



FAO: Productivity Commission

Sent by email to: businessreporting@pc.gov.au

Date: September 28, 2026

Subject: Social Ventures Australia Submission to Productivity Commission review into Business Reporting Requirements

Social Ventures Australia (SVA) and Social Procurement Australasia welcomes the opportunity to provide information regarding the Productivity Commission's inquiry into Business Reporting Requirements.

Social Ventures Australia

SVA, a not-for-profit social impact organisation, was created over 20 years ago to solve challenging social problems. We influence systems to deliver better social outcomes for people by learning what works in communities, helping organisations be more effective, sharing our perspectives and advocating for change. Our vision is for an Australia where all people and communities can thrive.

SVA's Employment team has been at the forefront of identifying, testing, and advocating for practices that can contribute to systemic change towards a more inclusive and equitable labour market.

Since 2022, SVA has been working directly with employers to develop quality job opportunities for non-university educated young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds. This work has been informed by a series of research reports which uncover the workplace experiences of low SES youth and the challenges they face in finding long term quality work.

We have worked with nearly 50 medium-large employers to pilot new ways of working – including redesigning job roles, establishing new work-based learning opportunities, skilling up supervisors and re-engineering selection and induction processes.

More recently SVA, along with the Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN) and the Smith Family, has launched the [Fair Chance Initiative](#) to promote employer action on economic mobility.

Social Procurement Australia (SPA)

Established in 2013, Social Procurement Australasia is a volunteer-led organisation that brings together practitioners, governments, businesses, researchers, and community organisations committed to harnessing procurement's power as a force for positive social change. SPA raises awareness, connect practitioners with the best research and resources, and advocate for and champion the advancement of social procurement practices across Australia and New Zealand.

SPA has recently undertaken a review of the Social Procurement Framework in Victoria and is working with University researchers, industry and key partners to develop and strengthen nationally consistent social procurement policies and practices.

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Recommendation:

That the Productivity Commission work with relevant Government stakeholders to establish a nationally consistent Social Procurement Framework to assist in creating consistent standard data, reporting definitions and processes to address critical gaps emerging between policy intent and on-the-ground delivery and streamline practice for procurers, regulators and at all levels in supply chains.

Please find attached our full response for the Commission's consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to provide you with more information at the Commission's request.

For more information, please contact:

Rosie Hodson, Director Policy and Advocacy

Chris Newman, Director Social Procurement Australasia

Submission

All levels of Government have recognised the key role that procurement policy can play in delivering critical social, environmental and economic objectives. The success of policies such as the Federal Indigenous Procurement Policy and Victoria's Social Procurement Framework for example have demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach. Industry too have demonstrated that not only can they meet these policy requirements, but they can innovate beyond initial expectations and apply their resources to delivering Government policy objectives efficiently and effectively.

However, policy and practice in social procurement is evolving rapidly and inconsistently creating inefficiencies and uncertainty for industry and communities. One example of this is in the renewable energy sector, where governments, regulators, and stakeholders at Federal, State and local levels understand the importance of achieving and maintaining 'social licence' in the delivery of Australia's renewable energy transition. Increasingly, they are also recognising the critical role of procurement as a vehicle to deliver the local economic, social and environmental outcomes that will underpin the achievement of social licence, particularly in regional Australia.

Another is governments using their purchasing power to create inclusive employment opportunities for people who are otherwise locked out of the labour market. The Commonwealth and state and territory governments apply a mix of procurement frameworks, First Nations procurement policies, apprenticeship requirements, local jobs measures and social enterprise purchasing.

This is leading to increasingly detailed and diverse policy and regulatory requirements for social procurement (e.g. local content, First Nations participation, workforce targets etc). However, these requirements are currently fragmented, overlapping, and ad hoc. The approach is highly variable, changing throughout project phases, inconsistent (or even conflicting) in definition and application between jurisdictions and regulators, and project specific rather than place or industry-based. This adds to the challenge faced by proponents, contractors and partner organisations who often have limited capacity and experience in this field and struggle with the uncertain and unpredictable environment.

There is a need for a nationally consistent Framework for social procurement that would ensure consistency within and across jurisdictions. A well designed and applied Framework would assist in creating consistent standard data, reporting definitions and processes. This would both streamline practice for procurers, regulators and all levels of the supply chain, while also increasing the effectiveness and delivery of critical social, local economic and environmental objectives.

This work will help address a critical emerging gap between policy intent and on-ground delivery that is resulting in:

- Underachievement of local workforce, local business and other social and economic outcomes;

- Missed regional economic development opportunities despite the scale of investment in regional Australia;
- Inefficient, project-by-project approaches;
- Increased cost and delivery risk for proponents; and
- Fragmented leadership and coordination.

Recommendation

That the Productivity Commission work with relevant Government stakeholders to establish a nationally consistent Social Procurement Framework to assist in creating consistent standard data, reporting definitions and processes to address critical gaps emerging between policy intent and on-the-ground delivery and streamline practice for procurers, regulators and at all levels in supply chains.