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# Procurement Made Simple: Fusion21's Frameworks

Case Study

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**FUSION**21

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# Summary

Housing providers often face challenges in delivering large-scale decarbonisation and construction projects due to limited technical expertise, resource constraints, and compliance pressures. **Oliver Mooney** (Head of Category) and **Paul Towers** (Framework Manager, Construction and Decarbonisation) explore how Fusion21 tackles these challenges with procurement frameworks that provide a fast, compliant route to market while embedding social value and expert support.

Readers who would like this document in a more accessible format should contact [rise@turntown.co.uk](mailto:rise@turntown.co.uk).

## Introduction to Fusion21

Fusion21 is a national social enterprise delivering efficient public sector procurement and social value you can see. With a 24-year history of providing procurement with purpose, it was created by and for the housing sector in 2002 and has since expanded into local authority, education, NHS, and blue light sectors.


Fusion21 specialises in compliant procurement within the built environment, offering members a fast and efficient route to market through a range of commercial tools.

To date, the organisation has saved its members over **£424 million**, created more than **16,600** employment outcomes, and generated over **£300 million** in social impact. Beyond delivering value for money, Fusion21 embeds social value into every contract and reinvests surplus through its charitable foundation, the Fusion21 Foundation. Its mission remains clear: to provide procurement with purpose, driving commercial efficiency while creating lasting social impact.

## Overview of Fusion21's frameworks

Fusion21 manages 13 commercial tools with over 1,200 active contracts each year, enabling members to award works and services worth over £3.5 billion since inception. These frameworks provide a legally compliant, streamlined route to market - reducing procurement timescales from the typical six to twelve months under regulated procedures to as little as six to eight weeks. This efficiency is coupled with access to a vetted, qualified supply chain, ensuring members can engage with experienced contractors who understand sector-specific challenges.

Frameworks are structured to reflect the diversity of public sector needs. For example, the *Decarbonisation Framework*, launched in May 2025, includes separate lots for domestic and non-domestic works, recognising differences in



specification, pricing, and supply chain capability. Since the launch of the *Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund*, Fusion21 has supported over 240 contracts worth in excess of £750 million, helping organisations deliver whole-house retrofit and energy efficiency improvements aligned with PAS 2035 standards.

Beyond compliance and speed, Fusion21 frameworks embed added value. Members benefit from:

- Competitive pricing models and developed specifications.
- Technical and contractual support, including call-off management and procurement advice.
- Social value delivery in every contract.
- Performance benchmarking through framework-level KPIs.

By combining procurement expertise with sector insight, Fusion21 frameworks enable public bodies to achieve more than transactional outcomes - they create opportunities for innovation, skills development, and long-term impact.

## Benefits of using a framework

For many public sector organisations, navigating complex procurement regulations can be time-consuming and resource intensive. Using a Fusion21 framework offers significant advantages:

1. **Speed and efficiency:** The accelerated route to market allows members to mobilise projects quickly, meet funding deadlines, and respond to urgent needs without sacrificing compliance or quality. Reduced timescales also translate into lower administrative costs, freeing up resources for delivery.
2. **Access to a qualified supply chain:** Every supplier appointed to a Fusion21 framework undergoes rigorous checks for experience, accreditations, and capability. For members, this means confidence in working with contractors who understand sector-specific requirements - whether delivering retrofit works under PAS 2035 or managing large-scale construction projects. This assurance reduces risk and ensures projects are delivered to the highest standards.
3. **Targeted early engagement with credible suppliers:** Frameworks facilitate engagement with suppliers early in the process, enabling informed decisions and collaborative planning. This early dialogue helps shape specifications, identify potential risks, and explore innovative solutions before contracts are awarded.

Overall, Fusion21's frameworks deliver speed, certainty, and trusted expertise - turning procurement into a strategic advantage.

# Driving social impact

## Embedding social value in every contract

Fusion21 requires suppliers to deliver measurable social value outcomes as part of their contractual obligations. Using a credit-based model, for every £100,000 of contract spend, suppliers must provide 10 social value credits. These credits translate into tangible benefits such as job creation, apprenticeships, and training opportunities. For example, one job created equates to 50 credits, meaning a £500,000 contract could generate a new employment opportunity. This structured approach allows outcomes to be tailored to the priorities of each contracting authority, ensuring relevance and impact.

In the last financial year alone (2024-2025), contracts awarded through Fusion21 frameworks delivered:

- **2,497** jobs (sustained or created)
- **216** apprenticeships
- Over **1,900** training opportunities

Additionally, 51% of suppliers implemented training initiatives to upskill staff in sustainability and green skills, while 66% took proactive steps to reduce carbon emissions - demonstrating how social value commitments drive industry-wide progress.

## The Fusion21 Foundation: impact beyond procurement

Established in 2015, the *Fusion21 Foundation* reinvests surplus income from the business into charitable initiatives. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded over £4 million in grant funding, focusing on three key areas:

4. Health and wellbeing
5. Employment and skills
6. Financial inclusion and resilience

Through partnerships and targeted funding, the Foundation supports large-scale projects that deliver lasting change.<sup>1</sup>

## Fusion21's top tips for using frameworks

While frameworks offer speed, compliance, and value, contracting authorities must understand their responsibilities and risks before proceeding. Fusion21 highlights three critical points for organisations new to frameworks:

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<sup>1</sup> Fusion21 Foundation Case Studies <https://www.fusion21.co.uk/foundationcasestudies>

7. **Confirm legal compliance and eligibility:** Verify that it was established in accordance with relevant procurement legislation (such as PCR 2015 or PA 2023). Check the original contract notice to confirm who completed the procurement. If the entity enabling the call-off differs, seek clarity on their relationship and obligations.
8. **Assess framework scope and suitability:** Check the contract notice to ensure you are an eligible user of the framework. Review its scope, supplier accreditations, and commercial terms to confirm they meet your technical and compliance needs.
9. **Understand call-off mechanisms and compliance risks:** Liability for compliance sits with the contracting authority - not the framework provider. If using a direct award, confirm that the method for selecting suppliers is objective and that key terms - pricing, specifications, and contract conditions are pre-established.

By asking the right questions upfront - about compliance, scope, and call-off processes, organisations can use frameworks confidently and avoid costly legal pitfalls.

#### Links to resources referenced:

##### Fusion21

Get in touch with Fusion21 here: [info@fusion21.co.uk](mailto:info@fusion21.co.uk)

#### Links to other relevant resources:

Supply chain advice pack: Procurement Act 2023 update – RISE Toolkit

Procurement practices in housing – RISE Masterclass

Procurement Strategy – RISE Article

Sustainable and responsible procurement for retrofit – RISE Podcast

#### Upcoming RISE events focusing on procurement:

Retrofit Information, Support and Expertise (RISE) Events - 27 Upcoming Activities and Tickets | Eventbrite



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