

SOCIAL PROCUREMENT PRINCIPLES CHECKLIST

1. STRATEGIC

- Clearly define your terminology (for example “social outcomes”, “community benefit” and “social benefit supplier”).
- Link social procurement to your organisation’s triple bottom line objectives (economic, environmental and social) by quantifying the tangible outcomes and estimating the intangible outcomes of the project.
- Embed social procurement into all relevant council policies and processes, so that it becomes an integral component of procurements and not merely an afterthought.
- Integrate social procurement into your organisation’s strategic business planning, operations and reporting.
- Ensure that there is senior managerial support for social procurement within the organisation, as this will have a critical effect on the success of, and internal enthusiasm for, social procurement projects.
- Nominate at least one officer to be the social procurement “go-to” person that council officers can call upon for advice and/or assistance with social procurement projects.
- Establish linkages between the community services/social policy units and procurement, finance and engineering/infrastructure units of the council in developing the council’s social procurement framework and generating the necessary cross-unit support for social procurement initiatives.
- Communicate the social procurement message internally and externally using the initiatives in the toolkit’s Engagement and Awareness Strategy.
- Brief providers on the development of council’s social procurement program at the earliest possible stage, through mechanisms such as:
 - organisational publications and social media
 - business and community forums.
- Develop a database of social benefit suppliers in your municipality.

2. PROJECT-RELATED

- Identify procurement categories and upcoming procurements that might lend themselves to social procurement.

- Not all social policies should be selected for integration into public procurements
 - Social outcomes should be determined on a case-by-case basis
 - A cost-benefit case needs to be made to ensure that:
 - the best value-for-money outcomes and the most effective policy outcomes are achieved
 - the recommended social outcomes are justifiable if they incur additional expense.

- Social procurement should be integrated:
 - at the earliest stage in the project's development (for example, the planning stage)
 - integrated throughout the project.

- Consider all relevant legal and government policy factors in determining the way in which you will build the social requirements into the contract.

- As with all procurement, a risk management plan should be developed for social procurement projects.

- At the outset of the project, determine the mechanism you intend to utilise to evaluate the social benefits of the project (examples are provided in the cost-benefit paper in this toolkit).

- Ensure that the social benefit requirements of the procurement are:
 - clearly drafted
 - practical and easy to understand by all stakeholders, including the market and purchasing and procurement staff and providers
 - appropriate for the size and associated risk of the project
 - sufficiently outcome-based to encourage a range of solutions
 - equitable to all potential providers
 - sufficiently flexible to allow for innovation
 - not too onerous for potential providers
 - clear, measurable and practical to ensure that successful providers can readily report back and be evaluated on the social outcomes of the project.

- Ensure selection criteria is transparent, as complex or poorly drafted criteria can result in confusion for the providers.

- Don't include fuzzy aspirations or hopes in procurement documentation - social benefit clauses need to be clearly articulated in the go-to-market documents and contract to ensure that all applicants are aware of, and understand, the requirements, including:
 - key deliverables
 - measurement requirements
 - monitoring responsibilities
 - consequences for non-compliance.

- Remember, it is better to have fewer achievable targets than a complex set that cannot be met or monitored.

- Emphasise the project performance key performance indicators and social benefit targets in the procurement documents – unless the provider believes that these are a priority, it is unlikely to volunteer to fulfil the requirements.

- Appoint a specific officer from local government and from the provider organisation who will take responsibility for the delivery of social benefits.
- An industry briefing may be necessary to explain the details of complex social benefit clauses.
- Organisations such as Jobs Services Australia providers and welfare organisations that may assist in sourcing beneficiaries should be engaged as part of the procurement process for training and employment social procurement projects.
- The procurement evaluation team should include at least one person with experience and expertise in social procurement.
- Report the findings of the evaluation:
 - if quantitative and/or qualitative benefits can be proven for social procurement initiatives within the municipality, this will encourage further investment in, and support for, social procurement projects
 - if the foreshadowed benefits were not realised, what was learned through the process will inform subsequent projects.
- Draft the findings of the social procurement project into a “lessons learned” case study.
- Develop a register of social procurement projects, including a summary of the findings, to provide key information to units new to the area and to inform the development of social procurement policies and practices within the council.