



Royal  
Botanic  
Gardens  
Victoria

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## Social Procurement Strategy

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## Context

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's (RBGV) is committed to supporting the Victorian Government's directions under the Social Procurement Framework to advance social and sustainable outcomes for Victorians.

RBGV's initial Social Procurement Strategy enables a strategic, agency wide approach to delivering social and sustainable outcomes. It ensures that in each area of operations RBGV is focused on ethical, social, and sustainable principles while maintaining a focus on value for money.

Biodiversity and conservation, public education and inclusion are at the core of the work that we do. Committing to minimising potentially adverse social and sustainable impacts through careful purchasing of goods and services, RBGV will be able to improve its sustainability messaging, reach and reputation. By acting on and promoting our core strategic priorities through our purchasing power, we will in turn, encourage others to do the same.

## RBGV business strategy

In accordance with Victorian Government's Social Procurement Framework, Departments and agencies are required to develop a Social Procurement Strategy, 'the Strategy'.

Key priorities identified in the *RBGV Corporate Plan 2021-2024* and *Annual Business Plan 2021-2022* outline social procurement initiatives in business-as-usual areas such as Aboriginal engagement, diversity and inclusion, sustainability, and contract management.

This Strategy's priorities are addressed under RBGV's *Procurement Policy*, *One RBGV People Strategy 2020-2022*, *Gender Equality Action Plan*, *Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-22* and environmental sustainability FRD24E office based and non-office-based annual reporting.

Committing to the implementation of this Strategy will ensure that key actions identified through these existing commitments are met, notably to:

- Invest in Aboriginal culture, representation, employment, and procurement.
- Grow diversity and improve access and inclusion for all.
- Strengthen our climate response, resilience, and conservation action.

RBGV deliver on several social procurement related actions to assist to advance social and sustainable outcomes for Victorians (see Appendix 1). For example, current contracts include reference to the Victorian Government Supplier Code of Conduct and prioritising the Victorian Jobs First policy.

These initiatives enable RBGV to make positive social and environmental impacts while simultaneously highlighting key challenges and learnings, notably that:

- To undertake meaningful socio-economic and environmental impact, it takes considerable time, resourcing, and effort.

- It needs to be a holistic approach at a policy, operational and educational level to ensure that it is embedded throughout all operations.
- That you cannot manage that which you cannot measure. Organisational wide monitoring is required to be simultaneously rolled out with guiding policies and initiatives to ensure their effectiveness and opportunities for continual improvement.

### Procurement profile and social procurement opportunities analysis

Each agencies' social procurement priorities need to be based on their unique procurement needs and requirements. Understanding RBGV's direct and indirect social procurement spend, and opportunities has assisted to shape of this Strategy's priorities and targets.

**Direct** procurement spend for RBGV's 2021-2022 financial year was \$8,015,920. Direct procurement is currently tracked by RBGV's financial system and reporting system. This reporting is to be transferred to the Victorian Government's VPS centralised tracking system by 2025.

**Indirect** procurement spend can be tracked through the assessment of contracts and annual reporting, based on strategy priority objectives within contract clauses.

Over half of RBGV's total annual procurement is below \$50,000 in size (transactional), to the value of \$4,780,857.

An analysis of RBGV's top five (5) supply and service categories for 2021-2022 was undertaken to assess opportunities for **direct** and **indirect** social procurement impact (see Appendix 2), including:

1. Construction costs	\$2,312,385
2. Contract costs (Agency staff and maintenance contractors):	\$2,134,736
3. Non-financial assets hire, maintenance and operational costs:	\$1,624,673
4. Consultancies and professional services:	\$1,228,701
5. Garden and office equipment and supplies:	\$818,787

A baseline analysis of RBGV's existing annual **direct** procurement spend in the Aboriginal businesses sector was undertaken for 2021-2022. The direct spend on Aboriginal owned suppliers was assessed against the total value of RBGV's goods and services procurement size of \$12,034,587 for 2021-2022. From this total it has been assessed that Aboriginal social procurement is estimated to make up 0.15% on average per annum from within the \$50,000 under threshold.

### Strategic social procurement objectives

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's vision is 'safeguarding plants for the wellbeing of people and the planet'. Our programs and strategic areas focus on biodiversity conservation, climate action and on improving opportunities for First Peoples.

In this context, for the term of this Strategy, RBGV commits to four (4) from the ten (10) Victorian Government Social Procurement objectives:

1. Opportunities for Aboriginal Victorian people
2. Environmentally sustainable outputs
3. Environmentally sustainable practices, and
4. Implementation of the Climate Change policy objectives.

The remaining six (6) Victorian Government Social Procurement Framework priorities include:

1. Opportunities for Victorians with disability
2. Women’s equality and safety
3. Opportunities for disadvantaged Victorian
4. Supporting safe and fair workplaces
5. Sustainable Victorian social enterprises and Aboriginal business sectors
6. Sustainable Victorian regions

All these priorities are already supported indirectly through RBGV strategies. With the development of appropriate internal procurement framework, systems, and resourcing, RBGV will be able to capture activity against these priorities in future.

As a result, this Strategy is initially focused on:

- Developing key changes to procurement systems, policies, and processes to ensure compliance with Social Procurement Framework requirements.
- Raise awareness through delivery of training programs for staff and key stakeholders in social procurement guidelines and requirements.
- Provision of ongoing relevant resources and access to expertise, as required.

### Social Procurement Priority Objectives and Actions

Details of RBGV specific targets in our four priority areas are listed in **Table 1**.

**Table 1: RBGV Social Procurement Priority Objectives and Actions**

Priority Objective	Type of procurement	Actions
1. Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people	1a. Procurement activity less than \$100,000 where there is no established Government contract or panel arrangement. 1b. For procurement activity greater than \$100,000 where there is no established Government contract or panel arrangement. 1c. All procurements across RBGV are to consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	1a. Obtain a minimum of 1 quote to directly procure from Victorian Aboriginal business, up to \$100,000, approved by Financial Delegate. If no Victorian Aboriginal business can supply, seek from Australian Aboriginal business. 1b. Alert Aboriginal Victorian businesses of forthcoming tender opportunities.

	<p>peoples owned businesses that are registered members of Supply Nation and / or Kinaway.</p>	<p>1c. Communicate the commitment of procuring from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander managed and/or at least 50% owned businesses to RBGV staff responsible for procurement of goods and services, including retail products.</p> <p>1d. Compile a list of Victorian Aboriginal businesses that can be utilised when considering purchasing and contractual arrangements to ensure agreed to procurement targets are met.</p>
<p>2. Environmentally sustainable outputs</p>	<p>2a. Non construction project-specific requirements to use sustainable resources to manage waste and pollution.</p> <p>2b. Use of recycled content in construction.</p>	<p>2a(i). Address contract clauses to reinforce sustainable resource management of waste and pollution within product supply chain.</p> <p>2a(ii). All new Invitations to Supply to include requests all project providers to use sustainable resources and to sustainably manage waste and pollution.</p> <p>2b(i). Work with RBGV construction providers in shifting to use at least 15% recycled content.</p> <p>2b(ii). All new construction tenders and contracts include appropriate specification to use recycled content by 2025.</p>
<p>3. Environmentally sustainable business practices</p>	<p>3. Adoption of sustainable business practices by suppliers to the Victorian Government within RBGV's direct sphere of influence.</p>	<p>3a. In line with Government Single Use Plastics legislation, RBGV's tenants and contractors are no longer to use single use plastic.</p> <p>3b. 15% of procurement materials to be sourced from sustainable accredited supply chains by 2025.</p>

		3c. All new infrastructure to be developed in line with Australian and / or international sustainability design rating specifications and standards (e.g., Green Star, International Green Construction Code, LEED).
4. Implementation of the Climate Change Policy Objectives	4. Annual Reporting & implementation to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions under office-based environmental impacts FRD24D/E reporting directive.	4. Report on all seven FR24D/E office-based, and non-office-based environmental impact indicators by 2025, which includes measuring and reporting on environmentally sustainable procurement initiatives.

### Roles and responsibilities

Due to the decentralised nature of procurement at RBGV, the objectives in this Strategy apply to all staff procuring goods and services at RBGV.

All RBGV staff conducting procurement or contract management activities, as well as all applicable delegates, must ensure procurement activity aligns with the VGPB key policy requirements.

Within RBGV, the Corporate Services Division is charged with developing procurement strategy and processes.

**Executive Director – Corporate Services:** Executive accountability for overall directive and final procurement policy, financial approvals and strategic advice to Director and Chief Executive and Board in best practice procurement.

**Manager – Governance and Projects:** Oversight of procurement reform including social procurement framework, strategy, standardisation and cross-organisational information distribution, advice and policy implementation, and quarterly reporting to Executive and Board on social and standard procurement deliverables.

**Advisor – Governance and Projects:** Responsible for development of social procurement strategy and annual reporting, coordination of the integration into policy, processes, documentation, tools and templates, integration into forward procurement planning.

**Chief Financial Officer:** Accountability for all financial and supplier management systems, guidelines, standards and financial approvals, tenant and contractor accountabilities, and supplier engagement in relation to social procurement.

## Capability development and supplier engagement

Social procurement capability involves embedding social procurement practices throughout the procurement process, so that the organisation's expertise, resourcing, systems, policies, and processes enable the delivery of social and sustainable outcomes in a manner that is aligned to this Strategy.

**Table 2** below articulates the organisation's gap analysis in relation to social procurement capability and the actions that will be taken to fill the gap.

**Table 2 – Social procurement self-assessment and capability development plan**

Description	Assessment (Score 0-5)	Actions required
Our Strategy covers all core components.	4	Four (4) from the ten (10) core components are currently able to be acted on due to resourcing. Additional resources are required to develop RBGV's Social Procurement Framework and reporting. This will assist in RBGV's response to the 10 core components, create greater targets and outcomes for existing priority areas.
Our governance framework / accountability mechanisms promote compliance with Social Procurement Framework requirements.	3	RBGV commit to communicating and training for all staff to promote integration of this Social Procurement Strategy.
Procurement spend is actively monitored to ensure that value-for-money outcomes are achieved, considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the total benefits and costs over the life of the goods, services or construction being procured,</li> <li>environmental, social, and economic factors, and</li> <li>any risk related to the procurement.</li> </ul> Spend analysis can accommodate social procurement commitments.	3	Broader procurement monitoring and provision of organisation wide advice will be met through compliance with the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB).

Senior management view social procurement as a strategic priority and set the tone from the top.	4	Social procurement has been identified as a key priority in the <i>RBGV Corporate Plan 2021-24</i> and <i>Business Plan 2022</i> and is reported in RBGV's annual report.
Roles and responsibilities in respect of social procurement are clearly communicated and supervised by senior management.	4	As part of the all-staff and stakeholder communication and education plan, identification of roles and responsibilities in relation to social procurement is clearly articulated.
Individuals with social procurement related roles and responsibilities have sufficient knowledge, skills and experience to identify and pursue opportunities to deliver social and sustainable outcomes through procurement.	4	Corporate Services Executive and Managers have previously developed and / or implemented social procurement strategies and guidelines. Where there is some shortage of latest best practice requirements, the need to attend information sessions and training have been identified for key staff. Retail staff and administrators who order regular goods are also well experienced and aware of latest social procurement guidelines and only engaging with appropriate and relevant suppliers.
Recruitment, training, and professional development activities in relation to procurement integrate social procurement knowledge, skills and experience.	3	This has been identified as a requirement to be undertaken by key staff to ensure latest best practice standards are adhered to.
Social procurement is embedded throughout the procurement process (for example, in procurement-related systems, policies and processes for planning, sourcing and contract management).	3	A key action of the overarching procurement uplift to be undertaken this year is to embed this Strategy in all RBGV procurement systems, policies, and processes, which the new Procurement Officer will lead on in 2023.
Supplier and stakeholder relations are managed on an ongoing basis to promote compliance with contractual obligations. Management of supplier and stakeholder relations can	4	A communication plan for staff, stakeholders and suppliers is to be developed as part of the implementation of the Strategy and



accommodate social procurement commitments.		led by the Finance and Governance and Projects teams
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### Reporting and management framework

Reporting and monitoring against this Strategy happens as part of RBGV's annual reporting process.

This Strategy will be reviewed every three years.

Supporting resources, templates, tools, and training will be communicated to all staff and linked to RBGV's central procurement resource hub. You can also contact the Governance and Projects team for copies, or go to

<https://www.buyingfor.vic.gov.au/goods-and-services-document-library>

### CONTACT

- Manager, Governance and Projects (CPO)

### VERSION CONTROL

Document Name	Version no.	Date	Approved By	Date
Social Procurement Strategy	1.0	07/07/2023	ET	07/07/2023

### APPENDIX

**Appendix 1:** Social and Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Achievements

**Appendix 2:** RBGV Annual Expenditure Categories 2021-22