

# Winterthur Declaration towards a post-carbon procurement culture

**Mission** The construction industry is at the forefront of the transition towards a non-fossil fuel-based society. Architects and engineers play a decisive role in ensuring we can adopt building practices that are climate friendly, resource efficient and economical while also delivering high quality. In this regard, the public procurement of planning and design services is key to assuring quality, facilitating innovation and promoting responsibility. The signatory organisations are actively committed to making this happen.

## **1. Building in existing fabric: planning and design in the face of uncertainty**

A large amount of construction work is performed on buildings that already exist. This makes planning and design complex: often, factors such as the materials used, harmful substances, energy efficiency and heritage protection status can only be truly assessed once the project is under way. Narrowly defined procurement requirements hinder high-quality, sustainable, context-sensitive solutions.

*Uncertainty must be accepted as part of the planning and design process. The procedures for awarding contracts must provide a certain degree of flexibility and promote innovation.*

## **2. Trade-offs between sufficiency, efficiency and quality**

Post-carbon construction combines resource conservation and efficiency with architectonic quality. Sufficiency does not mean “doing without”; instead, it means deliberately reducing surface areas, functions and materials in a way that achieves the best results with fewer resources.

Trade-offs may arise between:

- reduced space and comfort
- preserving the existing fabric and complying with recognised technical rules / norms
- energy efficiency and Baukultur
- legal requirements and innovation

*These tensions must be made transparent and assessed in a nuanced manner – points-based systems are not equal to the task.*

## **3. Interdisciplinarity is key – but it doesn't come for free**

Planning and design in a post-carbon environment calls for teamwork between experts in the fields of architecture, engineering, building technology systems, the circular economy, sociology and mobility, among others. This form of collaboration increases the time and effort involved, especially for small and newly established companies.

*Interdisciplinary approaches must be encouraged without this requiring undue preliminary work or favouring the awarding of large, single-lot contracts.*



#### 4. Recommendations

To align post-carbon procurement with high planning and design quality, the signatory organisations recommend the following:

- **Realistic requirements:** specifications should be ambitious but also realisable while transparently addressing the trade-offs involved.
- **Process-oriented planning:** competitions and procurement procedures should enable flexible decision-making at each stage in the process.
- **Institutionalising interdisciplinarity:** early collaboration between all the disciplines must be encouraged, taking due account of the workload involved.
- **Appropriate fees:** expertise, responsibility and time spent on the project must be compensated fairly. This applies in particular to sufficiency-oriented planning and design solutions.
- **Holistic criteria:** ecological, economic, social and Baukultur-related dimensions must be integrated into all areas and forms of procurement.

#### Initial signatories

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