Q·SEED

Social procurement
Employment
Economic
Development

Q-SEED Townsville Regional Action Plan 2024

A pathway for implementing social procurement and inclusive employment in the region.

CQUniversity AUSTRALIA

ArcBlue
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Executive summary

There is a **significant** amount of **investment** and **opportunity** coming to **transform Townsville,** with an estimated annual investment of **$1.8B** per year over the next 5 years, starting from 2024.

With **$6.2B** of Townsville **expenditure** being spent **outside** the region, there is a significant opportunity through Q-SEED to **redirect** a portion of this significant **investment back** into the **local community**, to assist in tackling the **broader socio - economic challenges** Townsville is facing and improve community prosperity.

Re-investing existing expenditure through procurement, via **the Q-SEED** model will be a key medium for addressing some of the broader socio-economic **challenges** facings Townsville. The Q- SEED model focuses on **building collaboration within the Townsville community** to ensure capability is built to harness expenditure opportunities and to ensure that the flow on effects open doors for those who experience barriers to economic participation and growth.

The **Q- SEED Regional Action Plan** has been developed and informed by **local stakeholder input** from a series of **workshops** and targets key areas identified as needing reform.

ArcBlue completed a survey to inform the priority actions to be selected for the Q-SEED Townsville Regional Action Plan. Respondents included **buyers, suppliers, employers, youth organisations, social enterprises and government**.

The Q-SEED Townsville Regional Action Plan sets out the **priorities** for **Q1-Q4 2024 and Q1-Q2 2025** to ensure work is underway to address the broader socio-economic challenges identified.

Q- SEED Regional Action Plan Methodology

1. **Workshop 1** — September 2023
2. **Workshop 2** — October 2023
3. **Regional Action Plan Meeting** — December 2023
4. **Regional Action Plan Feedback Survey** — January 2024
5. **Finalised Q- SEED Regional Action Plan**

Feedback consolidation at each stage

Survey Findings – Procurement

		Focus Area	
Finding	**Solution**	**Actions**	**Stakeholder Participation**
P1 **Restricted Pool of local suppliers**	*Mapping the ecosystem in selected sectors*	✓ Establish the Procurement Working Group (PWG) to understand the biggest challenges in accessing local suppliers. ✓ Identify what sectors are the highest priority and create an action plan to address	Procurement
P2 **Limited administrative capability of local suppliers**	*Establish a Local Supplier Working Group (SWG), Develop supplier 'how to respond to procurement training' program along with a supplier mentorship model*	✓ Engage the Supplier Working Group (SWG) to understand the biggest issues in responding to procurement opportunities. ✓ Create a hierarchy of issues and create a training plan to address each ✓ Deploy the training plan and deliver	Suppliers, ArcBlue, Smart Precinct
P3 **Lack of supplier visibility in the region**	*Review Procurement supplier lists and local industry membership organisations to create a cohesive supplier list*	✓ Identify with PWG current local suppliers and engage with local industry bodies to determine the local market supply chain (based on hierarchy of needs from P1) ✓ Create list and design database ✓ Determine the optimal place for database	Procurement, ArcBlue
	Deliver 'meet the buyer' networking events and create Lighthouse project briefings.	✓ Based on Q-Seed membership requirements and Major Capital work programs, work with all intermediaries, ICN and government organisations and create a schedule of events	Q-SEED members, ICN, Industry bodies, government

Action Plan Timeline – Procurement

Q·SEED Social procurement Employment Economic Development

Focus Areas	Findings	Solution	Targeted Action/s	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2
Procurement	P1 Restricted Pool of local suppliers	*Mapping the ecosystem*	❑ Establish the Procurement Working Group (PWG) to understand the biggest challenges in accessing local suppliers.	★	– – –	– – –	⚑		
			❑ Identify what sectors are the highest priority and create an action plan to address	★	———	⚑			
	P2 Limited administrative capability of local suppliers	*Establish a Local Supplier Working Group (SWG), Develop supplier 'how to respond to procurement training' program along with a supplier mentorship model*	❑ Engage the Supplier Working Group (SWG) to understand the biggest issues in responding to procurement opportunities.	★	———	⚑			
			❑ Create a hierarchy of issues and create a training plan to address each	★	———	⚑			
			❑ Deploy the training plan and deliver		⬢	– – –	– – –	⚑	
	P3 Lack of supplier visibility in the region	*Review Procurement supplier lists and local industry membership organisations to create a cohesive supplier list*	❑ Identify with PWG current local suppliers and engage with local industry bodies to determine the local market supply chain (based on hierarchy of needs from P1)	★	– – –	⚑			
			❑ Create list and design database	★	———	———	⚑		
			❑ Determine the optimal place for database	★	———	———	⚑		
		Deliver 'meet the buyer' networking events and create Lighthouse project briefings	❑ Based on Q-Seed membership requirements and Major Capital work programs, work with all intermediaries, ICN and government organisations and create a schedule of events	★	– – –	– – –	📅		

Legend: ★ Start ⬢ Launch 📅 Event ——— Planning & Design – – – Ongoing Engagement ⚑ End

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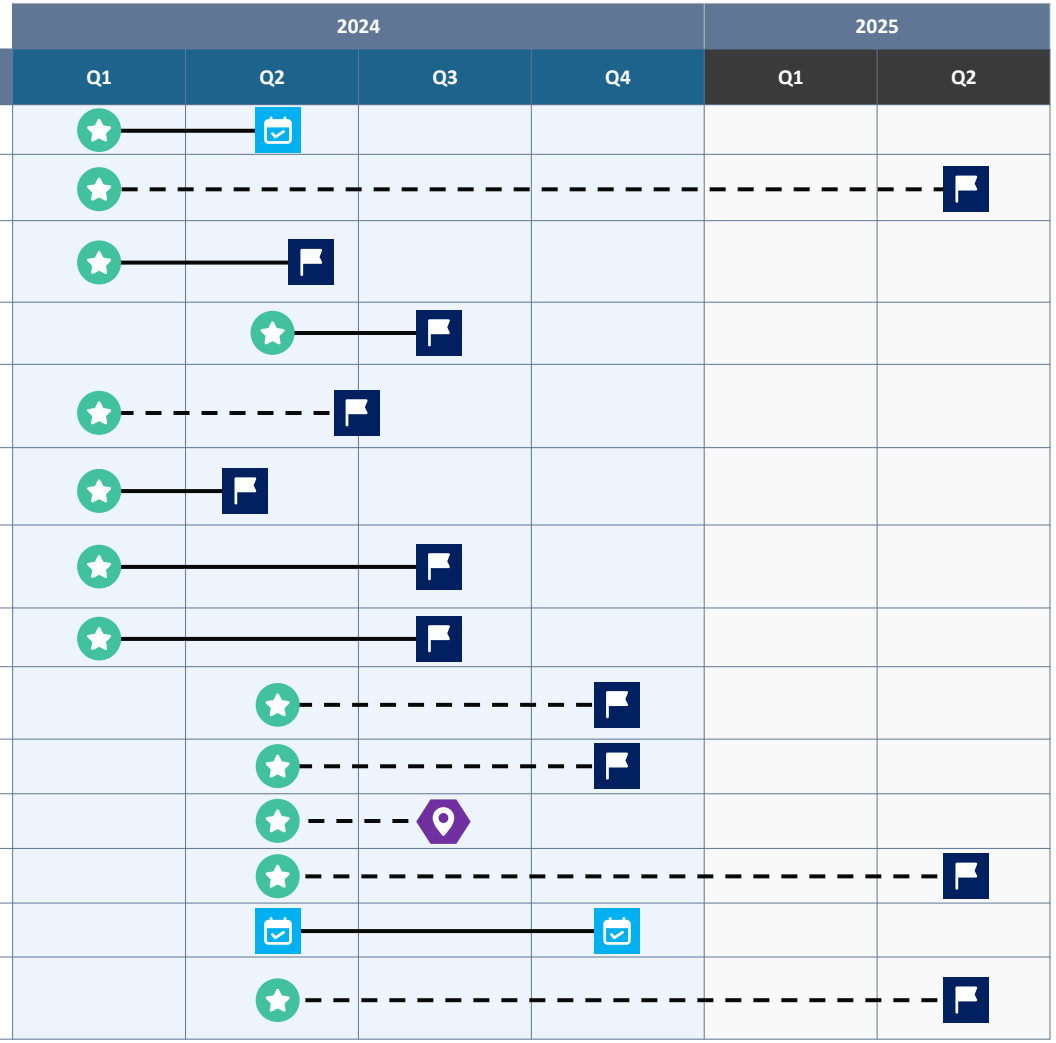
Survey Findings – Suppliers

		Focus Area	
Finding	**Solution**	**Actions**	**Stakeholder Participation**
S1 **Local suppliers cannot compete with other larger businesses**	*Develop a Supplier Hub to build capability and increase competitive advantage*	✓ Establish Supplier working Group (SWG) ✓ Through activities in (P3) further develop the hub to include opportunities to increase completive advantage ✓ Identify opportunities where suppliers are "missing out" and approach organisations to explore options and campaign for local buy	Supplier Working Group, ArcBlue
	Identify Collaboration opportunities	✓ Work with PWG and SWG to identify opportunities where collaboration could be beneficial ✓ Create a database of suppliers interested in collaboration opportunities ✓ Create a calendar of events for businesses to explore collaboration opportunities	Procurement Working Group, Supplier Working Group, ArcBlue
S2 **Complicated tender and procurement processes**	*Identifying opportunities to simplify tender and procurement processes with PWG*	✓ Connect with PWG to investigate opportunities to simplify and streamline tender process ✓ Advise on improvements and create implantation plan to action	ArcBlue, PWG
	Supplier Capability Building	✓ Engage with SWG to understand current capability constraints outside of P2 actions ✓ Identify opportunities to uplift capability and design solution ✓ Implement "Capability Boost" program	ArcBlue, Smart Precinct
S3 **Limited exposure to local opportunities**	*Consolidated Q-SEED member procurement and project pipelines*	✓ Consolidate all local opportunities on Supplier Portal ✓ Targeted events (P3) around local procurement opportunities ✓ Consider targeting selective procurement opportunities to ring fence local suppliers and advertise through the Q-SEED membership	ArcBlue, Smart Precincts, SWG, PWG

Action Plan Timeline – Suppliers

Focus Areas	Findings	Solution	Targeted Action/s
Suppliers	S1 Local suppliers cannot compete with other larger businesses	*Develop a Supplier Hub to build capability and increase competitive advantage*	❑ Establish Supplier working Group (SWG)
			❑ Through activities in (P3) further develop the hub to include opportunities to increase completive advantage
			❑ Identify opportunities where suppliers are "missing out" and approach organisations to explore options and campaign for local buy
		Identify Collaboration opportunities	❑ Create a database of suppliers interested in collaboration opportunities
			❑ Work with PWG and SWG to identify opportunities where collaboration could be beneficial
			❑ Create a calendar of events for businesses to explore collaboration opportunities
	S2 Complicated tender and procurement processes	*Identifying opportunities to simplify tender and procurement processes with PWG*	❑ Connect with PWG to investigate opportunities to simplify and streamline tender process
			❑ Advise on improvements and create implantation plan to action
		Supplier Capability Building	❑ Engage with SWG to understand current capability constraints outside of P2 actions
			❑ Identify opportunities to uplift capability and design solution
			❑ Implement "Capability Boost" program
	S3 Limited exposure to local opportunities	*Consolidated Q-SEED member procurement and project pipelines*	❑ Consolidate all local opportunities on Supplier Portal
			❑ Targeted events (P3) around local procurement opportunities
			❑ Consider targeting selective procurement opportunities to ring fence local suppliers and advertise through the Q-SEED membership



Legend: Start · Launch · Event · Planning & Design · Ongoing Engagement · End

Survey Findings – Employers

		Focus Area	
Finding	**Solution**	**Actions**	**Stakeholder Participation**
E1 **Employers have challenges retaining local staff**	*Employer Engagement*	✓ Establish the Employer Working Group (EWG) to understand the biggest challenges in retaining staff ✓ Create action plan to address the highest priority items	EWG, ArcBlue
	Leverage support from Employment Service Providers (ESP)	✓ Connect with Local Jobs Facilitators to create a schedule and plan of engagement for Employment Service Providers (ESP's) ✓ Hold EWG and ESP round tables according to schedule	EWG, ESP ArcBlue
	Identify flexible working possibilities	✓ Conduct an Inclusive employment maturity assessment workshop with specific training on flexible working and job carving opportunities	ArcBlue, EWG and Q-SEED employers
E2 **Employer expectation vs. reality**	*Employer Engagement*	✓ Engage with EWG to understand the biggest challenges in staff expectations and ✓ Create action plan to address the highest priority items	EWG, ArcBlue
	Employment Service Provider	✓ Socialise The Employer challenges with ESP's and develop training to roll out to job seekers on Employers expectations ✓ Connect job seekers to opportunities through ESP's.	ESP, ArcBlue

Action Plan Timeline – Employers

Focus Areas	Findings	Solution	Targeted Action/s	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2
Employers	E1 Employers have challenges retaining staff	*Employer Engagement*	❑ Establish the Employer Working Group (EWG) to understand the biggest challenges in retaining staff	★	⬢				
			❑ Create action plan to address the highest priority items		★	⚑			
		Leverage support from Employment Service Providers (ESP)	❑ Connect with Local Jobs Facilitators to create a schedule and plan of engagement for Employment Service Providers (ESP's)		★	⚑			
			❑ Hold EWG and ESP round tables according to schedule		📅		📅		📅
		Identify flexible working possibilities	❑ Conduct an Inclusive employment maturity assessment workshop with specific training on flexible working and job carving opportunities	★	⬢				
	E2 Employer expectations vs. reality	*Employer Engagement*	❑ Engage with EWG to understand the biggest challenges in staff expectations and	★	⚑				
			❑ Create action plan to address the highest priority items	★	⚑				
		Employment Service Provider	❑ Socialise The Employer challenges with ESP's and develop training to roll out to job seekers on Employers expectations	★	⚑				
			❑ Connect job seekers to opportunities through ESP's			★			⚑

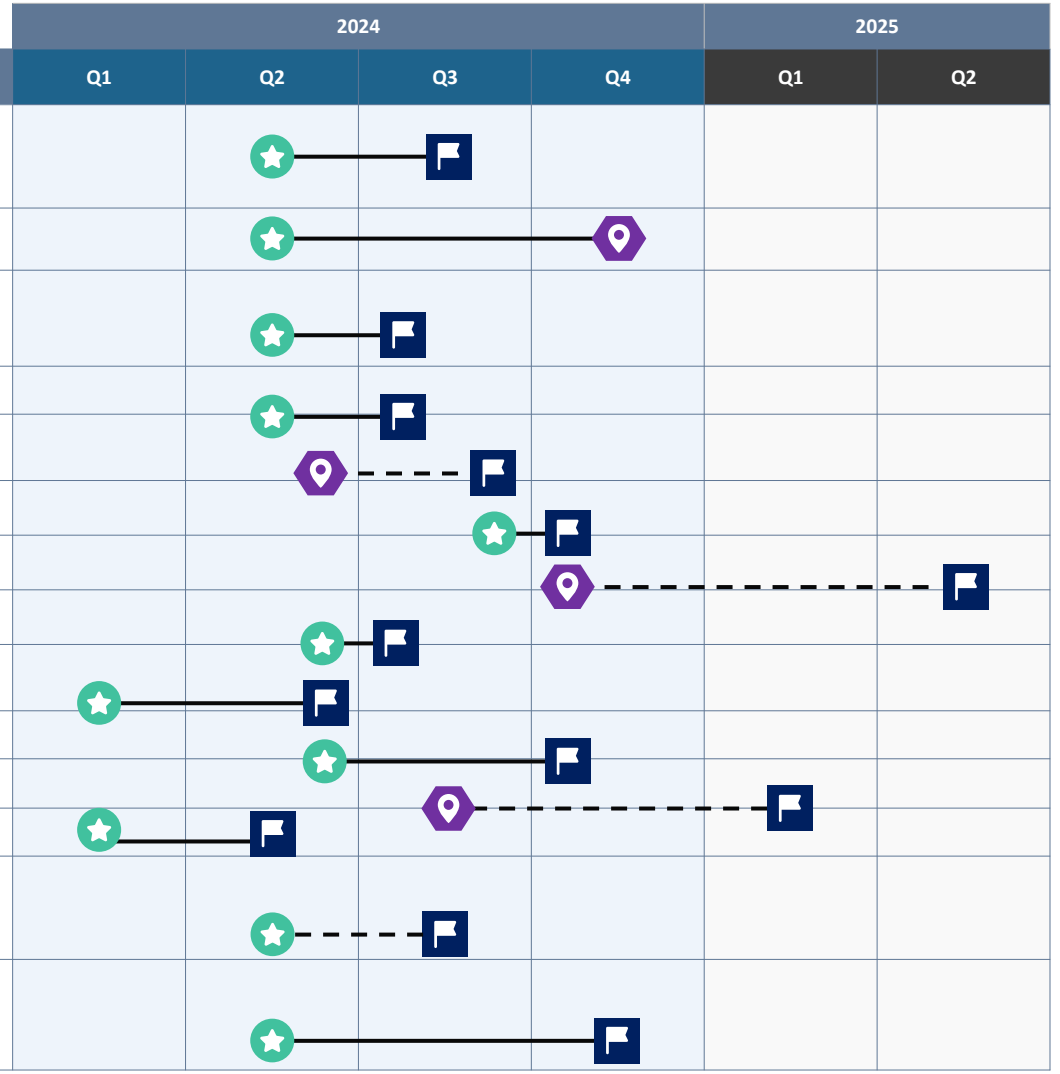
Legend: ★ Start ⬢ Launch 📅 Event — Planning & Design - - - Ongoing Engagement ⚑ End

Survey Findings – Youth

			Focus Area	
	Finding	Solution	Actions	Stakeholder Participation
Y1	Lack of Transportation	*Police and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) Braking the Cycle Program* *Learnt it*	✓ Connect with both programs, ascertain opportunities to work with them. Establish current activities and improvement opportunities to increase access to the service for Young People ✓ Create action plan and implement	PCYC, Learn it and Youth support organisations
Y2	Non-Vocational Skills for Employment	*Deliver Pre-Employment Training Programs**	✓ EWG to determine and agree generic Pre-Employment requirements. Connect with ESP to design program and roll out	Employment Working Group, Employment Service Providers
Y3	Negative perceptions of young people held by employers and the community	*Isolate the negative perceptions of Youth and identify strategies to enhance*	✓ Identify key stakeholders to participate in Youth workshop ✓ Conduct intensive workshop with multiple stakeholders to identify current perceptions ✓ Create strategies to address and enhance perception ✓ Implement plan.	CQU
Y4	Youth Engagement and Expectations	*Determine current baseline of Youth Engagement and expectations to inform future actions*	✓ Identify key stakeholders to participate in Youth workshop ✓ Conduct intensive workshop with multiple stakeholders to identify current expectations ✓ Create strategies to address and enhance perception ✓ Implement plan.	CQU
Y5	Mental Health and Wellbeing	*Employers developing a Mental Health Pledge in partnership with Mental Health Service Providers*	✓ Work with Mental Health Service Providers to establish a mental health pledge best practice, review with EWG and wider membership for adoption	CQU, ArcBlue, Employment Working Group, Mental Health Service Providers
		Partnering with First Nations ESP's and Support services	✓ Identify First Nations Employment Service Providers within the region ✓ Develop strategies and initiatives with First Nations ESP's and employment bodies to engage and retain First Nations youth in employment ✓ Engage with local schools to identify current First Nation programs for school leavers and explore potential Employer programs to transition from school to work	Employment Working Groups, ESP's ArcBlue, EWG, ESP

Action Plan Timeline – Youth

Focus Areas	Findings	Solution	Targeted Action/s
Youth	Y1 Lack of Transportation	*Police and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) Braking the Cycle Program*	❑ Connect with both programs, ascertain opportunities to work with them. Establish current activities and improvement opportunities to increase access to the service for Young People
		Learnt it	❑ Create action plan and implement
	Y2 Non-Vocational Skills for Employment	*Deliver Pre-Employment Training Programs**	❑ EWG to determine and agree generic Pre-Employment requirements. Connect with ESP to design program and roll out
	Y3 Negative Perceptions of young people	*Isolate the negative perceptions of Youth and identify strategies to enhance*	❑ Identify key stakeholders to participate in Youth workshop
			❑ Conduct intensive workshop with multiple stakeholders to identify current perceptions
			❑ Create strategies to address and enhance perception
			❑ Implement plan
	Y4 Youth engagement and expectations	*Determine current baseline of Youth Engagement and expectations to inform future actions*	❑ Identify key stakeholders to participate in Youth workshop
			❑ Conduct intensive workshop with multiple stakeholders to identify current expectations
			❑ Create strategies to address and enhance perception
			❑ Implement plan
	Y5 Mental health and well-being	*Employers developing a Mental Health Pledge in partnership with Mental Health Service Providers*	❑ Identify First Nations Employment Service Providers within the region
			❑ Develop strategies and initiatives with First Nations ESP's and employment bodies to engage and retain First Nations youth in employment
		Partnering with First Nations ESP's and Support services	❑ Engage with local schools to identify current First Nation programs for school leavers and explore potential Employer programs to transition from school to work



Legend: Start · Launch · Event · Planning & Design · Ongoing Engagement · End

Survey Findings – Procurement

		Focus Area	
Finding	**Solution**	**Procurement**	**Participation Rate**
Restricted Pool of local suppliers	*Mapping the ecosystem in selected sectors*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **mapping the ecosystem in selected sectors** as an appropriate solution to addressing a restricted pool local suppliers.	**50%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Limited administrative capability of local suppliers	*Establish a Local Supplier Working Group (SWG)*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **establishing a local supplier working group** as an appropriate solution to addressing the limited administrative capability of local suppliers	**67%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Develop supplier 'how to respond to procurement training' programs	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **developing supplier 'how to respond to procurement' training programs** as an appropriate solution to addressing the limited administrative capability of local suppliers.	**83%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Develop a supplier mentorship program	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **developing a supplier mentorship program** as an appropriate solution to addressing the limited administrative capability of local suppliers.	**50%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Lack of supplier visibility in the region	*Deliver 'meet the buyer' networking events*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated hosting meet the buyer events as an appropriate solution to addressing a lack of supplier visibility.	**83%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Review Procurement supplier panels and local industry membership organisations.	✓ **83%** of Respondents rated **reviewing procurement supplier panels and local industry membership organisations** as an appropriate solution to addressing a lack of supplier visibility.	**80%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Lighthouse' project briefings	✓ **83%** of Respondents rated **Lighthouse' project briefings** as an appropriate solution to addressing a lack of supplier visibility.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.

Survey Findings – Suppliers

		Focus Area	
Finding	**Solution**	**Suppliers**	**Participation Rate**
Local suppliers cannot compete with other larger businesses	*Develop a Supplier Hub to build capability and increase competitive advantage*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **developing a Supplier Hub to build capability to increase competitive advantage** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of local suppliers not being able to compete with other larger businesses.	**75%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Collaboration	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **Collaboration** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of local suppliers not being able to compete with other larger businesses.	**75%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Local Procurement Engagement	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **Local Procurement Engagement** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of local suppliers not being able to compete with other larger businesses.	**75%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Complicated tender and procurement processes	*Identifying opportunities to simplify tender and procurement processes*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **Identifying with the PWG opportunities to simplify tender and procurement processes** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of complicated tender and procurement processes.	**75%** of Responents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Supplier Capability Building	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **Supplier Capability Building** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of complicated tender and procurement processes.	**75%** of Responents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Limited exposure to local opportunities	*Consolidated Q-SEED member procurement and project pipelines*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **consolidated Q-SEED member procurement and project pipelines** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of limited exposure to local opportunities.	**75%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.

Additional Feedback	
Potential Action	**Description**
Set Aside Projects or Being 'In the Know' earlier to prepare	Rather than just announcing projects and scrambling, giving smaller business more awareness and having set aside projects for social enterprise

Survey Findings – Employers

		Focus Area	
Finding	**Solution**	**Employers**	**Participation Rate**
Employers have challenges retaining local staff	*Employer Engagement*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated e**stablishing an Employer Working Group (EWG)** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of employers having challenges retaining local staff.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Leverage support from Employment Service Providers (ESP)	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **leveraging support from employment service providers as** an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of employers having challenges retaining local staff.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Identify flexible working possibilities		**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Employer expectation vs. reality	*Employer Engagement*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **employer engagement; defining minimum entry level requirements and developing training programs** as an appropriate solution to address the issue of employer expectations vs reality.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Employment Service Provider	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **forming partnerships with employment and employment service provider** as an appropriate solution to address the issue of employer expectations vs reality.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Access to employment & training	*Develop partnerships with Employment Service Providers, Tertiary Institutions and Registered Training Organisations and Industry*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **developing partnerships with Employment Service Providers, Tertiary Institutions and Registered Training Organisations and Industry** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of access to employment and training.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Connecting priority job seekers to opportunities through Employment Service Providers.	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **Connecting priority job seekers to opportunities through Employment Service Providers** as an appropriate solution to addressing the issue of access to employment and training.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.

Additional Feedback	
Potential Action	**Description**
Employee Lived Experience Working Group	Working group of employees with lived experience (of being excluded or underemployed) to also be included in this group or have their own advisory group

Survey Findings – Youth

		Focus Area	
Finding	**Solution**	**Youth**	**Participation Rate**
Lack of Transportation	*Police and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) Braking the Cycle Program*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **Police and Citizens Youth Club and Braking the Cycle driving** programs as appropriate solutions to addressing the issue of a lack of transportation for young people	N/A
	Learnt it	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated the **Learnt It** programs as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of a lack of transportation.	**67%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Non-Vocational Skills for Employment	*Deliver Pre-Employment Training Programs*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **pre-employment training programs** as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of non-vocation skills for Employment of young people.	**33%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Negative perceptions of young people held by employers and the community	*Isolate the negative perceptions*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **isolating the negative perceptions of young people** as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of negative perceptions of young people held by employers and the community.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Delivering inclusive employment seminars/ webinars	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **delivering inclusive employment seminars/webinars** programs as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of negative perceptions of young people held by employers and the community.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Advertisements	✓ **67%** of Respondents rated **advertisement** programs as an appropriate solution for addressing the negative perceptions of young people held by employers and the community	**50%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Youth Engagement and Expectations	*Campaigning*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **campaigning programs** as an appropriate solution for youth engagement and expectations	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
Mental Health and Wellbeing	*Employers developing a Mental Health Pledge*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **employers developing a mental health pledge** as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of mental health and wellbeing amongst young people.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Partnering with Mental health service providers	✓ **75%** of Respondents rated **partnering with mental health and wellbeing programs** as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of mental health and wellbeing amongst young people.	**67%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
First Nations Disadvantage	*Delivering inclusive employment seminars/ webinars*	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **addressing First Nations disadvantage and delivering inclusive employment education and training** as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of mental health and wellbeing for young people.	**100%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.
	Partnering with First Nations ESP's and Support services	✓ **100%** of Respondents rated **partnering with First Nations ESPs** as an appropriate solution for addressing the issue of mental health and wellbeing for young First Nations people.	**75%** of Respondents agreed to help drive this solution with other Q-SEED members.

Additional Feedback	
Potential Action	**Description**
Connection with exiting organisations to avoid duplication and wasting time.	As far as I can see there has not been engagement key local organisations such as; TEL, Indigenous Youth Council etc. all who have visibility over the regional plans and employer networking for indigenous youth as an example. It might be helpful if you have a local advisory group working with you so that you can understand the ecosystems and who's who in our community and what work is already being done rather than duplicating efforts and wasting time.
Young People Advisory Group	Transport' can become a scapegoat that consumes focus and conversation. The mindsets around 'troublesome youth' or 'youth that don't want to work these days' are so strong in TSV now that no amount of campaigning will overcome these. Perhaps having a group of youth with lived experience of being excluded, left out, underestimated, and employers who pledge to employ these types of people...and an advisory group that can inform employers more...and employers who pledge to eliminate job descriptions that are full time, require drivers license, 5 years experience, etc...inclusion