

Social procurement

Quick reference guide

Social procurement is when buyers use their procurement activities to deliver positive social outcomes, in addition to the goods and services they require.

When done effectively, social procurement provides an opportunity to positively transform people's lives without compromising on the quality of goods or services provided.

How to undertake social procurement

There is always an opportunity to undertake social procurement.

The tender evaluation process ensures buyers only enter in to contract with suppliers that demonstrate value for money and meet business requirements. By simply asking prospective suppliers to demonstrate their social impact, buyers can:

- deliver added social value, consistent with government objectives ([Queensland Procurement Policy \(QPP\) 2023, Principle 2](#))
- support the long-term wellbeing of our community and
- help shape a more inclusive economy all while still achieving value for money.

Social benefits can be generated:

- directly - procuring goods and services from Social Benefit Suppliers (SBS); or
- indirectly - by requesting mainstream suppliers to demonstrate their social benefits.

Social Benefit Suppliers (SBS) include Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses as defined in the Queensland Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Procurement Policy, social enterprises, women-owned and/or women-led businesses, and businesses owned or operated by people with disability.

Direct engagement

Buyers can source SBS information from:

- [Supply Nation](#) and/or [Black Business Finder](#) for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses
- [Social Traders](#) and [Queensland Social Enterprise Council](#) for Social Enterprises*
- [Buyability](#) for businesses that employ people with disability
- [WEConnect International](#) for women-owned and/or women-led businesses

*Please refer to the [Social Enterprise Certification Guide](#) for additional guidance on how to validate an organisation's social enterprise credentials.

Indirect engagement

Many mainstream suppliers are already delivering social benefits to disadvantaged Queenslanders and their communities. If there are no SBS in the market providing the required goods/services, simply ask your mainstream suppliers to demonstrate their social impact and commitment to advancing government's social objectives.

How to demonstrate social impact

A mainstream supplier can demonstrate their social responsibility and deliver social value in several ways, including, but not limited to:

- providing employment and/or training opportunities for disadvantaged Queenslanders
- utilising the services of SBS in their supply chain
- providing pro bono support and assistance to a domestic violence shelter
- making donations to a registered charity; and/or
- delivering internal programs that support workforce diversity and wellbeing (e.g. mental health awareness training).

The [Social Procurement Clauses Guide](#) provides a list of questions buyers can ask the market.

Scores can be applied across three main criteria areas:

Social evaluation criteria	Score		
	Low score	Medium score	High score
Supplier attributes	Mainstream supplier	Supplier is utilising the services of an SBS in their supply chain	SBS supplier
Social benefits	% workforce employed >12 months from marginalised backgrounds – score increases as % increases		
	Number of people from marginalised backgrounds employed if awarded contract – score increases as number of people employed increases		
Supplier's social responsibility (SSR)	Minimal evidence of SSR	Track record of SSR but not specifically related to the contract	Track record of SSR and additional commitments specific to the contract

Delivering on the Queensland Procurement Policy's (QPP) targets and commitments

Procuring the services of a SBS will often deliver on multiple QPP targets and commitments. These include:

Target	Commitment
Small and Medium Enterprise (SME)	A high proportion of SBS are SMEs, therefore using their services will often also support the SME target .
Local benefits	A high proportion of SBS are delivering local benefits to the community.
Advancement of social and economic objectives (additional social value)	Employing vulnerable Queenslanders can help break the welfare cycle and generate savings to the community.
	<p>Procuring from a SBS, that strategically aligns with the Queensland Government's core purpose, mission and priorities, generates even greater value for government and our communities. For example, when the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> housing sector partners with a SBS to generate employment opportunities for the long term unemployed, or those living in social housing health sector partners with a SBS that supports people with disability or people with a lived experience of mental illness. <p>A number of case studies highlight the benefits of partnering with SBS.</p>

Existing or new panel arrangements

Refer to the [Diversity in Supply Arrangements](#) guide to understand how to:

- refresh existing arrangements to encourage greater supplier diversity; and/or
- consider diversity at every stage in the procurement process when establishing new arrangements.

Small contracts create a big impact

Small recurring purchases can make a big difference to a SBS by providing an opportunity to demonstrate the quality of their goods/services and a consistent income stream. Having an existing government customer also increases the likelihood of the SBS attracting additional buyers.

More buyers = increased social impact = greater outcomes for disadvantaged Queenslanders.

Support and assistance

As an experienced procurement professional, simply add 'social' to the process and create more opportunities to deliver the best value and outcomes for our communities.

For more guidance or information, check out the [Social Procurement Buyer Toolkit](#) or email socialprocurement@epw.qld.gov.au.