

Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC) becomes one of only 25 Founder Members across Europe of Electronics Watch

APUC becomes the first Centre of Procurement Expertise and one of only 25 Founder Members across Europe of Electronics Watch, an independent monitoring organisation working to achieve respect for labour rights in the global electronics industry through socially responsible public purchasing in Europe. APUC, as the Procurement Centre of Expertise for all Universities and Colleges in Scotland is working in tune with their member institution's ethical objectives and is therefore committed to pushing for improved ethical, social, economic and environmental standards in its supply base.

APUC recognise the opportunity of working with Electronics Watch and pulling together shared goals, objectives and resources to help all involved achieve the aim of a transparent, fair and ethical supply chain. To this end they have participated in Electronics Watch from its inception, as a member of its informal Advisory Group, working with People & Planet (the key UK arm of Electronics Watch).

Jim Cranshaw from People and Planet said "We have been working in partnership with APUC for some time on their Sustain project and we are delighted that as part of their strong commitment to sustainable procurement and ethical responsibility, they have become a founder member of Electronics Watch. We hope they, as the first Centre of Procurement Expertise to be a founding member, will encourage other similar bodies to bring an increased focus to the impacts of the ITC supply chain".

APUC has worked closely with its client institutions, students, student groups (including the NUS) and NGO's (including People and Planet) since December 2012 on their project 'Sustain' – promoting improved awareness and standards through its procurement processes. The culmination of APUC's efforts is the Sustain web tool, due to launch later in 2014, which enables supplier assessment against the APUC Code of Conduct, collects sub supplier/supply chain data, is accessible to Institutions and other UK HE/FE Consortia, is free to relevant suppliers and allows suppliers to complete one assessment for the whole Higher and Further education sector. The outputs are then used to prioritise further supply chain review / audit where applicable.

Angus Warren APUC's CEO said "APUC are very pleased to support Electronics Watch in moving forward their work to support the rights of workers in the electronics industry around the world. The synergies between Electronics Watch and our own Sustain Project are significant and are targeted at the value that a collaborative focus can bring to change to industry practises. Whilst our Sustain project covers the very broad range of goods, service and works that our Sector purchases, Electronics Watch focuses on a very specific yet significant area of that spend and as such we believe we can reap large rewards by working together to help workers in ITC supply chains. By working together and leveraging the significant spend our Sector has, we hope to positively influence change."