

The time is right to think more about the social value of new infrastructure projects

Consult Australia releases new report on the importance of considering social impacts in business cases for new infrastructure projects

NATIONAL – a new report titled *Considering social impacts in infrastructure business cases* has been released by the industry association for design, advisory and engineering businesses.

Consult Australia’s report highlights that now is the time to increase of focus on the social value of infrastructure investments. We should ensure our economic response to COVID-19 aligns with community values and creates a positive legacy for future generations.

Social impacts are consequences experienced by people, both positive and negative, owing to changes in their surroundings from a project. These social impacts, when resulting in positive outcomes, determine the social benefits from new infrastructure and enable investors to ensure investments are delivering social value to the community.

Business cases for new infrastructure proposals is the ideal starting point to start looking at how we can increase the social value from these investments. A social-value focused business case helps us better understand the community needs that we are looking to address, which is valuable information to shape and inform the proposal from the outset.

Nicola Grayson, Chief Executive of Consult Australia, said:

“The earlier we think about the social impacts from new infrastructure, the more opportunities we have to increase its social value for the community.”

“The social value from new infrastructure does not have to be distinct from the strong focus to date on economic value. Instead, thinking about the values and objectives of our community can ensure growth opportunities from investments are balancing these economic and social considerations – a dual lens approach.”

Consult Australia’s report highlights that there is no one approach to measuring social impacts in infrastructure business cases. There are many tools that can be used depending on the context and objectives.

Grayson added:

“We think governments require a more flexible approach as to how they analyse benefits from investments.”

MEDIA STATEMENT

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“Many of the businesses we represent are developing new ideas and tools on how social impacts could be better considered in infrastructure proposals, and we would welcome the opportunity to work with governments to showcase their benefits.”

A copy of Consult Australia’s report on considering social impacts in infrastructure business cases is attached.

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NOTES TO EDITOR

1. About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting firms operating in the built and natural environment sectors. These services include design, engineering, cost management, architecture, technology, survey, legal and management solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private and public sector including local, state and federal governments. We represent an industry comprising some 48,000 firms across Australia, ranging from sole practitioners through to some of Australia’s top 500 firms with combined revenue exceeding \$40 billion a year.

2. About Nicola Grayson

Nicola Grayson is the Chief Executive of Consult Australia. Nicola is responsible for implementing the organisation’s strategy, building ongoing external relationships, and for leading Consult Australia’s advocacy and government relations agenda on behalf of member firms.

Nicola is a government relations specialist, and has represented industry associations in the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Australia. Nicola has worked across a range of sectors including general insurance, consumer finance, alcohol, and education, in addition to consulting engineering. She has an Honours Degree in Law from the United Kingdom and was previously Consult Australia’s Director of Policy and Government Relations.

3. For interview

For more information and to arrange an interview, please contact Nicola Grayson directly on 0499 878 839 or email nicola@consultaustalia.com.au.