

Tender Toolkit

Guide #6: Social & Environmental Procurement Made Simple

Show your value beyond price, without overcomplicating it

More government tenders now assess how your business delivers community and environmental benefits, not just how cheap you are. Even small actions can help you score.

What Are Buyers Looking For?

Category	What They Want
Local Jobs First	Are you hiring locally? Are your materials manufactured locally, and are your suppliers local?
Fair Jobs Code	Do you treat staff fairly? Pay legal wages?
Social Procurement	Are you supporting disadvantaged workers, diverse suppliers, or social enterprises?
Environmental	Are you minimising waste? Using eco-products? Tracking impact?

These aren't just tick boxes, they're scored. But you don't need a full blown strategy to do well.

SME Friendly Pick Lists

Don't overthink it, these small wins count.

Local Impact

- Staff live locally
- Buy supplies from regional providers
- Use local subcontractors

Social Procurement

- Employ apprentices or trainees
- Source from social enterprises or Indigenous businesses
- Offer flexible hours or accessible roles

Environmental

- Use recyclable packaging
- Minimise site waste or energy use
- Source sustainable products

Sample Statement

"We employ 6 local staff, all based in Ballarat, and use regional suppliers for construction materials. Our apprentice program supports young people entering the trade. Onsite, we've reduced landfill waste by 40% through recycling and better stock control."

This simple, honest response shows you're doing the right thing, without needing a separate policy or certification.

Don't forget, you can download your free Social Procurement Statement template.

Why It Matters, Even if It's Just 5%

These criteria might look minor on paper:

- Environmental Impact – 5%
- Social Procurement – 10%

But if your pricing and delivery are equal to a competitor, these small margins can win you the job. Many SMEs lose tenders by *just a few points*, don't leave these sections blank.

Pro Tips

- Include impact examples with numbers (e.g. "2 apprentices", "5 local suppliers")
- Be specific, "local" means something different in every tender. Say "Ballarat" or "Western Victoria" where possible.
- Answer every question with something meaningful
- Don't skip just because you think "it doesn't apply"
- Don't copy and paste broad promises, be real

Ask ICN

Some projects flagged through [icn.org.au](https://www.icn.org.au) require local and social procurement reporting. ICN can help you understand the expectations before you bid.

Also check out <https://www.buyingfor.vic.gov.au/find-social-benefit-suppliers>