

SOCIAL ADVISORY AND RESEARCH

Enhancing the value of Australia's
investment in infrastructure





UNLOCKING SOCIAL VALUE

From unemployment to housing affordability and the continuing disadvantage experienced by First Nations people, Australian cities and regions are experiencing big social challenges.

These problems are complex and interrelated. Innovation and collaboration are required to address them.

Realising that infrastructure projects are among the biggest investments made in communities, project owners are recognising infrastructure's power to create social value beyond the primary purpose of an asset, and the role that projects can play in improving social, economic and environmental outcomes.

As an industry this journey began with determining social licence to operate and completing social impact assessments. RPS is taking a next generation approach by understanding, delivering and measuring social value throughout the project lifecycle – a relatively new concept in Australia.

Taking a social value approach to infrastructure investments

Understanding opportunities for social value creation can help you to build trust with your stakeholders, reduce project risk, and ultimately deliver better infrastructure.

We help our clients to realise the full value of infrastructure investments, policies, and projects by evaluating the social, environmental, and economic context in which they are delivered, and exploring the outcomes that really matter to communities. Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we design solutions and strategies to capture social value, prioritise community wellbeing and foster resilience.

Understanding the outcomes that matter

We support project owners to investigate community aspirations, values, challenges and opportunities. We quantify the cost of social challenges and develop evidence-based strategies for creating social value through infrastructure investments.

Positioning projects to realise social value

We collaborate with project partners to adopt governance frameworks that contribute to social value creation. We facilitate partnerships that generate positive outcomes for employment, education, housing, placemaking and more.

Demonstrating positive impact

We gather evidence that helps projects measure their impact. We quantify and communicate the social benefits that your projects deliver for individuals, communities and places.

OUR FOCUS

CREATING SOCIAL VALUE ACROSS THE PROJECT LIFECYCLE

We offer social advisory and research support from the earliest phases of project development, allowing you to identify, assess, and realise social benefits through all stages of the lifecycle.

INITIATION

We identify social challenges and opportunities that go beyond the asset, and lay the foundations for social value-led planning and governance.

Expertise

- Problem, challenge and opportunity identification.
- Integration of social value considerations in project planning and governance.

DEVELOPMENT

Using economic evidence, we identify potential social benefits to target, set clear goals for social value creation, and integrate these within the project business case.

Expertise

- Bringing together people with capability in social value frameworks, social research, socio-economic data, data analytics and visualisation of data, stakeholder engagement and more.

PROCUREMENT

We integrate social value into transactions, procurement and evaluations to maximise value for assets, and generate benefits beyond them.

Expertise

- Social value inputs to procurement planning and documentation.
- Evaluation of tenders and expressions of interest (EOIs).
- Advice to the market on strategies for generating social value in tender responses.

DELIVERY

We shape positive partnerships with stakeholders and communities as infrastructure projects are designed and built.

Expertise

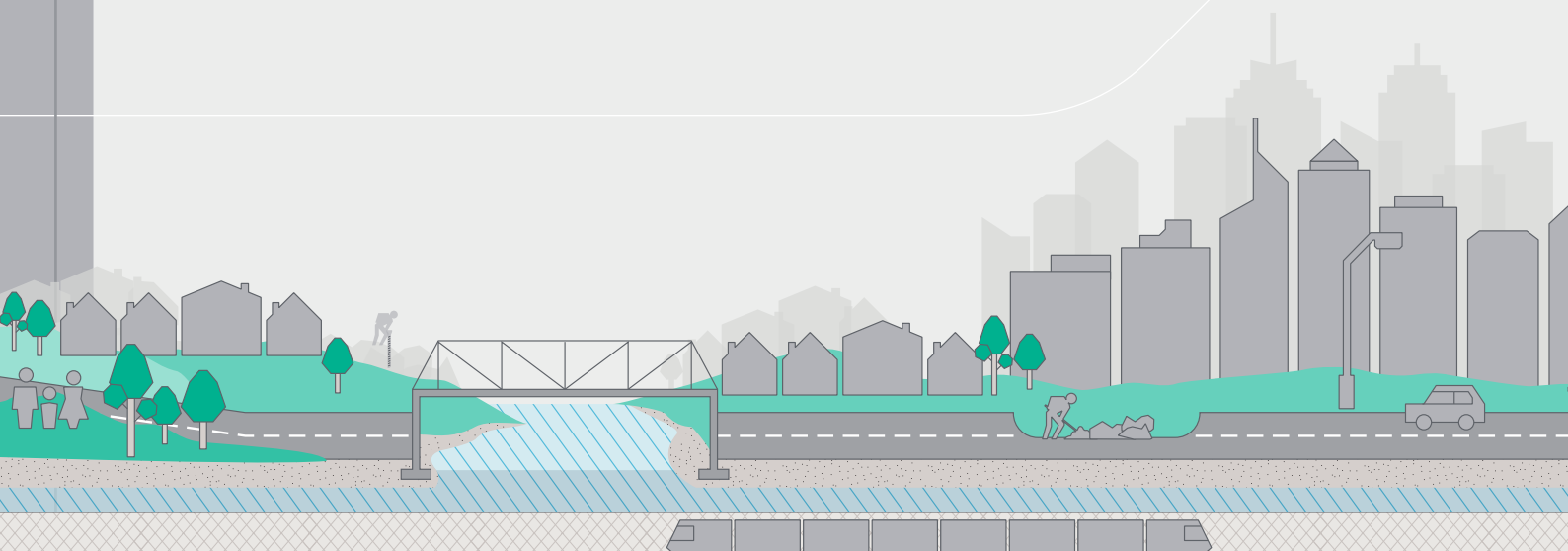
- Strategic partnerships with social value collaborators.
- Social procurement delivery.
- Community and stakeholder engagement.
- Project communications.

OPERATIONS

We evaluate how projects are performing against their social value objectives and use this evidence to communicate benefits.

Expertise

- Evidence of social impacts and benefits
- Reporting
- Optimisation planning.



MEET OUR TEAM

Our social advisory and research team brings international, Australian, public and private sector experience to facilitate partnerships, gather evidence to guide your social value strategy and achieve whole-of-project objectives.

We recognise that complex social issues cannot be addressed by any one sector alone, therefore partnerships are at the heart of our approach, working collaboratively with our clients and stakeholders strengthening relationships between government, business and the not-for profit sectors.

Partnering with our experienced communications and engagement, economics, data analytics and insights, project investment and finance, and transaction advisory specialists, we work to understand and create greater social value from Australia's infrastructure investments.

Vanessa Pilla

National Lead – Social Advisory and Research

Vanessa is a purpose-driven leader with a passion for creating social value in cities. She has over 20 years' experience working across public and private sectors in Australia, Malaysia and UK, advising on sustainable urban development and inclusive economies. She is motivated to understand different stakeholder needs and build a shared vision that requires meaningful partnerships with government, business, and the community. She is constantly looking for constructive solutions to influence long-lasting change that will lead to improved social and economic outcomes.



Andrea Comastri

Director – Social Advisory and Research

Andrea is a professional change-maker with 25 years' experience across the not-for-profit, philanthropic and consulting sectors. He has vast experience as an executive, director and management consultant with a strong focus on facilitating social impact, inclusion and sustainability. Focused on social justice and innovation, Andrea has strong expertise in managing stakeholders and working on complex and multi-layered projects.



Rachel Cogger

Associate Director – Social Advisory and Research

Rachel is an accredited urban planner and social researcher with more than 12 years' experience working across a range of government and university funded projects where 'people and place' are the key focus. She adopts an evidence-based approach to communications and engagement to enable the projects she works on to respond to the real needs of the community and stakeholders. She has engaged with community members from diverse backgrounds and uses her experience in consultation to design and implement successful communications and engagement programs for planning and infrastructure projects.



Merryn Spencer

Associate Director – Social Advisory and Research

Merryn is an accomplished researcher with extensive experience managing complex stakeholders and delivering engagement programs for state and local government. Merryn is enthusiastic about combining the complementary practices of research and engagement to bring rigour and an evidence-based approach to her social value work.





AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO SOCIAL VALUE SERVICES

What we do

- ✓ Social value strategy and transformation
- ✓ Social research
- ✓ Economics
- ✓ Deliberative engagement and co-design
- ✓ Data analytics
- ✓ Stakeholder engagement and facilitation
- ✓ Social procurement and supplier diversity
- ✓ Social impact assessments

Discover our work in infrastructure at rpsgroup.com

Combining decades of experience working on the nation's most successful transport, water, telecommunications and social infrastructure initiatives, we help clients maximise the value of their investments in infrastructure.



ABOUT RPS

Founded in 1970, RPS is a leading global professional services firm of 5,000 consultants and service providers. With experience across 125 countries and six continents, we define, design and manage projects that create shared value for a complex, urbanising and resource-scarce world.

From the transport infrastructure that keeps our cities moving, to the masterplanned communities and commercial projects that enhance our regional centres, RPS collaborates with industry, government and the community to take critical projects from ideas to reality.

We work across six sectors:

- Transport
- Property
- Energy
- Defence and government services
- Water
- Resources

CONTACT US

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