

Power of collaboration on display at Sodexo's annual 'Partners with Purpose' supplier conference

8 months ago



[Sodexo UK & Ireland](#) welcomed 40 strategic supply partners to Brighton & Hove Albion's American Express Stadium for its third annual 'Partners with Purpose' conference.

Recognising the power of partnership, this year's conference focused on three key themes: enhancing understanding of Sodexo's operations, increasing collaboration and innovation, and recognising shared progress on sustainability and social impact programmes.

Attended by representatives from its supply chain, including SMEs and VCSEs, Sodexo's 'Partners with Purpose' conference facilitated insightful discussions and sessions with senior leaders from across the company. They shared the latest developments, priorities, and plans in areas such as supply management and growth enablement, social impact, ambitions for Sodexo's food brands, and how the company is delivering valued experiences through the digitisation of facilities management.

At the inaugural conference in March 2023, Sodexo launched its [net zero supply chain engagement strategy](#)—a roadmap to help supply partners contribute to both Sodexo's and their own net zero goals. Building on that foundation, the March 2024 event introduced Sodexo's Green Line vision—an initiative aimed at positioning the organisation as a sustainability market leader and broadened the focus to include wider social impact priorities for the years ahead. This year's conference included an update on Sodexo's progress toward delivering that vision.

Since its launch, Sodexo UK & Ireland's forward-thinking, collaborative net zero supply chain engagement strategy has earned three prestigious national awards for sustainability excellence: the Reuters

Sustainability Awards, the edie Awards and the National Sustainability Awards.

The conference also marked 20 years of the Stop Hunger Foundation by thanking suppliers for their continued support and encouraging them and their colleagues to volunteer with the Foundation's charity partners. Established in 2005 in the UK & Ireland, the Foundation is a UK-registered charity committed to tackling food insecurity and building a better future. Its work goes beyond food aid, providing support through fundraising, grant-giving, volunteering, and partnerships with national and local charities to ensure help reaches those most in need.

Jean Renton, Chief Operating Officer, Sodexo UK & Ireland said: *"Our supply partners play a vital role in enabling us to deliver on our purpose every day. 'Partners with Purpose' has become a key event that strengthens collaboration, celebrates progress, and aligns on the challenges and opportunities ahead. What makes our proposition truly unique is the strength of our long-term relationships with our most critical and strategic suppliers. Their reliability, innovation, creativity, and partnership is deeply valued."*

The conference concluded with the presentation of four supplier awards, recognising those who exemplify Sodexo's values and contribute significantly to its mission:

- Supplier of the Year – Bunzl

Over the past 18 months, Bunzl has strengthened its strategic partnership with Sodexo, significantly improving efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and service quality. They've shown strong commitment, proactivity and helped increase managed spend from 28% to nearly 35%. Bunzl has also enhanced service levels through forecasting tools and supported complex contract mobilisations. Their transparent communication, proactive site visits, and consistent delivery of results have made them an invaluable partner.

- Diverse Supplier of the Year – The MCL Group

Since working with Sodexo in February 2024, MCL has delivered data-driven solutions, built strong stakeholder relationships, and exceeded KPIs in occupational health. They've achieved early cost savings, introduced scalable innovations, and supported Sodexo's sustainability goals. Beyond commercial results, they've helped shape a more inclusive supply base and quickly become a key part of Sodexo's occupational health supply chain and a role model for excellence.

- Innovative Supplier of the Year – Planteria Group

Planteria has played a key role in driving innovation across multiple contracts and bids. The team is highly professional, helpful, and passionate about the positive impact of plants and horticulture on employee mental health. Their innovative products and collaborative approach have significantly supported Sodexo's growth objectives, making them an important partner.

- Service Excellence Supplier of the Year – Dole

Dole has consistently met high expectations around local sourcing and sustainability, providing rich provenance data and visual assets. Their standout support for a high-profile vegan event in Liverpool, sourcing produce within 10-15 miles enabled Sodexo to deliver exceptional food experiences under tight constraints.

Bibendum Wine was also Highly Commended in the Service Excellence Supplier of the Year category, and Insight UK was Highly Commended in the Innovative Supplier of the Year category.

During the conference, guests were treated to a menu featuring three award-winning sustainable dishes created by Sodexo's culinary community: Adam Collison, Head Chef at Alderley Park and winner of the 2024 International Sodexo Cook for Change! competition; Andy Ridewood, chef in Sodexo's Schools & Universities business and winner of Sodexo's Chef of the Year 2025 (UK & Ireland); and Akeira Beckford, commis chef in Sodexo's Health & Care business and winner of the 2024 UK & Ireland Food of Black Origin (FOBO) competition.