

Tender Toolkit

Guide #9: Partnering to Win – Joint Bids & Local Collaboration

Go further by going together

You don't have to go it alone. Joint tendering can unlock bigger jobs, strengthen your offer, and show real local value, if it's done well.

Why Partner?

- ✓ Take on larger tenders
- ✓ Fill capability or compliance gaps (e.g. WHS, policies, licenses)
- ✓ Deliver faster or more cost effectively
- ✓ Demonstrate local economic impact (especially important in council tenders)
- ✓ Build a supply chain for future work

Partnering ≠ subcontracting

There's a difference, and it matters in tenders.

Partnering	Subcontracting
Collaborative and strategic	Transactional and one directional
Both parties contribute to the bid	One party delivers under the other's contract
Often formalised with an MOU	Formalised by a subcontract agreement
Shared visibility and risk	One party bears most of the delivery risk
Shows deeper local engagement	Often seen as just outsourcing

Why use partnering in a tender?

It signals to buyers that you're building long term, local capability, not just hiring in help. Councils and government love seeing genuine collaboration, especially when it supports local businesses and keeps money in the region.

How to Choose the Right Partner

- Do they have a good reputation and similar work standards?
- Are your services complementary, not competing?
- Do they share your approach to quality, safety, and values?
- Are they registered on ICN or known to Commerce Ballarat?

Tip: Use ICN to find vetted local suppliers and partners.

Basic MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) Checklist

A simple one pager is often enough at the start. Include:

- Parties involved and ABNs
- Overview of the tender/project
- Roles and responsibilities (who's doing what)
- Confidentiality, NDA
- Lead contact and sign-off point
- Agreed pricing structure or shared costs (optional)
- Date and signatures

Real Example

*"We partnered with a smaller cleaning company to deliver a multi site contract. They had local knowledge; we had systems and compliance. Together, we won a three year council tender neither of us could've won solo." **Regional Cleaning Provider***