

CVRD Social Value Directory - Request for Information, R21-16 Frequently Asked Questions

Question: I hear that the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is looking at social procurement and connecting with local suppliers but what exactly is “social procurement”?

Answer: Social Procurement is about focusing existing spending and purchasing on community priorities to provide benefits back to the community. It is a shift from lowest price to achieving greatest value in terms of recognizing suppliers that are providing social values through means such as youth and apprenticeship training opportunities, hiring practices that support marginalized members in our communities and other community contributions.

Question: What is this Request for Information for, and what do I need to do?

Answer: This Request for Information (RFI) provides an opportunity for local suppliers and businesses to identify themselves to the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) as local suppliers who are providing social value and community benefits that are readily available to meet routine, lower value, CVRD purchasing needs. By filling out the RFI documents and submitting them to the CVRD, local suppliers can be added to a social value directory that can be accessed by CVRD staff for routine, lower value, purchasing opportunities such as catering, landscaping, building supplies and materials, etc.

Participation is easy with these three steps:

- 1) [Register for a free vendor account](#) in the CVRD’s e-sourcing platform, Bonfire.
- 2) Download and fill out the [RFI form](#)
- 3) Submit the RFI using the Bonfire platform before April 30, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

Join us for an information session on April 1, 2021 at noon to learn more and go over these steps. [Register here](#).

Question: How will the directory be used and by whom?

Answer: The resulting directory built from the RFI will be available to CVRD staff, as well as the broader Coastal Communities Social Procurement Initiative (CCSPI) membership which is made up of 25 local governments partners. More information and details of current CCSPI members is available [here](#).

Question: By filling out the RFI do I automatically get contacted for opportunities by the CVRD, or other CCSPI members?

Answer: No, by filling out the RFI and submitting it you can be added to the social value directory which CVRD staff and other CCSPI members can access for their routine, lower value, purchasing opportunities up to \$5,000 where services / goods provide a good fit. Joining the directory is a great opportunity to build awareness about the services / goods that you offer and community benefits your organization supports.

Question: I don't meet all of the social value criteria listed on the RFI form, should I still make a submission?

Answer: Businesses and enterprises can offer significant social value to their communities in many ways. Regardless of whether you meet all of the social value criteria, if you are passionate about or involved in supporting community causes and local initiatives, we still want to hear from you. There is space on the form for you to tell us about your social, environmental or cultural mission and to provide examples of community initiatives or other community contributions that demonstrate your commitments.

Question: Why are opportunities on the RFI intended for lower value purchases up to \$5,000? How is it worth applying for this?

Answer: The RFI provides opportunity for lower value purchases up to \$5,000 where CVRD purchasers have discretion to make purchases based on best value which includes social value as a consideration through this directory.

By joining the directory suppliers are also increasing awareness about the services / goods they can provide and building capacity to qualify on potentially larger value purchasing needs where social value considerations are factored into the purchasing processes.

The social value directory is intended for purchases up to \$5,000 as a starting point as the CVRD is bound to purchasing processes and legal trade treaty requirements for its higher value purchases.

Question: How will I be contacted about opportunities?

Answer: As part of the social value directory, your company contact information will be made available to CVRD staff members for their purchasing needs as well as other CCSPI members in areas that you indicate you can service under Question #8 of the RFI.

These members may reach out to the contact information provided for more information about your services/ goods, credentials and pricing where applicable to their needs.

Question: Can I drop my RFI off at the CVRD office, or mail it in?

Answer: No, please upload the submission into the [CVRD's Bonfire portal](#). By joining this system, you can opt to see all relevant CVRD purchasing opportunities as they are issued as well so it's beneficial to be registered in the system.

Question: What is Bonfire and how do I join that?

Answer: Bonfire is the CVRD's e-sourcing platform used for [all open purchasing opportunities](#). Vendors can create a free account quickly and easily using the platform.