

**Submission  
No 10**

**INQUIRY INTO PROCUREMENT PRACTICES OF  
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN NEW SOUTH WALES AND  
ITS IMPACT ON THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
PEOPLE OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

**Date Received:** 18 January 2024

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To the Committee Chair

As you may know, the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue is a not-for-profit, community initiative that aims to shine a light on the key issues facing the Greater Western Sydney (GWS) region, and to spark and nurture a national conversation about the West to help ensure it is equipped to shape its future.

I am writing to formally lodge our submission to the current inquiry into government procurement practices in NSW.

As part of our advocacy, the Dialogue has investigated social procurement and its significance to the GWS region in our 2021 paper Humanising Infrastructure. Developed in partnership with RPS, Humanising Infrastructure explores the procurement opportunities that stem from the large infrastructure investments in the region and how these projects can be leveraged to achieve positive social outcomes that both complement the wider agenda of the Government and leave lasting social legacy. A copy of the paper is attached to this submission.

Rather than specifically address the terms of reference, we would simply prefer to table with the Committee the three key recommendations made in Humanising Infrastructure, which we believe are critical to ensuring maximum community dividends from the investment in publicly funded major projects, for your consideration. These include:

1. Develop a NSW Social Procurement framework - This recommendation would see NSW follow the successful approaches of Queensland and Victoria. The development of a comprehensive, whole-of-government framework would bring together existing policies to fully embed social procurement across the NSW Government and produce greater social value outcomes. While elements of this framework exist in various silos of government, we see a need for a central framework which can be implemented, monitored and refined to optimise the return to communities from taxpayer-funded projects.
2. Develop a NSW Social Enterprise Strategy – A social enterprise strategy is critical to the success of a social procurement framework and will enable the strengthening and growth of a strong social enterprise sector. In many diverse, disadvantaged or disengaged communities, the social enterprise sector is far better placed than government or the private sector to connect with and deliver impactful social and economic support to those who we seek to empower through social procurement.
3. Establish a Western Sydney Infrastructure Pathways Program - The growing number of state-significant infrastructure projects expected to be delivered in GWS over the coming years can generate training and upskilling opportunities that are much needed in the region. A dedicated pathways program should be established to ensure these benefits flow on to GWS communities effectively, where they are best suited and most needed.

Additionally, in light of the Voice referendum result, the Dialogue strongly believes now is the time for the Government to double down on its commitment to economic empowerment of First Nations people through government procurement policy. We believe the Minns Government has inherited a robust and powerful First Nations Procurement Policy, which we strongly encourage it to refine and strengthen. Western Sydney is home to the largest urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Australia, and the state, and through procurement of goods and services, a tremendous impact can be made towards reconciliation

and closing the gap. The Dialogue implores the NSW Government to ensure efforts are sustained to improve outcomes for our First Nations people, particularly following this difficult time for our region's First Nations communities.

We believe our recommendations are fitting and support a best practice approach to social procurement in government projects. Unlocking the myriad of social benefits that are possible through the procurement process will result in better skills, opportunities and quality of life for residents of GWS and aligns closely with the priorities of this Government.

Please contact us to discuss any aspect of this submission in further detail.

Kind regards

Luke Turner