



City of Armadale builds on WALGA initiative, implements VendorPanel for all council procurement

A single platform for operational and strategic procurement

At the time the WALGA Marketplace initiative was announced, Senior Procurement Officer at the City of Armadale, Steven Kinsey, was preparing a business case for a tendering system to replace burdensome manual processes. News of the initiative prompted Kinsey to reconsider his options:

“VendorPanel’s local supplier discovery functionality is unique and I was keen to take advantage of the offer to use it at no cost. Selecting VendorPanel Tenders in addition meant we could have a single platform for all procurement, whether seeking quotes from local suppliers, WALGA Preferred Supplier Arrangements, or managing complex one-off sourcing events.”

A week after receiving the green light from council executives, City of Armadale had activated Marketplace and raised their first tender. Kinsey says, “Because our staff were already using the technology [to access WALGA PSAs], the transition to move all sourcing online was incredibly easy - it’s the same simple process for them to find suppliers and raise RFQs.”

The council has 105 staff with purchasing authority and a procurement team of three. Bringing low value sourcing onto a platform that also manages more strategic sourcing and tenders gives the team complete visibility across all procurement. This transparency has given them control of low value sourcing without stripping staff of autonomy or requiring more resources.



The procurement team and dozens of operation staff at the City of Armadale have been using VendorPanel to source from WALGA’s preferred supplier arrangements since 2014.

In April 2020, in response to the Covid-19 economic crisis, WALGA (The WA Local Government Association) extended their partnership with VendorPanel to make the local supplier Marketplace available to their members at no cost.

VendorPanel Marketplace is a proven local economic development tool that helps drive procurement spend into regional economies by making it easy for buyers to identify local suppliers and include them in their RFQs.



Now staff are protected with tools that ensure compliance with policy and that save them time in the sourcing process.

As Director of City Projects, Andrew Barnett is planning to raise an RFQ to the Project Management list on Marketplace. He says,

“The platform is easy to use and saves me time as I simply follow the steps and can be assured nothing has been missed. Access to Marketplace categories means all my RFQs will be consistent, compliant and audit ready. It’s a weight off my shoulders.”

Andrew has invited suppliers that he has worked with previously to self register to the platform and will include new suppliers he finds on the Marketplace in order to generate more local opportunities and drive competition and innovation in the local market.

Armadale raised nine tenders to the market in their first month and Kinsey estimates they saved 7-8 hours in administrative work for each.

Future plans

With the change, Armadale now has access to activity reports that provide insight into buyer behaviour and supplier engagement, highlighting trends that will inform decision making.

Kinsey says, “Use of Marketplace will give us better access to the local market and enable us to see patterns in our purchasing. We’ll use this information to consider the potential of establishing preferred supplier lists in heavily-used categories that will likely further reduce risk to the organisation.” VendorPanel Marketplace is available nationally, and to WA local governments at no cost until May 2021. Council buyers that use eQuotes in WA already have access to the local supplier Marketplace from their VendorPanel



Supplier lists available to WALGA members via VendorPanel

¹ Study of aggregated data from 26 Australian local governments using VendorPanel Marketplace found contracts were awarded to local suppliers in, on average, 84% of cases. Findings were published in an independently audited case study, BuyRegional: Leveraging sub-tender procurement to drive local economic development.