Project manager for the FIS reuse initiative

Background:

Commercial offices get refitted on average every 5-7 years, sometimes more often for high value spaces. In addition, when an office building is new or when a tenant moves out, the space is striped out and can either be refitted to shell and core or to a Cat A specification. Cat A typically include kitchen and facilities, basic building services and basic finishes, such as suspended ceilings, luminaires and raised access flooring (no floor covering). Some elements of Cat A will most likely be removed and disposed of when the space is fitted to a Cat B standard even though they are pretty much new.

The FIS and its members recognise the importance to reduce the environmental impact of the fit out sector and in particular they are keen to reduce embodied carbon emissions and waste from strip out projects. Surveys have shown that there is a growing appetite for enabling more reused products into commercial projects. Currently, some pre-demolition audits (very few pre-fitout audits) are carried out prior to the strip out/demolition stage. Some products identified during the audits may be listed on digital platforms (see list published by FIS here) and often find their ways into the charitable/community sector. The key question is: how do we enable the reuse of these products to ensure they continue to be used in the commercial sector?

There are a number of practical barriers for reuse. Often, there is little time and space on site to segregate and store products to be picked up by an organisation for reuse. Construction projects are very time dependant and any delays to a project timeline can be very costly. In order for the project team to specify reused products, they need to have confidence that the products will be available at the time of installation and that the products meet the right quality requirements.

The project:

FIS members have therefore identified the need for a physical storage space where products can be stored, processed and then redirected to a new site. FIS members also recognise that in order to create sufficient supply and demand, there is a need to have a wide collaboration across the sector.

FIS has engaged with its members and broader industry to create a network of professionals to pilot a physical reuse hub in London. The pilot will focus on two products: suspended ceiling systems and luminaires used in Cat A. The pilot will run for 12 months with at least 6 months of storage. The project will look to:

1. Pilot a physical reuse hub to:
    a. Create supply and demand – create confidence that reused products can be specified and there won't be delays in project
    b. Create a buffer to assess products and find a receiver projects
2. A network of professionals to support activities to encourage reuse
3. Develop the commercial model to understand the real costs of reusing products

So far, the project has received a lot of industry support from contractors, sub-contractors, architects, consultants and membership organisations – over 20 companies. A Governance Board will be created to enable the success of the project. The project will be co-ordinated by the FIS and is opened to FIS members and any other interested parties willing to make the project a success.

The project manager:

In order to support this project, we will require a project manager to work alongside the FIS sustainability champion and the CEO to deliver the initiative. This could be on a contract or secondee basis. Any secondee will be expected to represent the needs of the wider initiative and partners independently of their parent organisation. The role of the project manager will be to:

- Liaise with the Governance Board to report on project progress on a monthly basis
- Laise with the storage provider and distribution company to ensure they deliver their brief
- Identify receiver and donor projects
- Develop the storage model to enable the efficient use of the storage space
- Develop a process to identify the right products to be included in the storage space
- Develop a process to evaluate the quality of products in the storage space
- Develop the commercial model to understand the real costs of reusing products
- Estimate the carbon savings of reusing products and other environmental and social factors
- Set out the ownership model of the reused products at the start and at the end of the project
- Create a plan to ensure the long term viability of reusing suspended ceilings and luminaires in Cat A projects and engage with the relevant parties
- Investigate the potential to enable the reuse of other products
- Write relevant outputs to ensure the long term dissemination and success of the project, including lessons learnt, any specifications, case studies, etc

In addition, the project manager is expected to apply all good project management practices, including: day to day coordination of the project, risk register, any associated governance and budget management of initial funding.

The list of tasks above is a minimum requirement and might evolve as the project advances. It is estimated that the project manager will work 2 day a week, which will be reviewed after 3 months by the Governance Board and then likely to be 2 days a week for the next 9 months.

The project manager will be expected to have the following skills and knowledge:

- Understand the construction industry and sites' constraints
- Experience in the practicalities of reusing products
- Good communication skills
- Good project management skills
- Awareness of the ethical necessity of working as part of a wider industry – they will be bound to the FIS's core values of working practices.

If you are interested in this role, please send your CV and an expression of interest to Flavielowres@thefis.org