



## Frequently Asked Questions – Suppliers

### 1. What is the Sustainable Choice online database?

Sustainable Choice is a membership-based program to assist councils in NSW to integrate sustainability into their procurement systems. The database lists sustainable products and services that have been assessed and approved by the Sustainable Choice team against a number of sustainability indicators. Products and services are listed under a number of categories and corresponding suppliers are also displayed on a map enabling the user to easily locate suppliers within their local area. The Sustainable Choice database focusses on the overall sustainability of a supplier's business as well as how sustainable their product/service is.

### 2. How can my business benefit from Sustainable Choice?

Local Government spends an estimated \$10 billion each year on products and services – listing your product or service on the Sustainable Choice database is an avenue for tapping into this market.

Councils are continually looking for ways in which they can better deliver services and manage assets for the benefit of their community. Section 8 of the *Local Government Act 1993* calls on councils "to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD)".

Sustainable procurement is an effective way to meet these responsibilities while also addressing economic, environmental, social and governance considerations. For example, consider buying locally made and manufactured products, those with recycled content, and those that are non-toxic or have other environmental and social benefits.

Local Government Procurement (LGP) actively promotes the database to councils directly via LGP Business Area Managers, LGP monthly newsletters, Sustainable Choice quarterly newsletters and Sustainable Choice Forums.

Sustainable Choice holds at least two Sustainable Procurement Forums annually, typically attracting between 20-30 council officers, which will often represent between 10-15 councils. These forums include a tradeshow of sustainable suppliers and a facilitated 'Meet the Suppliers' session, aligned with the 'Speed Dating' concept, which provides suppliers direct contact with all council participants in attendance at the event. Only suppliers listed on the Sustainable Choice database are invited to exhibit at the tradeshow. These events are held in both the Sydney Metropolitan Area and Regional NSW. The tradeshows are intimate in nature with the number of exhibitors limited to between six and eight.

### 3. What kind of products/services are on the database?

The database lists sustainable products and services across a number of categories relevant to Local Government. A sustainable product/service is one by which their manufacture and/or use reduces the impact on the environment, is socially responsible and financially viable. All products and services on the database have been critically analysed and researched for social and environmental credibility, ensuring that sustainability claims are verified.



# Sustainable Choice

## The Sustainable approach to Procurement in Local Government

#### 4. How can I put my products/services on the database?

You can apply online at <https://lgp.org.au/sustainable-choice>.

#### 5. What are sustainability indicators?

The Sustainable Choice sustainability indicators are icons that may be attached to a company and/or its products/services on the database. When uploading new products/services you may apply for an indicator, but it will ultimately be left to the discretion of the Sustainable Choice team as to which sustainability indicators your product/service is eligible for. Information on each indicator can be found on the database website.

#### 6. Does it cost?

The listing is free of charge

#### 7. What if our organisation doesn't have a sustainability policy?

If your organisation does not have a sustainability policy, the Sustainable Choice team are happy to provide you with guidance to create one. Having a sustainability policy with environmental and social targets is a requirement of registering your organisation on the Sustainable Choice database. If you do not have a sustainability policy and do not have plans to create one in the near future, it is unlikely your online application will be successful.

#### 8. What is ISO 14001?

ISO 14001:2004 is a standard that sets out the criteria for an environmental management system. It does not state requirements for environmental performance, but maps out a framework that a company or organisation can follow to set up an effective environmental management system. An organisation with an ISO 14001 accredited environmental management system will have an advantage over those who don't. However, accreditation can be an expensive process and is not mandatory for listing on the database. Evidence of good environmental practices is sufficient for small to medium-sized businesses.

#### 9. Will my products/services be advertised?

LGP actively promotes the database to its council clients. Suppliers listed on the database are given exclusive opportunity to purchase advertorials in Sustainable Choice newsletters and to exhibit at or sponsor Sustainable Choice Forums.