



Using social value software to win more bids

How the right tools can help you excel at every bidding stage





Public sector procurement teams must now examine the social impact of every supplier contract. If you're a private company looking to win contract work in the UK public sector, this means your bids will need to include a robust social value offer.

Learning to view your plans, processes, resources and supply chain through a social value lens, then ensuring your proposal aligns with the government's Social Value Model, will stand you in good stead with procurers and ensure your business is delivering benefits for society.

But even if you work for a socially-minded organisation, learning how to **capture and articulate** the good that's going on in your business in a way that makes sense for procurement teams can be a steep learning curve.

This is where using social value software can really help by:

- Capturing impact from previous projects and quantifying against universally-recognised proxy values
- Reporting social value achievements against pledged targets
- Improving visibility of social value supplied by supply chain
- Providing up-to-date measurement criteria and a single source of truth
- Evidencing tangible real world impact of your initiatives – contract based or otherwise
- Demonstrating your socially conscious credentials to prospective employees, clients and customer

The result? More streamlined social value delivery workflows and increased efficiencies in forecasting, tracking and reporting your organisation's socio-economic impact.

All of which put you in a much better position to submit a persuasive social value component in your contracts, and deliver on those promises if the work is won.

In this article we'll talk through the stages of bidding and delivering contract work, and how using a social value platform can help at each stage.

How social value software can support bid-writing

Social value can make up anything from 10–30% of a bid submission's total score, so it's essential to put together a clear social value proposition that shows what you can deliver. Quantifying your offer using proxy values gives the awarding authority an easy way to assess how your organisation will be giving back to society, and whether it is in a reasonable proportion to the fee spent.

Social value software gives you a place to log and collate your social value data, then aligns it with the required metrics so you can articulate it in an effective way at every stage of the bidding process.

Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) stage

At this early stage, contracting authorities will ask your organisation to provide evidence of social value delivered in past projects. If you don't currently have a central system for logging social value, this means time and effort spent tracking down and collating data from multiple sources, then putting it into an appropriate format.

Having a place where social value project data is kept, and can be added to easily, makes it quick and straightforward to access for inclusion in bid submissions.

A good social value platform will take this one step further by allowing you to extract this data in a ready-to-showcase format, including case studies and social value stats – saving bid teams time and providing consistently high quality results.



Invitation To Tender (ITT) stage

As well as evidencing social value delivered in the past, you'll be expected to demonstrate commitment and ability to deliver social value on future projects. A good social value platform will have an estimating or forecasting function to help articulate this by:

- Responds to the client's social value priorities and beneficiaries' established needs
- Mirrors the client's corporate objectives
- Taking into account the tenderer's capabilities, skill-sets and resources
- Keeping the socio-economic impact in line with the contract value

With the help of digital technology, you can build a robust offer that responds to the existing needs and requirements of your clients and the communities they serve.

How social value software can support contract delivery

Congratulations! You've won the contract. Now it's time to deliver on your promises. There are so many ways that social value software can support your social value delivery – here are just a few.

Contract awarding

Social value software supports the delivery planning process from the very start. For example, by plugging in key dates, you can plan a volunteering initiative at an optimum time that takes into consideration partner availability and volunteer availability during the project cycle. The software also provides a useful touchpoint for early conversations with your client, showing clearly how you intend to deliver on your social value commitments and building trust.

Contract delivery

Having digital technology on your side means nothing slips through the net when it comes to contract delivery. Get reminders and email notifications sent to whoever needs to see them to ensure that activities are delivered on schedule and contractual targets are never missed.

Using social value software is a great way to engage project managers by giving them a clear overview of what's happening and allowing them to benchmark against other areas of the business.

Social value in your supply chain

Specialist social value software can help track and manage social value delivered by your suppliers, allowing you to show clients the full extent of the social value your organisation is delivering.

Social value managers can set objectives for each supplier in the chain, manage the delivery of these objectives and report on suppliers' performance. This is particularly important if you're looking to bring your supply chain partners with you on your social value journey and need them to contribute to the overall target.

Using social value software makes it easy to include the whole supply chain in your submission, allowing partners of all sizes to take part in the creation of social value. It also fosters supply chain diversity which is a key outcome in all social value frameworks.

Continuous Improvement

By capturing feedback throughout the project lifecycle, social value software provides an easy way of banking useful qualitative and quantitative data that can feed your organisation's continuous improvement measures. This valuable data can help ensure your KPIs and strategic social value commitments stay closely connected with what's happening on the ground.

Reporting

The reporting capabilities of digital social value platforms allow social value data to be sliced in a multitude of ways, fulfilling the needs of multiple stakeholders both inside and outside of your organisation.

The data can be presented in a variety of formats, for example:

- Aligning to multiple global frameworks, e.g. UN SDGs, EU directives etc.
- Aligning to your internal or project objectives, e.g. company values, sustainability pillars etc.

Handover and Legacy

On contract completion, a good social value platform will provide a simple way for your clients to access selected social value datasets, showcasing the impact that has been achieved and the forecasted future impact of the measures taken.

This is a great way to demonstrate your commitment to leaving a positive legacy even after your contractual obligations have ended.

Improve your contract delivery from bid stage to completion – and beyond

Social value software offers so many opportunities to improve on how you deliver social value, from bid stage to contract completion – and beyond.

As well as offering a simple way to create a robust social value offer, a good social value platform will allow you to collate and communicate social value to clients and prospects, engage staff internally, keep stakeholders informed of your positive work, and position social value as a central part of your business infrastructure and strategy.

At Thrive, we exist to help you embed social value in your organisation.

To learn more about [Thrive](#), the [Impact Evaluation Standard](#) and our [Social Value Advisory](#) service, or to chat about how we can support, please contact: – info@thrive-platform.com

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