Why we wrote this guidance

Open Contracting Partnership ↗ is a nonprofit organization that supports public sector organizations around the world to get better results from their procurements through leveraging data, cross-sector collaboration, and goal-driven systems change. Given our technology expertise, our partners are now asking us ↗ questions around buying AI and looking for more resources on how to get started.

We set out to create this guidance with and for procurement directors and officers, as well as for project teams from agencies or departments that want to buy and use AI technology. Through our one-on-one conversations and group co-creation sessions ↗ with over fifty public practitioners and experts, we identified three critical challenges for successful AI procurement:

1. Procurement teams want help understanding, in plain language, what to pay attention to when buying AI technology.
2. Procurement, project, and IT/data teams seek to better collaborate and work in more agile ways to get the best products and outcomes.
3. Public sector organizations must ready their IT, data, and project teams to adopt AI technology.



This guidance seeks to address these challenges by providing actionable and plain language information to help public sector procurement officials get started with the essential information they need to know when buying AI, as well as give procurement, project, and technology teams a shared language and vision for working together. We also highlight some of the key measures that leadership should take to help make their organizations ready to buy and adopt AI technology.