

Editorial

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Improving public procurement systems and maximising the potential for public–private partnerships (PPP) in construction and infrastructure projects contributes to the improvement of market integrity, guarantees better project quality and value, and facilitates the integration of sustainability goals. This issue of *Management, Procurement and Law* includes four papers, three of which discuss themes related to construction management.

Ojiako *et al.* (2014) discuss procurement process in public-sector building construction; their excellent paper discusses the lowest bid procurement philosophy and compares it with the advantages and disadvantages of the best value concept. The challenge is the absence of consensus on an appropriate algorithm to assess the best value concept, and the idea that this concept will remove the need for competitive tendering. The study examines two research questions using different criteria and their weight to assess the best value in Korea's construction projects. The result outlines six main criteria and 24 sub-criteria.

Laryea and Watermeyer (2014) present a case study using documentary analysis of the applied strategies for construction procurement at Wits University, South Africa. These procurements correspond to a capital project programme of about 1.5 billion Rand (at time of writing, 1 Rand = £0.06) and include over 40 projects consisting of both new construction and renovation. Their approach was based on the philosophies of collaborative shared risk and integrated project teams. These strategies were then applied to framework agreements, NEC3 contracts, target cost contracts and early contractor involvement; they conclude that the strategies adopted at Wits University on procurement and contracts demonstrate the advantages of using innovative construction procurement methods.

Wessels (2014) conducts a study that discusses the addition of sustainability objectives to infrastructure projects using the risk-transferring mechanism characteristic of a PPP. This paper explores some of the main theories on sustainable development and discusses their merits and criticisms, including the 'triple bottom line', one of the most acclaimed

and often-used metaphors, as well as the popular 'natural step' framework, which was chosen by the author in order to define the sustainable infrastructure development. The paper also discusses practical experience – five prototype levers based on recurring themes in the researched literature – and examines two recent projects. Four useful backcasting steps have been provided, especially suitable when large problems cannot be solved: establishing awareness and a baseline, where public parties should be primarily engaged, and creating solutions and deciding on priorities where private parties are best equipped.

The fourth paper (Forsythe, 2014) presents a state-of-the-art critical review on proactive construction safety systems based on building information modelling (BIM). Modern proactive safety systems offer advanced real-time tracking of workers on site, which can be concurrently mapped onto a BIM model of the progressive construction. Real-time audio warnings can be provided to individual workers if they wander too close to hazards. The addition of real-time location technology can be used to determine where workers and objects are on site at any point in time.

The papers in this issue discuss two themes of great interest for both researchers and practitioners. I found them to be very informative and well written.

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