



Social Value

Community value, inclusion and local participation.

How to use this handbook

This volume is the practitioner (site and technical) reference for the Social Value factor. It sets out what Social Value governs, every assessment element with its own process and controls, the Queensland and Commonwealth instruments that apply, and the primary metric for each element. It is decision support, not legal advice or a substitute for a site-specific assessment — confirm every regulatory point against the current instrument and, where a threshold is close or a critical exception applies, obtain specialist and legal review.

FIELD	DETAIL
Volume	15 of 17 — Environmental Knowledge Handbooks
Factor	Social Value
Jurisdiction	Queensland, Australia
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Prepared by	QTEN — Queensland Technical Excellence Network
Review	SME, spatial and legal review before reliance

Executive overview

Social value is the community-facing side of environmental and infrastructure work — the wellbeing, participation and trust a project creates or erodes. In Queensland it is delivered through social-procurement expectations, the Human Rights Act 2019 for public entities, and local-government and community-engagement practice. Done well it earns social licence and durable relationships; done poorly it becomes objection, delay and reputational cost. The task is to set social-value objectives, make rights-compatible and inclusive decisions, and measure the outcomes that matter to the community.

Scope

Social Value resolves into four secondary factors — Community and Public Value; Inclusion, Rights and Participation; Employment, Skills and Supply Chains; Impact, Measurement and Improvement — and twenty assessment elements. Every element is set out below with its own process and controls and its primary decision metric; identifiers are shared with the companion Knowledge System workbook and the platform calculators.

Assessment elements & process

Each assessment element below carries what it governs and its key pressures, the appropriate site process and controls, and the primary metric that measures it. Work every element that your project engages.

ASSESSMENT ELEMENT	WHAT IT GOVERNS & KEY PRESSURES	PROCESS & CONTROLS
Social Value Strategy and Governance <i>Social value governance maturity</i>	Social-value strategy and governance maturity. Pressures: vague commitments, no baseline.	Set social-value objectives, baseline and governance; measure outcomes; assess maturity.
Community Wellbeing and Liveability <i>Community wellbeing outcome</i>	Community wellbeing and liveability outcome. Pressures: disruption, benefits bypassing the community.	Assess wellbeing effects; target local benefit; mitigate disruption; measure outcome.

ASSESSMENT ELEMENT	WHAT IT GOVERNS & KEY PRESSURES	PROCESS & CONTROLS
Local and Regional Economic Value <i>Local economic value delivered</i>	Local and regional economic value. Pressures: value leaking outside the region.	Set local-value targets; use local employment and suppliers; measure value delivered.
Community Infrastructure and Service Access <i>Service and infrastructure access</i>	Community infrastructure and service access. Pressures: severance, loss of service access.	Maintain and enhance access to services and infrastructure; provide alternatives; measure access.
Social Licence, Trust and Institutional Value <i>Trust and social licence</i>	Social licence, trust and institutional value. Pressures: loss of trust and social licence.	Engage and be responsive; build trust; measure social-licence and trust.
Human Rights and Rights-compatible Decisions <i>Human-rights decision compliance</i>	Human rights and rights-compatible decisions. Pressures: overlooked rights impacts.	Screen decisions for human-rights impacts; document compatibility; consult; remedy limitations.
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion <i>Equity and inclusion outcome</i>	Equity, diversity and inclusion outcome. Pressures: inequitable outcomes, exclusion.	Design for equity and inclusion; set and measure EDI outcomes; correct gaps.
Accessibility and Universal Participation <i>Accessibility compliance and participation</i>	Accessibility and universal participation. Pressures: inaccessible design and processes.	Apply universal-design and accessibility standards; enable participation; verify compliance.
First Nations Rights, Participation and Benefit <i>First Nations benefit and participation</i>	First Nations rights, participation and benefit. Pressures: inadequate engagement and benefit.	Engage Traditional Owners; respect rights; enable participation and benefit; measure delivery.
Community Engagement, Participation and Co-design <i>Engagement and co-design effectiveness</i>	Community engagement, participation and co-design. Pressures: tokenistic engagement.	Engage and co-design meaningfully; be responsive; measure engagement effectiveness.
Employment Pathways and Workforce Participation <i>Employment pathway outcomes</i>	Employment pathways and workforce participation. Pressures: barriers to local/priority employment.	Create employment pathways for local and priority groups; support participation; measure outcomes.
Skills, Training and Capability Development <i>Skills and capability outcomes</i>	Skills, training and capability development. Pressures: no skills legacy.	Provide training and capability development; leave a skills legacy; measure outcomes.
Social Enterprise and Benefit Suppliers <i>Social benefit supplier participation</i>	Social enterprise and benefit-supplier participation. Pressures: exclusion of social enterprises.	Include social and benefit suppliers; set targets; verify and measure participation.
Local, Small and Diverse Supplier Participation <i>Local and diverse supplier participation</i>	Local, small and diverse supplier participation. Pressures: exclusion of local and diverse suppliers.	Enable local, small and diverse supplier participation; measure participation.

ASSESSMENT ELEMENT	WHAT IT GOVERNS & KEY PRESSURES	PROCESS & CONTROLS
Fair Work, Human Rights and Modern Slavery <i>Fair-work and human-rights due diligence</i>	Fair work, human rights and modern slavery. Pressures: labour-rights and modern-slavery risk.	Assure fair work; conduct human-rights and modern-slavery due diligence; remediate; track coverage.
Social Impact and Materiality Assessment <i>Social impact significance</i>	Social impact and materiality assessment. Pressures: unassessed social impact.	Assess social impact and materiality; prioritise; manage material impacts.
Social Value Measurement and Additionality <i>Additional social value verified</i>	Social-value measurement and additionality. Pressures: outputs counted as outcomes, no additionality.	Measure outcomes and verify additionality; avoid double-counting; report verified value.
Social Return, Cost-benefit and Distributional Analysis <i>Distributional and social return result</i>	Social return, cost-benefit and distributional analysis. Pressures: unclear who benefits.	Analyse social return and distribution; show who benefits; use to improve equity.
Commitments, Outcomes and Benefits Realisation <i>Commitment and benefit realisation</i>	Commitments, outcomes and benefits realisation. Pressures: unrealised commitments.	Track commitments to outcomes; manage delivery; realise and report benefits.
Social Value Reporting, Assurance and Adaptive Management <i>Reporting completeness and adaptive improvement</i>	Social-value reporting, assurance and adaptive management. Pressures: weak reporting and assurance.	Report and assure social value; review; correct and adapt.

Regulatory mapping

The instruments most often engaged for Social Value. Confirm currency and application to the specific site and activity before relying on any entry.

INSTRUMENT	JURIS.	WHAT IT DOES	TYPICAL TRIGGER
Human Rights Act 2019	Qld	Human-rights-compatible decisions and acts by public entities.	Public-entity decisions affecting rights.
Queensland Procurement Policy	Qld	Social procurement and local participation expectations.	Procuring under the Queensland framework.
Local Government Act 2009	Qld	Community engagement and local-benefit obligations (local government).	Local-government projects and decisions.
Social Return on Investment (SROI)	Standard	Recognised social-value measurement methodology.	Measuring and valuing social outcomes.

Assurance & evidence

- **Source currency.** Confirm the instruments, criteria and trigger values cited are current and correctly applied to the site and activity.
- **Records.** For each element engaged, retain the assessment, the controls applied, monitoring against the metric, and any statutory notifications — the evidence that the process was followed.
- **Independent review.** Interpretations, threshold decisions and critical exceptions are reviewed by a suitably qualified person before reliance.

TALK TO QTEN

Managing social value on a live project? QTEN helps Queensland clients turn this handbook into a defensible, evidence-backed position — scoping, assessment, controls, approvals and review. Bring us your site and we will help you get it right, and prove it.
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