



IMPACT Program: A Best Practice in Public Procurement

Introduction

In January of 2024, the Orange County Procurement Division launched the *Initiative for Managing Procurement Advancement and Continuous Transformation* (IMPACT) to enhance operational efficiency, develop leadership within the organization, and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of public procurement. This program has successfully driven innovative projects that have strengthened procurement operations, empowered staff, and created lasting improvements in the procurement process. IMPACT aligns with Orange County's mission to reduce barriers to participation, promote the profession, and leverage technology to streamline operations.

The premise of the program is simple: empower individuals to drive meaningful change while enhancing operational efficiency and fostering professional growth. At its core, the Initiative for Managing Procurement Advancement and Continuous Transformation (IMPACT) is built on the idea that when talented professionals are given the tools, support, and opportunities to lead, they can achieve extraordinary results. By assigning team members to carefully curated projects that align with their skills and aspirations, the program creates an environment where participants are not only challenged to excel but also encouraged to grow beyond their perceived potential. These projects, which range from technology-driven process improvements to outreach initiatives that reduce barriers for small and minority-owned businesses, serve a dual purpose: advancing organizational goals and nurturing leadership capabilities. The structured project management framework employed by IMPACT, including the creation of charters, work breakdown structures, and comprehensive evaluations, ensures that every initiative is approached with discipline and clarity.

Regular stand-up meetings and progress tracking instill a culture of accountability, while collaboration across cross-functional teams builds resilience and adaptability. The results speak for themselves—over a dozen operational projects successfully executed simultaneously, the production of cutting edge procurement resources, and strengthened relationships with key stakeholders are just a few examples of the tangible outcomes achieved through this initiative. Moreover, the program's emphasis on sustainability ensures that these gains are not fleeting; instead, they set the foundation for a resilient procurement division poised to tackle future challenges with confidence. In essence, IMPACT is more than a program—it is a model for how strategic investment in people and processes can drive long-lasting transformation, not only for our agency but also for the community it serves.

Program Goals and Objectives

The IMPACT Program was designed to:

- Develop future leaders within the procurement division by engaging staff in cross-functional projects.
- Advance procurement initiatives that improve efficiency and effectiveness while reducing operational bottlenecks.
- Foster team collaboration and build internal capacity for strategic problem-solving.
- Strengthen relationships with key stakeholders, including vendors, community partners, and internal departments.
- Promote inclusivity in procurement through multilingual resources and expanded outreach.
- Leverage technology to modernize procurement processes and remove barriers to supplier participation.

Methodology

The success of the IMPACT Program was driven by a structured and intentional methodology that ensured both effective project execution and meaningful professional development:

1. **Strategic Project Curation & Leadership Assignment:** Projects were carefully selected to align with organizational priorities and operational needs. Leaders were assigned based on the competencies required to achieve success, while also providing opportunities for staff to grow, refine their talents, and step into expanded responsibilities.
2. **Sustainable Leadership Model:** Instead of relying solely on managers and supervisors to drive initiatives, IMPACT promoted a distributed leadership approach. This model strengthened the division's leadership bench, built resilience among emerging leaders, and prepared staff to take on higher levels of responsibility over time.
3. **Structured Project Management Approach:** Participants followed a disciplined project management methodology, including the creation of project charters, work breakdown structures, and structured tracking through the project lifecycle—planning, initiating, executing, monitoring, and closing. Teams managed resource allocation, expectation setting, communication planning, and program documentation.
4. **Accountability through Regular Stand-Up Meetings:** To maintain momentum and ensure project progress, regularly scheduled stand-up meetings were implemented to track milestones, address challenges, and facilitate real-time problem-solving.

5. **Outcome Measurement & Evaluation:** Structured evaluations and regular progress meetings provided insights into project impact, ensuring continuous improvement and effective knowledge transfer across the organization.

Execution and Achievements

Since its inception, the IMPACT Program has successfully advanced over a dozen projects that would have otherwise remained queued for future execution. These initiatives spanned various operational areas, including IT enhancements, marketing and outreach, data analytics, and education programming. By engaging staff in leading or supporting these projects, the program created tangible outcomes that benefited the procurement division, Orange County, and the broader supplier community.

Key achievements include:

- **Leadership Development & Professional Growth:** Staff members took on leadership roles within their assigned projects, gaining valuable experience in project management, stakeholder engagement, and strategic planning. These opportunities positioned employees for promotional growth and expanded their skill sets.
- **Operational Efficiencies:** The program enabled the simultaneous execution of multiple projects, ensuring timely delivery of procurement innovations that would have otherwise been delayed due to resource constraints.
- **Multilingual Procurement Deliverables:** Recognizing the diverse vendor base, the division produced procurement resources in multiple languages, reducing barriers to participation and fostering inclusivity in the solicitation process.
- **Technology Advancements:** The program leveraged digital tools to streamline procurement workflows, enhance transparency, and improve supplier engagement.
- **Stakeholder Engagement & Professional Promotion:** By promoting procurement best practices, engaging with the vendor community, and strengthening relationships with internal departments, IMPACT positioned procurement as a key driver of organizational success.

Impact on our Profession and Community

The IMPACT Program serves as a model for procurement divisions seeking to implement best practices that benefit their entity and the broader community. Through this initiative, Orange County demonstrated a strong commitment to continuous improvement, professional development, and inclusive procurement strategies.

By reducing barriers to supplier participation, particularly for small and minority-owned businesses, the program supported economic growth and expanded opportunities for local vendors.

Additionally, by promoting procurement professionalism and fostering a culture of innovation, IMPACT contributed to the advancement of public procurement as a discipline and the ongoing development of talent and well equipped leaders within the profession.

Sustainability and Replicability

A key strength of the IMPACT Program is its ability to be institutionalized as an ongoing standard practice. The structured approach to project selection, leadership assignment, and execution ensures sustainability. The model can be replicated by other procurement entities seeking to enhance their operational effectiveness, develop talent, and drive strategic procurement initiatives.

Conclusion

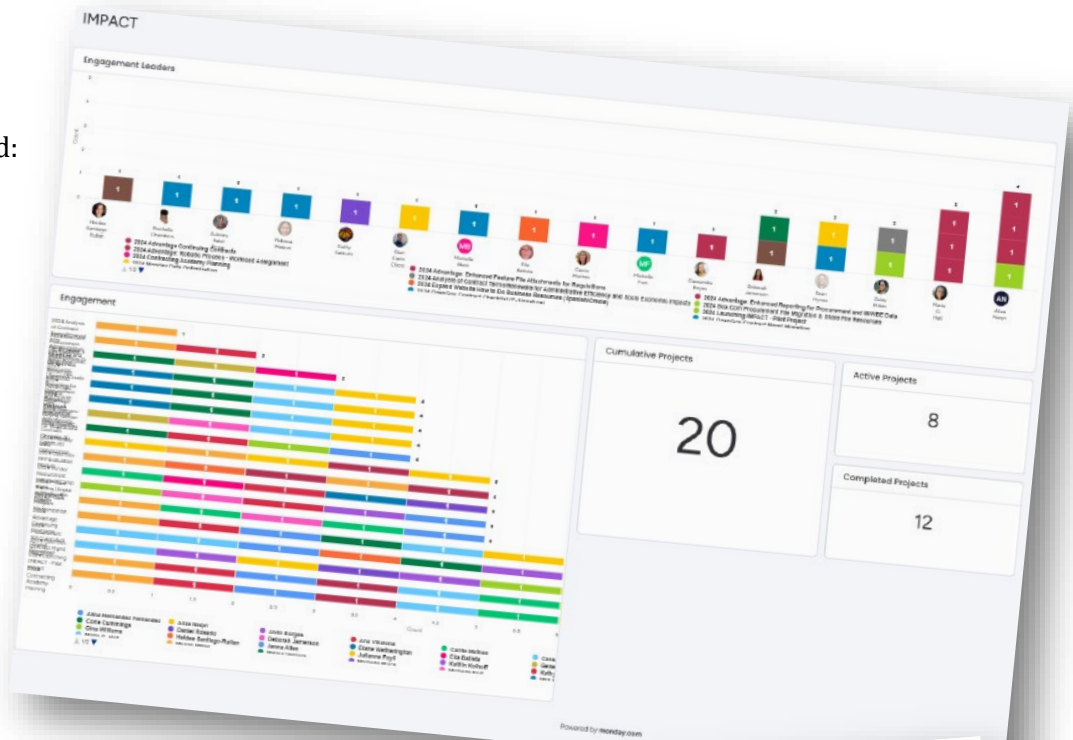
The IMPACT Program exemplifies a best practice in public procurement by fostering leadership development, achieving operational efficiencies, and prioritizing community engagement. Through this initiative, the Orange County Procurement Division has demonstrated its commitment to continuous improvement and the advancement of procurement excellence. As a scalable and repeatable model, IMPACT represents an innovative approach to managing procurement transformation and positioning procurement professionals for long-term success.

Participants gave this program an average rating of 4.4 out of 5. They were able to score their participation based on achievement of milestones, project management, team engagement, effective management and the value of the leadership experience.

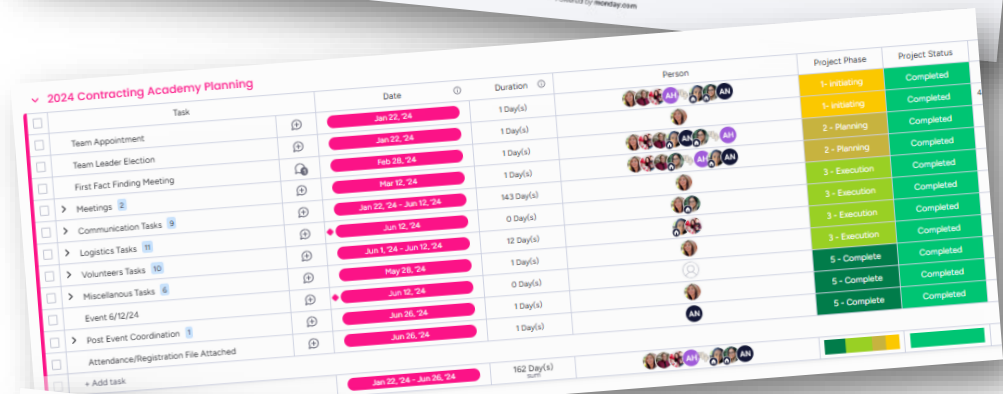
Project Name	I established miles...	I ensured the goals...	I motivated my tea...	I effectively manage...	This was a valuabl...	Average Rating
2025 Contracting Academy Planning	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	3.4
OKTA Implementation OpenGov	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	5
Analysis of Contract Terms/Renewals for ...	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4.6
2024 Contracting Academy Planning	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	5
Box.Com Procurement File Migration & Sh...	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	3.4
Monday Data Optimization	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4.2
Advanta... Advantage... Advantage...	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4.2
Procurement 101 Curriculum (Digital Reco...	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4.6
P-Card Training (Digital Recording & Exam)	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4.4
P-Card Program Modernization	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4.8
Advantage Continuing Contracts	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	5
OpenGov Contract Checklist (E-Signature)	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4
Opengov Buying Section RFQ Template	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	4.6

Additionally, each team shared achievements, challenges and support needed for next steps. This information provides us with valuable input to continue the program and adjust for future improvements.

Program Dashboard:



Sample Project:



Project List:

