

Re-use: Tonic for Medical Centre



Company: UMC Utrecht

Innovative business model type: Re-use and takeback

Sector: Furniture

Company size: Large

Service: Re-use of furniture and circular procurement of furniture

Key facts

- The University Medical Centre Utrecht (UMCU), is one of the largest hospitals in the Netherlands.
- As part of the REBus project the hospital set up a pilot into resource efficient use and circular procurement of furniture.
- REBus supported the UMCU by contracting Copper8, a consultancy who provided advice during the tender phase, as well as providing its own expert advisor.
- The aim is to commit to 90% of office furniture, waiting room furniture and living room furniture to be procured in a more resource efficient way.
- The result of the pilot is that a contract term of 10 years has been agreed.

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Case Study



Rijkswaterstaat
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Introduction

The University Medical Centre Utrecht (UMCU) employs around 10,000 staff ranging from medical and nursing staff to researchers and support personnel.

In addition to the academic hospital and children's hospital, it houses special units including:

- Neurosurgery.
- Cardiothoracic surgery.
- Neonatal and pediatric surgery and intensive care.
- Pediatric oncology.
- Trauma center.

The UMCU also features a Major Incident Unit intended for treating groups of military or civilian casualties in case of major catastrophes, war casualties or cases of contagious diseases.

REBM for furniture procurement

A number of pilots were launched, including the circular procurement of equipment for the UMCU. One of which included resource efficient and circular procurement for furniture, as part of the REBus supported work. REBus facilitated this by providing project management, in-house expert support and contracting Copper8 to provide procurement consultancy.

For furniture, the aim was to sign a 10-year contract for 90% of office furniture and waiting room furniture to be procured in a more circular fashion. The scope of the contract also includes finding a solution for existing furniture nearing the end of its useful life.



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The pilots

The first stage of the pilots was to conduct a joint feasibility study into circular procurement. This led to the decision to enter into a competitive dialogue with suppliers, to define the requirements such as needs, possibilities and award criteria. The award criteria were then decided in terms of technical content, financial and process.

'As well as furniture, the market enquiry also covered furniture management, interior advice, and the wish to enter into associations with different partners.



Results

A contract term of 10 years (split into two terms of five years) has been agreed for furniture management.

A price ceiling has been agreed with the client, plus the requirement that the solution be budget-neutral. It has been deliberately decided to opt for a partnership of at least 10 years, to encourage the client to include innovations, enter into partnerships and recover its investment.

UMCU choose to buy the furniture, rather than lease it, because they saw a number of practical problems with a 'pay per use concept', such as responsibility for the management of the furniture.

At the time of publication (February 2017), the UMCU and the supplier, Gispen, are still negotiating about the business model concerning the take back agreements. There's still room for improvement in terms of circularity.

Gispen will help the internal organisation of the UMCU to optimise the re-use processes. Refurbished furniture will be added to the catalogue of Gispen to stimulate re-use via the portal/ordering processes. The incentive for the customer is in the price; refurbished furniture is cheaper than new circular furniture.

"Sustainable but not dearer. That's one of the concerns."

Joep van Breukelen, Buyer, UMC Utrecht

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Lessons learned

UMCU discovered that attracting expert knowhow and advice on circularity was necessary to provide a more effective plan. Equally, taking the time to prepare and liaising with the market will reap dividends.

When searching for potential partners, the hospital found many small start-up organisations which, although promising, would not have been able to support an organisation as large as UMCU.

In addition, it became clear that:

- The parties in the market are reluctant to disclose pricing data, there is still limited transparency.
- Efforts from both sides are essential for the contract to succeed.
- A long-term contract provides the best options.
- Sharing your long-term procurement plan with the market is advantageous.
- It is important to invest time in a procurement strategy.

"More functional enquiries produce better results"

Michiel Plancken, Senior Buyer, UMC Utrecht



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Case studies were generated as a result of pilots carried out for REBus by WRAP or RWS and the named organisations from 2013 to 2016.

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