purchasing and innovation experts as well as suppliers who are less experienced in healthcare innovation procurement. The resources introduce innovation procurement goals and processes and address implementation challenges through case studies and by exploring cultural barriers. They also include specific guidance on the procurement of R&D services (PCP), public procurement of innovative solutions (PPI), and open market consultations (OMCs). Of the 10 resources, seven are primarily tailored to buyers and three to suppliers. Nonetheless, because a comprehensive understanding of both perspectives is essential, we encourage both buyers and suppliers to explore all 10. While each resource can be used independently, a suggested reading order is provided on the final page of this report.

*As part of our mission to create an inclusive, interconnected, and effective innovation ecosystem for healthcare procurement in Europe, we have not only developed our own resources but also established a platform that brings together existing resources from other projects. These can (freely) be accessed at: <https://innohsupport.softtr.app/>.*

## Introduction to this learning resource

This learning resource highlights the insights of Natalia Norambuena, Senior Innovation Consultant at Science & Innovation Link Office (SILO), and Diana Cortés Rodríguez, Manager at SILO. Both are experts in providing training in procurement and innovation. In this learning resource, Natalia and Diana provide their 7 key recommendations for starting with PPI.



## 7 key recommendations for PPI

### Recommendation 1: Internal assessment.

The first step before launching a PPI project is to conduct an internal assessment within your organisation. This means evaluating whether you have the necessary resources, not only human, but also financial. While there are funding opportunities available for PPI projects that typically cover a large share of the budget, the participating organisation usually must contribute a portion as well. Therefore, it's essential to ensure that both financial and human resources are allocated, just as you would for any other project. However, because PPI is still relatively new for many public bodies, this initial internal review becomes even more important.

Additionally, for public buyers, it's especially important to engage as many internal stakeholders as possible. One of the main challenges is building an innovation culture within the organisation, as some teams may be hesitant or unfamiliar with this type of process. Involving diverse stakeholders helps them understand the benefits and builds internal support to move forward.

## Recommendation 2: Be transparent.

One of the benefits of using this instrument is that it supports the achievement of broader policy objectives—such as economic recovery, digital and green transitions, and increasing resilience. Still, because the final solution may differ from the original vision, these policy goals might not be fully met. It's important to be transparent—both internally and with stakeholders—that objectives might only be partially achieved, depending on how the innovation process unfolds. So, while the benefits of PPI are significant, it is equally important to remain aware of the risks.

## Recommendation 3: Seek support.

If your organisation lacks sufficient resources, particularly human resources, seek support. This support could come in different forms: participating in training sessions, engaging in capacity-building activities, or using available tools and starter kits designed to help organisations new to PPI get started. Also, don't hesitate to look externally for help. External advisory services—such as consultancies with expertise in PPI—can guide you through the entire process. For example, organisations like SILO, and many others, are specialised in this field and have experience managing these types of projects, including anticipating risks and applying appropriate mitigation strategies.

## Recommendation 4: Choose the right procedure

Another key recommendation is to carefully select the appropriate procurement procedure. This decision should be based on tools such as the internal assessment, open market consultation, and an evaluation of the technology readiness level. Choosing the correct type of innovation procurement is crucial to ensure the procedure matches the maturity of the solution being sought. Take the time to define clear selection criteria, as well as a risk management strategy, since unexpected issues can arise during project execution.

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## Recommendation 5: Consider legal aspects

Another key point linked to internal assessment is the need to understand the legal framework of these instruments. Innovation procurement—particularly Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP) and Public Procurement of Innovative solutions (PPI)—comes with specific legal obligations. It's essential that the regulatory documents and tender specifications are developed and reviewed by professionals who understand the nuances of these instruments. If that expertise isn't available internally, it's strongly advised to bring in external legal experts. These are not standard tenders; they have particular features that need to be properly addressed. For example, tenders must clearly regulate aspects such as IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) management and penalties. A well-informed legal and risk assessment will help ensure that the tender is as robust as possible.

## Recommendation 6: Understand and plan funding requirements

If your organisation is seeking external funding, it's critical to understand all the conditions attached to that funding. These requirements must be reflected in the tender and in the monitoring framework of the project. Planning for this in advance helps ensure compliance and avoids surprises down the line.

## Recommendation 7: Monitor and evaluate continuously

Finally, ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the contract are fundamental. Unlike traditional procurement, innovation procurement typically involves frequent check-ins rather than just a final delivery. It's essential to schedule intermediate evaluations to assess how the solution is progressing. Additionally, gathering as much information, case studies, and lessons learned as possible is crucial for both current and future projects. Many initiatives have already been completed, and there's a wealth of existing knowledge to learn from. In this sense, different projects, such as InnoHSupport, can be a valuable resource for both newcomers and more experienced practitioners to avoid common pitfalls and improve outcomes.

## Explore our other learning resources

- **Learning resource #1:** Introducing Public Procurement of Innovation
- **Learning resource #2:** Well begun is half done: 5 Tips for Buyers on OMCs
- **Learning resource #3: Recommendations for PPI.**
- **Learning resource #4:** How to Plan – or Not Plan – a PCP Project.
- **Learning resource #5:** 5 questions & answers with Samira Bousseta.
- **Learning resource #6:** Key insights from the eCare-PCP project
- **Learning resource #7:** How to develop several PPI projects in a short period of time.
- **Learning resource #8:** Introducing PPI Projects for suppliers.
- **Learning resource #9:** Not just a formality—Why suppliers should engage in OMCs.
- **Learning resource #10:** Key Considerations for Suppliers Entering Healthcare Innovation Procurement.

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