

A National Conversation About Open Government - Towards An Ambitious National Action Plan

Need a brief for the work we need to do to achieve an ambitious National Action Plan. It's supported by It's the OpenAustralia Foundation and Transparency International.

Where are we at, what can we do, what do we want/and have the capacity to do?

Background & Overview -

The consultation process for the national action plan [has come so far](#). Now the timeframe for consultation with the public is being considered by government:

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- The timing of the public consultation process for the National Action Plan is still being confirmed by the Government.
- We are assured there will be adequate time for the public to provide input on the draft plan before it is finalised.
- The list of areas identified by the Interim Working Group for potential inclusion in the National Action Plan is available on the OGP Australia blog: <http://ogpau.govspace.gov.au/outcomes-from-the-first-meeting-of-the-interim-working-group/>.
- Interested stakeholders are encouraged to discuss and comment on this list via the blog, email (ogp@pmc.gov.au) or directly with civil society members of the Interim Working Group. As we are still discussing options regarding the timing of public consultation, please do not discuss timeframes with your broader networks (including estimates of when public consultation will occur). The timing to submit the National Action Plan to the OGP and draft commitments should not be shared or commented on publicly until government authority is obtained.

Members* are able to publish material outlining their own views on policy issues and seek feedback from their networks.

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**Members = Interim Working Group Members
Email to IWG members from PM&C OGP secretariat 22/09*

While we're waiting to hear more about what happens next, and when, there's a grand opportunity to have a national conversation about the content of the very first round of Open Government Partnership commitments.

It's been a 10 month start stop election stop start process! It's civil society's job in the OGP to ensure that we achieve the most doable and yet ambitious national action plan.

How we have worked together to do this so far.

- Civil Society have worked together to make the intent, and potential transformative impact of these commitments clear to the public. (How?)

- Together civil society and the public have challenged and held government to account on early deficiencies in the process co-creating a National Action Plan. (Explain)
- By working firmly and positively with government partners, resulting in increased opportunity for dialogue. (...outline what's happened)

On the table now

National Action Plan Proposed Commitment Headings:

- Information management and access laws and practices
- Enhanced integrity system (maybe an issues paper not a draft commitment))
- Confidence in electoral/political finance systems and Political party integrity
- Public Data infrastructure and discoverability/accessibility of government information
- Utilisation of data on information access rights
- Improve public participation and engagement in government decision making
- Natural resource transparency / EITI
- Whistleblower protections
- Permanent mechanism for OGP dialogue
- Open Contracting
- Beneficial ownership register
- Identify and release high-value datasets
- Public trust on data sharing
- Digital transformation

and

- Australian leadership in Asia-Pacific / UN Sustainable Development Goals (maybe an issues paper rather than a draft commitment)

What do we want to say about it to help make these the best possible OGP Commitments they can be?

How do we intend to have that conversation?

Members of the AOGPN will host events, and work together with a social media campaigner to raise awareness and promote constructive dialogue on the content of the National Action Plan.

We'll send interested people to Australian gov's OGP nominated place where they will give their feedback on the current crop of commitments, and test the ambition of those commitments.

Q. What's considered officially recognised input? Aus govspace OGP website comments? Anything else? Who are official points of contact? Should people get in touch with anyone else? If so How?

We want to reach people who

- Are already interested, they recognised the importance of Australian membership of the OGP
- Have a specialised interest in one or more proposed commitment or thematic area
- Civil society actors who have specialised interests, or those who want to offer support to those campaigning on issues that may be touched on by one or more commitments
- a wider group

Proposed Draft National Action Plan Commitments are due to be released by PM&C shortly

While we are not able to estimate when anything might happen (see email from PM&C above) - we can say that our continued membership of the OGP relies on National Action Plan to be announced and delivered to OGP in December. The OGP drop dead deadline is the end of December.

There is a Paris OGP summit from December 7th, which would offer a good opportunity and stage from which to announce.

Specific OGP Events will be held in various capital cities, organised by Network members over September and October.

Dates TBA

Sydney- Peter Timmins will organise-looking to those present in Sydney such as Australian Press Council, Public Interest Advocacy Center, OpenAustralia Foundation for a hand;

Melbourne-Accountability Roundtable (Ken, Tim Smith), Transparency International Australia (Phil Newman, Greg Thompson) and Mark Zirnsak to sort out.

Amanda Lawrence of Australian Policy Online has offered to organise something at Swinburne. I've told her to hold until we see if ART and TIA can run with this.

Johan Lidberg and Nicholas Gruen are also in Melbourne as is Jessie Cato from Publish What You Pay.

Fiona McLeod (IWG Co-Chair and Law Council of Australia but not a member) may wish to be involved.

Canberra-Craig Thomler to organise.

Brisbane- David Solomon (not sure if you are back in Australia yet?) Maree Adshead (Open Data Institute Queensland) a member of the IWG but not of the Network may be able to do something. We have other Network members in Brisbane including Professor AJ Brown and Howard Whitton.

Adelaide- Amanda Lawrence has said she could rely on a local contact to organise but getting a CSO IWG member there is likely to prove difficult both for money and time reasons. The same goes for **Perth**, and **Hobart** where we don't have much presence.

We need to identify other events/eetups where participants have an interest in the commitment areas and encourage them to participate:

27/09/2016 - Thursday 4-6pm The Australian Press Council seems likely to host a Sydney gathering next week (date TBC)

25/09/2016 - Tuesday 6:30pm OpenAustralia Foundation Meet Up in Sydney

Communication:

Present the draft commitments

- For people/groups with specific interests?
- for broader interested public

Put the commitment in context. What are some things that we could practically do that give people more information to comment on?

- Other commitment: to analyse our commitments against other commitments - here are ambitious commitments, here are not ambitious commitments?
- IRM assessment process and criteria
- OGP Guidelines for building ambitious commitments
- OGP Star Commitments

A possible action people might take is to

It's difficult, but people may want to compare with commitments and context in:

- G20 / OECD countries?
- Our region?

How do ours stack up?

Email lists?

Prepare a release for network members' groups that can be sent by network members to their networks. (and modified with information about any particular areas of interest highlighted for that group)

This campaign is run by the AOGP network, and members of the steering committee and other members are organising these events. Some may also be on the IWG and should make this and any other associations clear.

- Update the manifesto with the current crop of commitments
 - Write a new introduction to the manifesto
 - How do we want to frame that?
 - Describe how people have helped improve what's on the table so far
 - How can people get involved and assess/contribute further to stretch commitments' ambition
- What's the plan? How do we use different channels to encourage participation?

Hire Asher Wolf to organise/run a campaign

- Should network members or others be invited to write blog posts on a number of commitments?

- Ken on Integrity
 - Peter on Access to Information
 - Kat on Participation?
 - Phil? General intro to OGP where things are at
- How else might we communicate?
- Some guidance for blog posts/articles
 - Fully disclose role on IWG
 - Focus on the commitments, not the process
 - Consider blog posts a quasi preamble to the commitment detail - context, how does the commitment help open government, who benefits, what problem does the commitment address?
 - If something is missing from a commitment, how might that gap be filled or make more sense?
 - What about the commitment is ambitious/exciting/game-changing? (If something is actually very good then let's acknowledge it - e.g. getting political financing included feels like a pretty good win)
- Might any government participants want to say something about the value parts of the commitment or processes might have
- Aim to have a discussion
 - What input are we asking for?
 - Who should people talk to if they have questions?
 - Do we encourage people to talk to
 - What happens to input?
 - Make sure people are informed on how their participation
 - Network members: How has what you've done impacted the process so far?
 - Improved process
 - Increased participation - establishment of working group - genuine co-creation
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- There are Events you can go to in a number of capital Cities?
 - Publicise these
 - Why should I take part? Opportunity to hear first hand about where things stand, to see what is now on the table as proposed commitments and to discuss with others interested how the drafts might be improved.
 - Basics: Where/when/how to sign up? *When the organisers are in place we will circulate details*
 - Who should participate? *Anyone interested in improving our democracy through open, transparent government and increased citizen participation.*

- What do we want to say about them? *Two hours maximum. A briefing by a member of the IWG followed by Q&A. A speaker from PM&C may also be present*
- What happens at them?

If people have new ideas or want to bring in ideas that were previously discussed in the first round of consultation, they're unlikely to be considered in this National Action Plan. Where do we send those comments/queries so that they might be useful in the future?

How do we coordinate with our government partners on these messages and communication with the public and various civil society and business interest groups.

Do we want to have individuals to contact their local members or other political figures about particular issues as they relate to their portfolio?

What events/meetups are coming up in the next two weeks - eg. Snowden movie TI screening, where people who are interested in broader open government issues will be gathering. It behoves us to bring them in proactively in the consultation process.