



► Business Chamber Queensland Case study

In 2014 [Business Chamber Queensland](#), Australia, set up its first sustainability services to help businesses reduce their energy, water, and waste management costs. Since then, it has added carbon management services and will add climate risk mitigation and adaptation services in 2025. In May 2025, the Business Chamber of Queensland had more than 1,600 active participants in its ESG programmes, which have benefited thousands of enterprises over the years.

A comprehensive package of ESG services

Business Chamber Queensland's sustainability programmes cover all areas of ESG. With 99 per cent of businesses in the state of Queensland being SMEs, all programmes are tailored to smaller companies.

► [Sustainability health check](#)

During this two-hour introductory session, a Business Chamber Queensland staff member assesses the company's progress across a range of ESG areas. This includes identifying the sustainability initiatives the business already has in place as well as potential improvements. The business receives advice on how to take sustainability to the next level, how current sustainability trends are likely to affect the company, and what support is available from Business Chamber Queensland.

► [ecoBiz sustainability programme](#)

This is a predominantly online capacity-building programme that helps SMEs to audit their resource use, manage carbon emissions and save on costs, all while reducing waste, water and energy consumption. ecoBiz includes a two-hour on-site session with a sustainability coach, who then draws up a practical sustainability action plan for the company. ecoBiz was the Chamber's first sustainability programme and will be expanded in 2025 to include climate risk and adaptation and circular economy modules.

► [Workforce Evolve](#)

The programme helps businesses to address labour and skills shortages through more diverse recruitment and hiring practices, focusing in particular on groups such as those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, people with disabilities, and women re-entering the workforce. It includes online training, access to tools and resources, one-on-one coaching, referral access to expert diversity partners, and a verification badge.

► [Sustainability and ESG consulting](#)

This service is for businesses that have a specific sustainability challenge or are looking to go beyond Business Chamber Queensland sustainability programmes' offerings. It can include provision of training, carbon advice, stakeholder mapping, advice on sustainable finance, and more. For businesses that do not have the resources for a dedicated sustainability officer, there is the option of a Business Chamber Queensland Sustainability & ESG Consultant working directly with the business on a regular basis (usually monthly) to deliver ESG services and build sustainability capability.

Both ecoBiz and Workforce Evolve provide SMEs with a tailored sustainability journey based on their ESG maturity level. For example, when a business starts the ecoBiz carbon module, the first step is an assessment of their level of awareness and understanding of carbon emissions reporting. If the business is at a low level, it will not be able to access some of the more advanced learning and tools such as the carbon calculator. These will be unlocked once the business is at a level of maturity that means it can fully understand and use the advanced learnings and tools. This approach prevents businesses from feeling overwhelmed and leaving the programme early on, as well as motivating them by rewarding progress.

A diversified funding model

Business Chamber Queensland has made its ESG programmes financially sustainable with funding from different sources. The ecoBiz and Workforce Evolve programmes are delivered in partnership with, and are funded by, the Queensland Government. These programmes are predominantly developed for SMEs with fewer than 200 full-time staff in Queensland, regardless of whether they are a member of the Chamber.

Additional consulting services are charged on an hourly basis. Members have access at a discounted rate of 250 Australian Dollars (AUD) (around USD 158). Non-members can also access the consultancy services but at a higher rate, negotiated

on a case-by-case basis. A sustainability health check costs AUD 500 for members (around USD 315) and AUD 600 for non-members (around USD 408).

Where in-depth technical expertise is required, Business Chamber Queensland can refer the company to expert partner organizations. For example, if a company's practices are aligned with the TCFD standards, the Chamber may refer it to a partner that can help the business to obtain Climate Active certification, the Australian certification scheme for climate action. Business Chamber Queensland then collects an expert referral fee from its partner.

The right message, at the right time, in the right place

Business Chamber Queensland focuses its sustainability marketing and communications on cost reduction, which resonates with Queensland businesses facing rising expenses. While sustainability-related terminology evolves—from CSR and ESG to the circular economy—the central business case remains the same.

The Chamber also tailors its marketing and communications to new developments, such as the upcoming 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Australia, where sustainability in tourism is a key focus. SMEs need to be ready to make the most of this opportunity, especially those under pressure from larger supply chain partners and public procurement standards.

The provision of ESG advisory services is a congested marketplace in Queensland. Business Chamber Queensland sets itself apart from others by emphasizing its credibility and trustworthiness as a supplier to smaller businesses. It builds on its status as a not-for-profit organization as well as on the positive results of its programmes to date (see below). For example, one message promoting the ecoBiz programmes states: "We will help reduce your energy bills by 22%".

Finally, Business Chamber Queensland, in addition to using regular communications channels, also uses advocacy to make sure its messages reach the intended audience. For example, the Queensland Government procurement guidance for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games explicitly recommends the ecoBiz programme to potential suppliers. The sustainability programmes are also written into local government economic development strategies.

Demonstrating impact leads to growth

Business Chamber Queensland actively monitors the ESG performance of the SMEs it works with to determine programme impact. This has resulted in convincing figures that have helped the Chamber to attract new businesses and funding, with advocacy efforts, and to become a finalist in the Banksia 2025 National Sustainability Award. For instance, during the 2023-24 financial year, ecoBiz participants across Queensland avoided (compared to their baselines):

- ▶ 12,077 tCO₂^e of carbon emissions, or 3,000 passenger vehicles driving on roads for a year.
- ▶ 2,577GJ of energy, or 3,160 households' annual electricity usage.
- ▶ 48,151kL of water, equivalent to 20 olympic-sized pools of water.
- ▶ 1,035t of waste, or 14,000 wheelie bins.
- ▶ AUD 3,151,060 in costs in total (around USD 1,990,000).