

Win More Bids with Social Value



The essential bidder's guide

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Introduction



With up to 30% evaluation weighting for Social Value within bids, it has never been more important for public sector suppliers to focus on the environmental, social and economic benefit of their bids.

Guy Battle

Social Value Portal
CEO

In today's competitive marketplace, public sector contracts are highly sought after, and organisations are vying for the opportunity to provide goods, services, and works that support local communities.

At Social Value Portal, we have worked with both businesses bidding on tenders, and buyers in public procurement for almost a decade, which gives us a unique perspective on what it takes to win contracts. Our system, structure and support programme makes it is easier to incorporate a Social Value story, data and evidence into your bids.

This bidder's guide sets out to help you improve your Social Value within tenders, as well as outline how you can achieve more successful bids.

by contract

Average

£24k Social Value
delivery per £100k of
contract value

relevance

Average

13.5%
evaluation
weighting

success rate

x2 double your
chance of winning a
bid by winning at
Social Value

*Bidders who score highest in the qualitative Social Value element of the bid win bids 56% of the time versus the standard probability of 28%. Data source: Social Value Portal analysis competitive public sector project bids 2021-23.

1

What is Social Value and why does it matter?

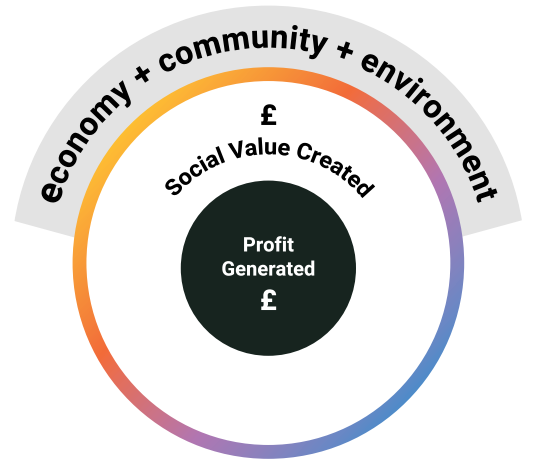


What is Social Value?

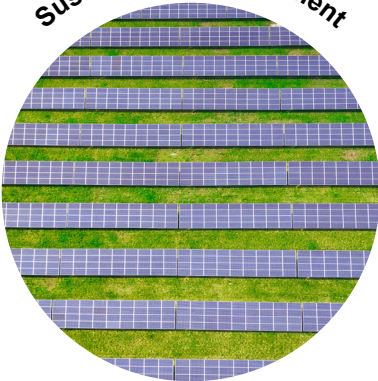
The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires public sector organisations to consider the potential for suppliers to deliver Social Value. Understanding what buyers mean when they talk about Social Value is vital to getting your bid right.

Simply put, Social Value is the value an organisation contributes to society beyond a reported profit.

Where profit is measured in standard accounting terms, Social Value is measured by actions. These could include:



Sustainable procurement



Training & apprenticeships



Buying locally



Reducing carbon emissions



Volunteering



Employing locally



SV£



Social Value is quantified by applying a proxy value to each unit of activity to create a financial value. This is generated from a number of robust data sources and updated annually.

Why does Social Value matter for bidders?

brand strength

x4 Customers are four times more likely to buy from a company with a strong purpose

[Zeno Group](#)

brand engagement

49% of people feel that companies who do not prioritise social issues do not care

[Harvard Business School](#)

competitive advantage

89% of executives believe a strong purpose provides competitive advantage for their business

[Porter Novelli](#)



Win more bids

It is no longer the case that price alone wins work. Creating a strong Social Value narrative will help you stand out from your competition and lead to future success.



Be proud and accountable

Think of Social Value as a new currency that helps you to demonstrate the value of your positive impact on society. This means that you can be proud and accountable to all your stakeholders.



Align with client goals

Demonstrate your commitment in a way which meets with your clients' processes and compliance requirements and build stronger, lasting relationships.



Social value in procurement doesn't work when it's treated as an afterthought. It needs to be baked in from the start.

Charlene Maginnis, Head of Policy Delivery, Supply Chain and Service Offering, Crown Commercial Services



An introduction to public sector contracts

Historically, public sector contracts – the agreements between public organisations and private companies for the provision of goods and services – focused on the best quality for the lowest cost for government.

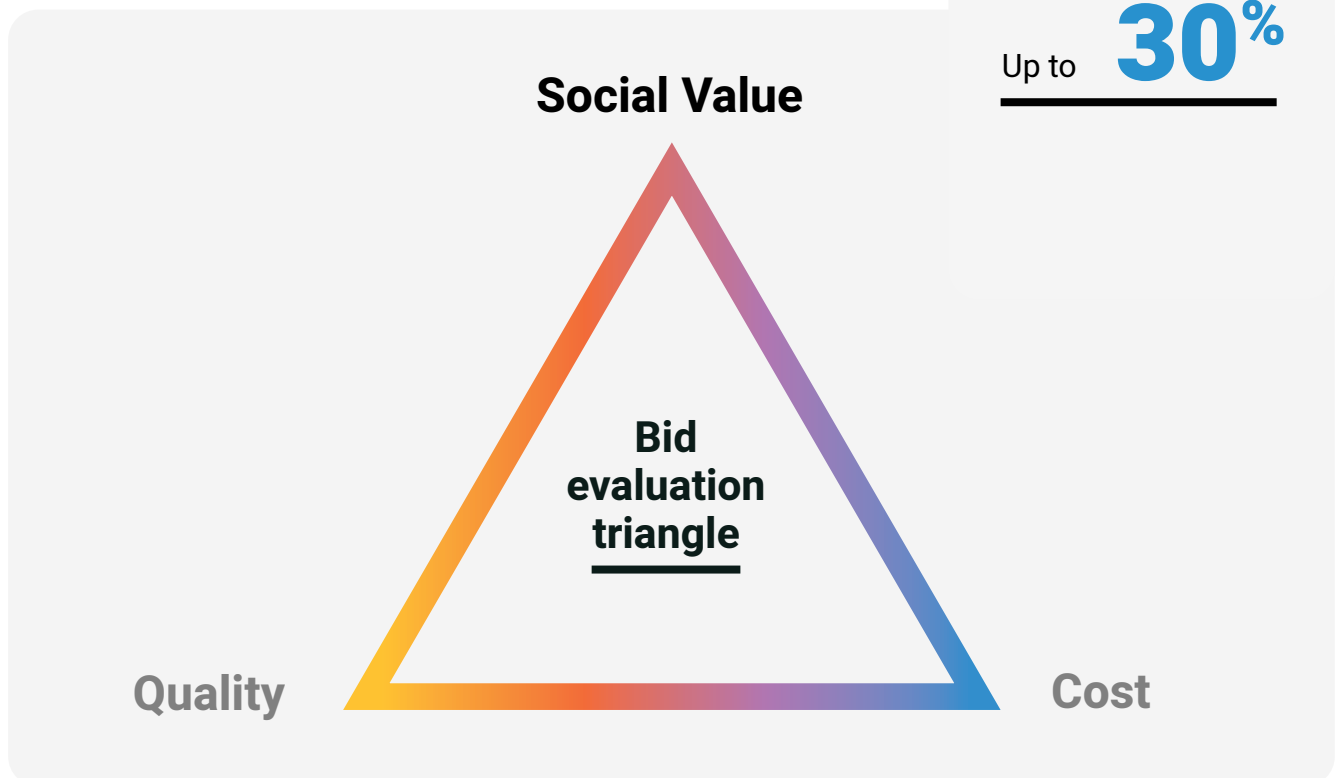
Now, however, there has been a shift towards considering the wider impact of contracts – including Social Value. This has been driven by a recognition of the role procurement can play in improving economic, community and environmental outcomes.

The UK Government requires organisations to consider Social Value in major public sector contracts.



Social Value is now the real differentiator in bids, where cost and quality are becoming hygiene factors.

Social Value Portal Member



So how does this effect Local and Central Government bids, including how Social Value is measured?





Local Government

In Local Government, the most widely adopted system of measurement is the 'Social Value TOM System', created by Social Value Portal and structured into five themes:



The TOM System provides structure and direction when tendering.

Stephen Roberts, NEPO

Social Value TOM System

UK Buyer Framework



Jobs



Growth



Social



Environment



Innovation

Central Government

In Central Government, a 'Social Value Model' is used to set the priorities for Social Value in the tender phase, using 'model award criteria'.

Social Value Portal's Central Government Mapping Tool allows Social Value to be quantified and measured throughout the life of the contract.



Social Value Model



Central Government Mapping Tool

Covid 19



Tackle economic inequality



Fighting climate change



Equal opportunity



Wellbeing



PPN 06/20



What are buyers looking for?

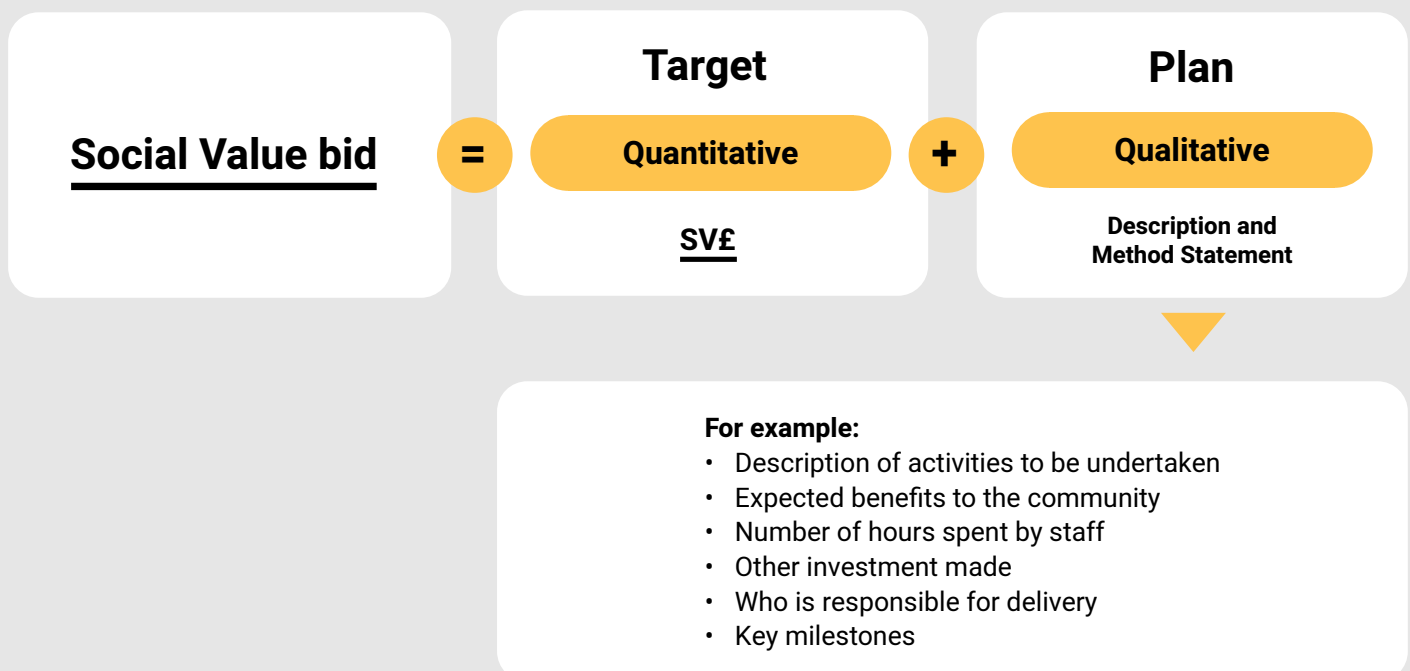
Public sector buyers look for suppliers that can deliver quality goods, services, or works at competitive prices. They also look for a commitment to delivering social, environmental, and economic benefits to the local community.

Tenders require Social Value to be demonstrated both quantitatively (the financial target, or SV£) and qualitatively (the target description and method statement). There is typically a 50/50 split on the evaluation weighting for these two elements, however, the qualitative element (the plan) can sometimes be higher.

! What buyers are looking for

- Tangible, quantifiable outcomes
- Qualitative back-up
- Local impact
- Realistic plans
- Delivery partners
- Evidence of resources to support
- Transparency and feasibility

The Social Value bid formula





It is important to understand the local benefits a supplier can bring to a contract, however we must be completely certain that they are achievable which is why we place a heavy emphasis on the Social Value plan.

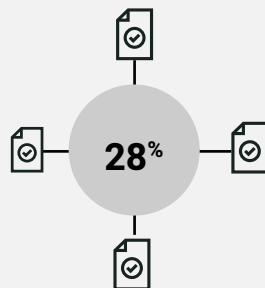
Buyer, Local Authority



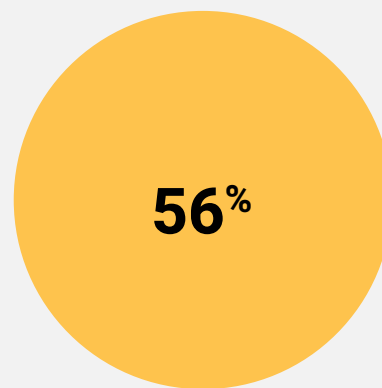
We all have a responsibility to ensure the public purse goes further so we look to work with suppliers and partners who share that aim and can demonstrate how to achieve it.

Buyer, Central Government

Increasing your chance of bid success



Based on an average of 3.6 bidders per contract you typically have just under a 1 in 4 chance of winning



The strongest Social Value plan doubles the chances of winning the bid.

Bidders who score highest in the qualitative Social Value element of the bid win bids 56% of the time versus the standard probability of 28%. Data source: Social Value Portal analysis competitive public sector project bids 2021-23



Overcoming challenges in Social Value bidding

When bidding on public sector tenders, effectively communicating a Social Value proposition can be time consuming and resource heavy. It can be difficult to understand and deliver against local needs, and confusing when it comes to structuring the Social Value response.

This guide is designed to highlight how establishing a Social Value strategy and programme can ease that burden. Let us show you how.



Once we established a Social Value strategy in the organisation, it became a lot easier to respond to individual bids.

Public sector bidder/supplier

Did you know?

Examples of Social Value initiatives include:

Training: e.g. anti-bribery, equality and diversity...



Business advice



New members are not always aware of the full range of activities which could contribute to their Social Value plan. We help them identify and build on existing relevant initiatives as well as how to expand their impact with new ones

Claire Ollington,
Customer Success Director,
Social Value Portal

Providing meeting space for local community groups



Green transport schemes



2

How to win your bid



Winning Social Value bids

Become a Social Value Pro and win more bids.

6 STEPS TO PRO:





1

Build the foundations

With the right foundations in place for delivering Social Value, it is so much easier to be able to present your organisation in the right light for bidders.

- ✓ Create a Social Value culture
- ✓ Establish a Social Value strategy and policy
- ✓ Understand how to measure and deliver
- ✓ Build a track record



This means embedding Social Value at the heart of the organisation, from the top down, empowering the internal team to get involved, and forming a culture around doing good.

Organisations with a robust Social Value strategy and policy, a clear understanding of what matters, what to measure and how to deliver are

much more equipped to win work in the public sector. They also find writing bids less arduous or time consuming, as the data and narrative is already in place.

Certifications and standards should also be up to date and bid-ready.



How Social Value Portal can help you

We navigate the complexity of Social Value for our members, establish a meaningful strategy and programme that fits.



2

Understand the ask

Research is vital to winning a bid. Study the client organisation and their specific economic, community and environmental priorities and policies to ensure it is the right fit and to help you prepare a very clear strategy aligned to their values.

- ✓ Study the customer
- ✓ Analyse the tender requirements
- ✓ Identify the evaluation criteria
- ✓ Know your competition



The information you include must be directly relevant to the opportunity you are bidding for so read the tender documents carefully, looking out for requirements such as:

- **Delivery plan questions**
- **Timelines**
- **Prescriptive themes**
- **Measures & targets**
- **Places**
- **Contract value & duration**

A good starting point is the scoring matrix and weighting the organisation will be using to evaluate your submission. Build your compelling story around that and ensure you can deliver on your promises.

It will also help you to stand out from the crowd if you understand who your competition is and how you can clearly differentiate your offering.



How Social Value Portal can help you

Our member onboarding, training and online help centre sets you up to create a strong Social Value bid.



3

Plan well

Buyers will be looking for a well organised plan which stands out. Outline the structure of the Social Value initiatives in line with the measures provided (or if they are not stipulated, use the Social Value TOM System as a framework).

- ✓ Structure the Social Value submission
- ✓ Articulate the delivery clearly
- ✓ Identify partners
- ✓ Detail remedial action



Remove irrelevant or vague information in order that your delivery plan is clear. Provide details of:

- **Who will be responsible**
- **Process for capturing Social Value**
- **How you'll report**
- **Dates and places**

Think about opportunities to include local participants – such as partners, or suppliers – who can support the delivery of your commitments, why are they an asset and how you will engage them. Also outline remedial action you will take if something does not go to plan.

Start your Social Value bid ahead of time, and aim to register and complete your bid at least 5 days before the submission deadline.



How Social Value Portal can help you

Our platform means members have everything in one place. Evidence is easy to access and match to bid requirements.



4 Set relevant targets

Whilst it may seem obvious, it is important to check and understand what the question is actually asking of you, and ensure the targets you set are relevant for the contract, as well as achievable for your business.

- ✓ Set relevant and achievable targets
- ✓ Use the guidance for the measures
- ✓ Adhere to the principles of Social Value
- ✓ Use the right units of measure



The local benefit of Social Value initiatives is likely to be critical to the requirements of the tender. Ensure you understand the local needs, and if required, engage with Social Value Portal to perform a Local Needs Analysis programme with one of our specialists.

The Social Value TOM System has guidance notes for each of the measures to help you with setting appropriate targets.

Ensure your targets take into account the key principles of Social Value:

- **Attributable to the scope of the contract**
- **Represents activity that is over and above your day-to-day activity and the core requirements of the contract**
- **Realistic to deliver**
- **Does not involve double-counting**

Check the unit of measurements you need to use. For example, if the question asks for the time spent on apprenticeships in weeks, you must use that unit specifically.



How Social Value Portal can help you

Our Social Value Specialists and tools help members set the right targets and activity – and avoid the common pitfalls.



5 Prove you can deliver

Build confidence with buyers. Show your commitment to delivering economic, community and environmental benefits to the local community.

- ✓ Instil confidence in the targets
- ✓ Justify the metrics
- ✓ Outline delivery initiatives
- ✓ Highlight track record



Provide detailed information on your Social Value proposition, including how it aligns with the buyer's goals and objectives.

Buyers need to feel confident each measure can be achieved so show how target was calculated including baselines.

Outline the initiatives you will employ and introduce the team who will deliver them.

Wherever possible demonstrate track record, individuals' experience and expertise, plus case studies of previous successes and the impact they have had on the local community.



How Social Value Portal can help you

Our members share their successes with verified reports, backed by accurate evidence management and our TOM System.



6 Show you are a pro

The quality of your presentation really highlights your understanding and provides the buyer with further confidence that you know exactly what you are talking about.

- ✓ Present a professional bid
- ✓ Use straightforward language
- ✓ Be innovative
- ✓ Learn from the experience



It goes without saying that bids should be well written and free from errors, however the presentation of the bid can help with how effectively you get your message across.

Consistent font sizing and clear headlines, along with a well-paced document brought to life with images and testimonials will have more impact.

Avoid jargon and acronyms which may not be understood by all readers and ensure the text is succinct and easy to read.

Consider ways of offering something innovative or unique.

Whether you are successful or not with the bid, use the experience to learn for next time.



How Social Value Portal can help you

We help members align messaging to their public sector clients. Our reports, analysis and consulting take you to the next level.



Bidder's Social Value Checklist

Do you have all the Social Value boxes ticked within your bid?

Task	Complete
Social Value strategy in place	
Certifications up to date	
Buyer research completed	
Tender requirements analysed	
Engagement session attended	
Evaluation criteria identified	
Clarification questions asked	
Competitor review completed	
Local needs assessed	
Targets defined in a structured way	
Target calculations shown	
Target descriptions and method statements compiled	
Partners identified	
Delivery plan complete	
Fine-tuned and checked	

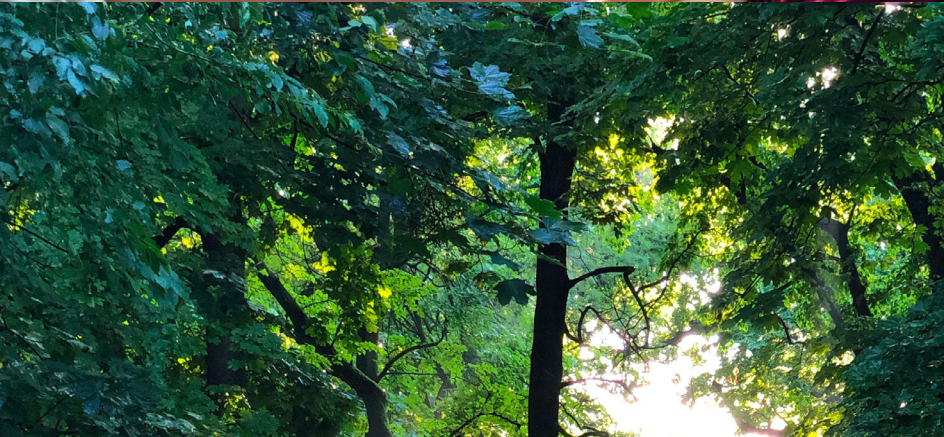
Missing ticks? Talk to our Social Value Specialists..

Understand more about a strategy solution, Local Needs Analysis, the TOM System or how you can take the strain out of reporting and management with a discovery call. [Get in touch now](#)

“

Social Value is becoming increasingly prevalent in conversations within the public sector when discussing long term planning and how to procure, commission and deliver services to ensure we maximise outputs and opportunities for our local communities. Organisations that can demonstrate how they will tangibly deliver this will be the ones that see their relationships with the NHS and wider public sector grow and strengthen.

Becky Jones, Sustainability Lead, Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board



3

How to get started



How we can help you win more bids

Set yourself up for success by embedding Social Value within your business.

£2.6bn

Value of tender evaluations within our platform in 2022

4000+

Reports issued in 2022



**Shape it. Prove it. Share it.
With complete confidence.**

A complete solution

Social Value Portal provides the platform, programme and people to equip you to deliver Social Value in a way which makes it easier to write bids and gives you more chance of winning them.

Social Value TOM system

The TOM System of themes, outcomes and measures, developed by Social Value Portal, allows Social Value to be easily and consistently measured and benchmarked.

Single point of truth

Our platform takes the strain out of data collection and input to build a robust Social Value story in one place, making it easy to filter the metrics relevant to the tender and to manage all of your project bids together.

Validated reports

Reports from our platform are checked by us and validated with a stamp to demonstrate their validity, adding weight to your bid.



The complete membership solution for bidders



Consulting

Maximise your potential with help from our Social Value Specialists.

- + Strategy co-creation
- + Local Needs Analysis
- + Strategic bid support
- + Corporate reporting
- + Planning advisory
- + Property and carbon assessments



Measurement

The Local Government Association endorsed TOM system for measurement.

- + Wide adoption supports benchmarking
- + Robust and defensible
- + Convert activity to SV£
- + Maps to Social Value Model and UNSDGs



Platform

Record and manage all Social Value activity from your single digital workspace.

- + Easy data collection and management
- + Evidence and image upload
- + Analysis tools
- + View delivery on a map
- + Configurable dashboard



Reporting

On-demand reporting to share with stakeholders and stay on track.

- + Social Value Portal validated reports
- + On-demand data
- + Instant access to project reports



Support

From set-up to ongoing support and guidance, we have you covered.

- + Workshops and training to set you up for success
- + Policy and process guidance
- + Specialists on hand to optimise and grow your Social Value



Why our solution works harder for bidders

Our membership programme for bidders is designed to help you embed Social Value within your organisation. Shape it, prove it, share it within your bids and across the lifecycle of the contract.

We are with you every step of the way, helping you navigate the complexity and optimise your Social Value activity.

Consulting and strategy

Our team of specialist consultants can help build a Social Value strategy as well as keep it on track.

Support and training

Our team of Social Value Advisors provide continual support to set you up for success, help you demonstrate your impact – and grow it beyond the bid. Our training and easy-access online help centre have a wealth of knowledge to

help you speak the same language as the procuring team.

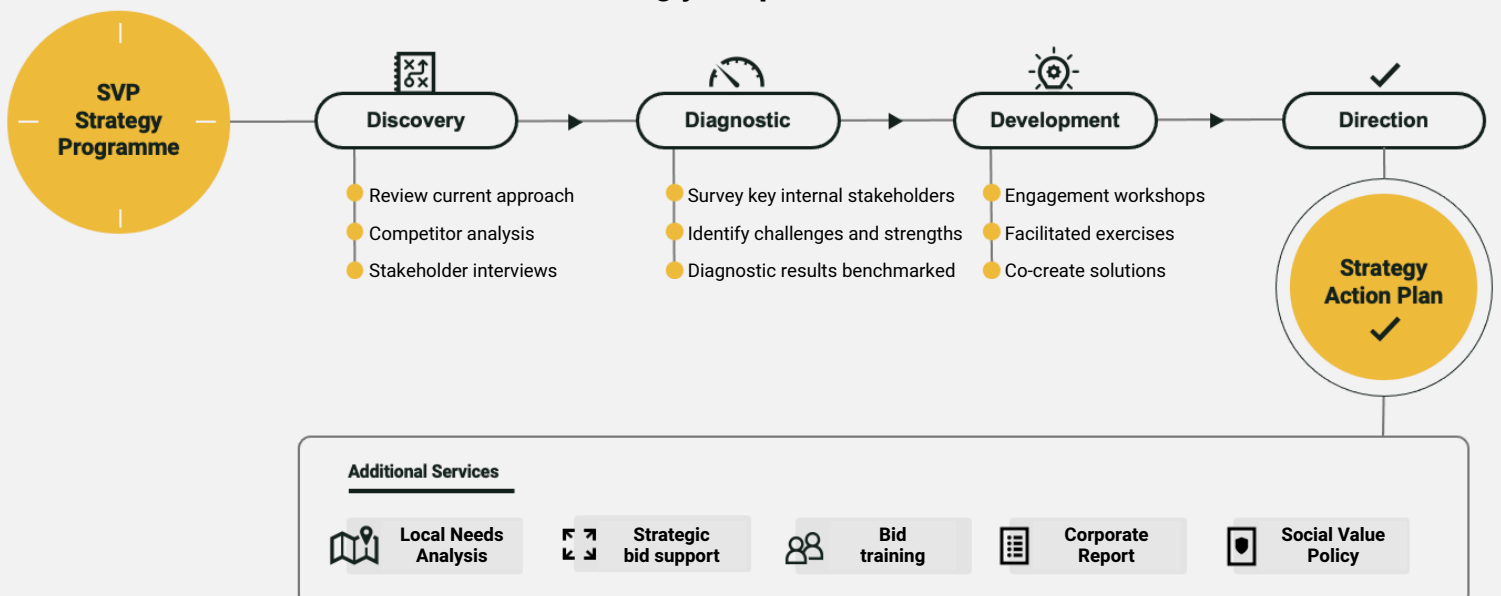
Local Needs Analysis

Identifying local Social Value needs for a contract can be difficult for a remote bidder. Our team can perform a detailed Needs Analysis of the local area and a report on the initiatives which will have the greatest impact for your bid.

Strategic bid support

We support bidders to optimise the Social Value element of tender responses, to ensure they make reasonable and material but ambitious commitments.

Setting you up for success:





The Social Value lifecycle approach

Our people platform and programmes set members up for success – and lasting impact.



It is a virtuous circle, success breeds success. Social Value delivery for one contract strengthens the story for the next bid”

Léyoh Goodall, Sales Director, Social Value Portal



Be a Social Value Pro

How can you extend your Social Value reach further?

In addition to demonstrating and delivering Social Value within the contracts you bid for, you can increase your Social Value contribution within your own organisation, and within your supply chain.



Solutions built around your needs

Social Value Portal’s complete solution enables you to build your Social Value contribution as a bidder, a buyer and a business. We also have dedicated solutions to support real estate needs, whether for planners, developers, investors or building services.

bidder	buyer	business	real estate
Effectively integrate Social Value within bids and tenders to maximise chances of selection.	Select suppliers based on Social Value promises and manage contracts based on delivery of targets.	Plan, measure and manage Social Value to engage stakeholders, employee, customers and investors.	Support for developers, planners and local authorities to integrate Social Value into plans and schemes.
Bid submissions and contract delivery	Procurement contract management	Optimising Social Value and corporate reporting	Planning management and reporting
✓	✓	✓	✓
Demonstrate commitment to win more work	Unlock Social Value within your supply chain.	Build a brand	Create Social Value throughout the lifecycle of developments

4

Glossary



Useful terms

Additionality	Core to the concept of Social Value, additionality is the good you do over and above the core contract requirements.
Baseline	The minimum starting point for comparisons (for example, last year's performance, another contract of similar type/size, or first year of contract)
Carbon offset	Unlike reducing your own greenhouse gas emissions, an offset is a way to compensate for emissions that an individual, organisation, or event produces by supporting projects that reduce or remove emissions from the atmosphere.
Central Government Social Value Model	The model sets out the Government's Social Value priorities for procurement. It includes a menu of Social Value objectives for Central Government departments (and executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies) to select from and include in their tenders
Circular economy	An economic system that is designed to be regenerative and restorative by minimising waste and maximising the use of resources. It aims to keep resources in use for as long as possible, extracting the maximum value from them, and then recovering and regenerating materials at the end of their useful life.
Clarification Question (CQ)	A question that can be raised during the tender process, by bidders before the tender deadline, or by evaluators after bids have been received. CQs raised by one bidder are often shared with all bidders, to keep the process transparent. If evaluators feel further explanation is required from the bidder, they will raise a CQ which is not then shared with other bidders. Evaluator CQs are not an opportunity for the bidder to improve their bid.
Double counting	The act of counting Social Value (promised or delivered) or related financial or non-financial impacts more than once which results in overstating Social Value.
Evaluation	The critical assessment of bids based on a pre-agreed grading and scoring system. For Social Value this is usually based on assessing a combination of quantitative targets and qualitative descriptions, or when using the Central Government Social Value Model, qualitative descriptions only.
Engagement session	Events organised by the buyer to engage with potential suppliers to check interest, define procurement needs and explain opportunities.
Local Needs Analysis	A report which identifies the needs and priorities of a particular area to allow bidders to create strategies that benefit the local community most.
Central Government Mapping tool	A methodology, bespoke to Social Value Portal, for aligning the TOM System with the Central Government Social Value Model.
Measures	An activity that is precisely defined to enable a proxy value to be applied, thereby enabling Social Value to be calculated.
Outcomes	The objectives that an organisation is looking to achieve that will contribute to the Social Value themes.
Place based project	A project where multiple public or private organisations within a local area collaborate to drive long term social, economic and environmental outcomes.
Proxy value	A value that is used as a substitute for or approximation of the expected impact of a measure. Proxy values are developed in accordance with relevant best practice (including the Treasury Green Book) and drawing on robust, verifiable data sources (such as the Office of National Statistics).
Sustainability	The concept of meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	A collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". Established in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly, they are intended to be achieved by 2030.
Themes	The overarching strategic areas of benefit for Social Value delivery.
Third sector	Charitable organisations or VCSEs (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises).
TOM System	The leading Social Value measurement standard in the UK, with a structure of a themes, outcomes and measures, created by Social Value Portal
Units	Metrics by which Social Value measures are calculated, such as tonnes of carbon.



We see time and time again that customers who take the time to fully embed Social Value into the fabric of their organisation are the ones who win their bids.

Anna McChesney Gordon, Director of Consultancy, Social Value Portal



**Over
90%
Member
satisfaction
rating**

Get in touch

Book a discovery call with one of our Social Value specialists today and see how we can help you with your next bid submission.

book online

call: 0203 355 0530

email: info@socialvalueportal.com

The people, platform and programmes that support organisations to measure, manage and report on the economic, community and environmental benefits they contribute to society.

Join the Social Value movement.
Book a discovery call with our experts:

call: 0203 355 0530
socialvalueportal.com



Certified



Corporation