

bettertogether™ - FAQ

What is BetterTogether?

A partnership between Steelcase and the National Joint Powers Alliance, BetterTogether is designed to provide office furniture solutions at competitively bid pricing to local government entities including cities, counties, municipalities, districts, and special districts. This program also includes vocational schools, k-12 educational facilities, and non-profits (excluding hospitals, healthcare systems, and healthcare related entities). This program seeks to assist public agencies in reducing the cost of purchased goods by providing a competitively priced portfolio of products without the hidden costs and complexity found in other purchasing programs. Because of the aggregate purchasing power of these entities, Steelcase, NJPA, and participating Steelcase Dealers are offering this reduced pricing program.

What is the National Joint Powers Alliance?

The National Joint Powers Alliance, referred to as NJPA, is a governmental agency operating under the legislative authority of Minnesota Statute 123A.21. This statute was created in 1977 and revised in 1995 to allow participating governmental and municipal agencies to reduce the cost of purchased goods by leveraging their combined purchasing power. NJPA is a member-owned cooperative, operating nationally, serving all public and non-public educational systems as well as all non-profit and all governmental agencies.

Is BetterTogether available to Higher Education customers?

Our commitment is to lead with the Educational & Institutional Cooperative Service buying agreement, if for some reason the E&I agreement does not meet a customer's requirements for purchase, then they may choose to purchase through BetterTogether.

Does NJPA meet requirements for public procurement?

Yes, in most states. All NJPA bid contracts have been competitively solicited nationally, reviewed and awarded by the NJPA Board of Directors in accordance with Minnesota public purchasing rules and regulations under the Municipal Contracting Laws, M.S. 471.345. Each solicitation and Invitation for Bid (IFB) contains language which includes all qualified customers in all 50 states. The IFB advises all IFB responders that the response must apply to all qualified customers in all 50 states and in some cases the provinces and territories of Canada. All IFB respondents understand that these contracts shall be used by member governmental, educational and non profit agencies throughout the United States. This consideration is based on the Minnesota "Joint Exercise of Powers Authority", M.S. 471.59, which is similar to Joint Powers Statutes in most states. This Joint Powers Authority allows for participation under NJPA's qualifying criteria and guidelines. Although each governmental agency may have different policies and purchasing procedures to follow, applying NJPA's competitive solicitation meets the requirements of most states.

What are the advantages?

- Competitively bid contract through a public agency (NJPA). The comprehensive portfolio of Steelcase and Steelcase design partnerships (with the exception of Nurture and Softcare) are covered under this program
- No contractual commitment for the customer in joining NJPA
- Direct pricing from Participating Steelcase Dealers with no third party involvement
- Aggregate purchasing power of the entities results in the best products at the best price
- No membership fees
- No hidden fees
- Reduced administrative processes



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Where can I see documentation for the competitive bid process and award?

Please go <http://www.njpacoop.org> and click on Steelcase award to view:

- Affidavit of Advertisement
- Invitation for Bid
- Witness Page
- Acceptance and Award

Can I use the program or do I have to go out for bid?

You will have to check with your purchasing department but most organizations do approve of this type of contracting methodology.

Are there other discounts available?

The BetterTogether program commits to minimum discount levels through Participating Steelcase Dealers for purchases up to \$400,000 list with an ability to access additional project-specific discounts for orders greater than \$400,000 list. Steelcase and its Participating Dealers can also tailor specific agreements to a specific public agency's needs based on volume, commitment, and so on.

What does a public agency have to do to participate?

Public agencies must sign up to be a member of NJPA. The agency can sign up to participate on NJPA's website: <http://njpacoop.org>

What does it cost to participate?

Nothing. The aggregate purchasing power of agencies allows Steelcase and its Participating Dealers to provide discounts to end users without any additional hidden costs or admin fees.

Who am I buying from?

Steelcase goes to market through a network of over 300 independent dealers nationwide. Purchases under the BetterTogether program will be conducted through your local Participating Steelcase Dealer.

Can I buy from Steelcase through BetterTogether even if I am buying other products through other GPOs?

Yes, GPOs are not a binding contract.

Does Steelcase participate in U.S. Communities?

Steelcase was a foundational supplier dating back to the creation of US Communities in 2000. Beginning 4/30/07 Steelcase and its Participating Steelcase Dealers will no longer be participating in the US Communities program. Effective May 1, 2007, Steelcase in partnership with the National Joint Powers Alliance® will be participating in BetterTogether. First order entry for BetterTogether is 5/1/07.

