

2013 OGP Summit

The [2013 OGP Annual Summit](#) is being attended by over 1,000 people, representing governments with populations of 1.94 billion and hundreds of civil society and multilateral organizations. The 61 governments have made a total of 1,078 commitments which will further greater transparency, accountability and/or citizen engagement. At a global level, highlights of the Summit include:

- The expansion of this unique group to 61 countries, with New Zealand becoming the latest country to express its intent to join OGP. Other countries who have done so in recent months include Australia, Ireland and Malawi.
- Each government coming to London will announce a new ambitious open government commitment, either to be integrated into their next OGP action plan or an enhanced commitment from their current plan.
- The [Bright Spots](#) competition which will see seven impressive individuals, from seven different countries, share their success stories in a seven minute talk on the main stage. The crowd will have the chance to vote on the most inspiring talk.
- The launch of the first Progress Reports for the eight founding OGP countries – Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States. These are produced by a new tough accountability instrument – the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) – a unique body which provides a comprehensive account of each country's progress toward meeting its OGP commitments.
- The launch of a new Open Government Awards competition to recognize public programs in OGP participating countries for their efforts to become more open, accountable and responsive to citizens. The inaugural competition in 2014 will focus on the theme of citizen engagement.

Australia will be represented at the Annual Summit by the Australian Government Chief Technology Officer, Mr John Sheridan and Mr James Kelly, Minister-Counsellor (Economic) for Europe from the Australian High Commission in London.

Four leading multilateral organizations – the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and United Nations Development Programme – support the OGP, helping to mobilize new investments and technical support to strengthen open government reforms across the world.

OGP delegates include senior government officials, civil society experts and activists, business leaders, journalists, bloggers and representatives from international organizations, such as the World Bank, OECD, UNDP, and Inter-American Development Bank. They are sharing experiences from their respective countries and providing real examples of how openness can improve public services, drive economic growth, reduce poverty and corruption, and restore public faith in government.

The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) reports for the eight founding countries show that of their 175 commitments, 49% are completed, 44% are in progress, 1% have not been started, 2% progress is unclear and 4% have been withdrawn. It also found that the majority of the commitments (66%) emphasised “access to information”, with the next largest amount (45%) emphasising “technology and innovation for transparency and accountability”, followed by “accountability” (35%) and “participation” (29%).

Blog post 1: [Introducing OGP Australia](#)

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a global effort to make governments more open and responsive. Australia [signed a letter of intent to join the OGP](#) in May this year. To complete its membership, the Australian Government will develop a National Action Plan by April 2014.

A core requirement for OGP membership is that the National Action Plan is developed publicly and transparently. The Government invites you to co-develop a vision and strategy for further progressing open government in Australia, a strategy that outlines:

- the history and status of open government in Australia
- a vision for the future
- how government and the broader society can work together in achieving the vision, and
- ways to monitor and measure success.

The Open Government National Action Plan is expected to comply with the [Open Government Partnership requirements](#). There is valuable guidance in the Action Plans of other countries, such as the [United States](#), [Canada](#), the [United Kingdom](#) and [Indonesia](#). You can also review the [full list of OGP countries](#) on the OGP site. You can read more about Australia's engagement with OGP on the [OGP Au Background page](#).

The Department of Finance (Finance) is the lead agency for the development of the Australian OGP National Action Plan, working closely with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) and the Department of Communications. Finance will be coordinating the program of work and consultation, including public consultation, to support this work. We are keen to have representation and ideas from civil society, industry, academia, cultural sectors and from the different spheres of government in Australia.

There are some key stages we are proposing for this consultation and we'd like to set up an OGP Australia Taskforce. We'd like your feedback on this approach before we get underway including your nominations for the Taskforce on the [Stage 0 page](#). The OGP Taskforce will be chaired by [Professor John McMillan, Australian Information Commissioner](#).

You can subscribe to the [OGP Au mailing list](#) for updates and news. Alternatively you can get website updates with the [OGP Au RSS feed](#). We will be reporting progress on a regular basis.

How to contribute to the Australian OGP National Action Plan Draft

- **Stage 0 – Preparation** (October 31 – November 14 2013): Getting initial feedback to the consultation approach and Taskforce membership:
 - Contribute feedback in the [Proposed Approach blog post comments](#).
 - Tweet your thoughts to #ogpau.
- **Stage 1 - Framework** (November 15 – December 16 2013): Defining and establishing definitions, feedback on the background/history of open government in Australia, and a skeleton framework for the National Action Plan Draft.
 - A wiki will be available for you to contribute to during this phase as well as a discussion paper.
 - You can add comments to the Stage 1 Blog post (once it is published).

- You can make a submission to the discussion paper that will be released during this stage.
- Tweet your thoughts to #ogpau.
- **Stage 2 - Drafting** (December 17 2013 – February 17 2014): Establishing a first draft of the National Action Plan Draft content including specific actions, success criteria, roles and responsibilities, mechanisms to monitor and track progress, and creating a cohesive open government approach for Australia. This draft will be submitted to the Government for early review at the end of this stage.
 - A wiki will be available for you to contribute to during this phase as well as a discussion paper.
 - You can add comments to the Stage 2 Blog post once it is published.
 - Tweet your thoughts to #ogpau.
- **Stage 3 - Prioritisation** (February 18 – March 10 2014): You can vote up and comment on specific actions to help identify community priorities. The draft will be submitted to the Government for early review at the end of this stage.
 - A wiki will be available for you for final comments during this phase as well as a discussion paper.
 - All Actions will be put into a voting system for you to prioritise what you think it most important to be included in the final report.
 - You can add comments to the Stage 3 Blog post once it is published.
 - Tweet your thoughts to #ogpau.
- **Stage 4 – Consideration** (February 18 – March 2014): The Government will need time to consider the National Action Plan Draft and decide what is possible and practical to endorse. This follows the same methodology as the [Gov 2.0 Taskforce Report consultation from 2009](#).
- **Plan Launch** (March or April 2014): Launch of the final Australian OGP National Action Plan
- **Implementation**: Ongoing monitoring and reporting of implementation.

Please find the information on [Stage 0 – Preparation](#) and provide your feedback in the comments. Please also see the [Background Information](#) on Australia’s participation in OGP and find further information [About OGP](#).

We look forward to your contributions, and indeed your feedback on the contributions of others.

██████████ (OGP National Action Plan Coordinator, Finance)

Professor John McMillan (OGP Au Taskforce Chair and Australian Information Commissioner)

██████████ (OGP Liaison, Department of Communications)

Blog post 2: [Stage 0 – Consultation Approach and OGP Taskforce](#)

Welcome to Stage 0, the preparation phase of the Australian OGP National Action Plan consultation! We'd like your feedback in the comments below on the proposed consultation approach and your suggestions for the OGP Australia Taskforce, to be chaired by Professor John McMillan, the Australian Information Commissioner.

Proposed Consultation Approach

Below is our draft consultation approach. Your feedback is welcome as we want to get the best possible process before starting on the National Action Plan Draft.

There are several proposed consultation phases:

- **Stage 0 – Preparation** (October 31 – November 14 2013): Getting initial feedback to the consultation approach and OGP Australia Taskforce membership.
- **Stage 1 - Framework** (November 15 – December 16 2013): Defining and establishing definitions, the background/history of open government in Australia, and a skeleton framework for the National Action Plan Draft. Releasing a discussion paper for comment.
- **Stage 2 - Drafting** (December 17 2013 – February 17 2014): Establishing a first draft of the National Action Plan Draft content including specific actions, success criteria, roles and responsibilities, mechanisms to monitor and track progress, and creating a cohesive open government approach for Australia. This draft will be submitted to the Government for early review at the end of this stage and be available for public comment throughout the Stage 3.
- **Stage 3 - Prioritisation** (February 18 – March 10 2014): You can vote up and comment on specific actions to help identify community priorities. The information will then be submitted to the Government along with any final comments and the National Action Plan Draft for consideration.
- **Stage 4 – Consideration** (February 18 – March 2014): The Government will need time to consider the National Action Plan Draft and decide what is possible and practical to endorse. This follows the same methodology as the [Gov 2.0 Taskforce Report consultation from 2009](#).
- **Plan Launch** (March or April 2014): Launch of the final Australian OGP National Action Plan
- **Implementation**: Ongoing monitoring and reporting of implementation of the National Action Plan after the launch.

Please see the [OGP timeline for more information](#). Australia is part of Group 4 and our National Action Plan is due by April 2014.

Creating the OGP Au Taskforce

Finance will be running the consultation transparently and openly. An OGP Au Taskforce is being established to oversee this work. It is based on the model of the successful Gov 2.0 Taskforce that created the Gov 2.0 Taskforce Report in 2009, a major contribution to the open government work in Australia over the past 4 years.

The [Australian Information Commissioner John McMillan](#) will chair the Taskforce. Some initial members include [existing government stakeholders](#) and we welcome your additional suggestions. Make your suggestions in the comments below along with your reasoning, and please vote up

names that you think should be added. The aim is a Taskforce that represents a well rounded set of knowledge, expertise and experience to contribute to the process.

Given the tight timelines, there will be fortnightly meetings of the Taskforce held until the draft National Action Plan is prepared, with minutes published publicly.

The logistics and coordination of OGP Au activities and consultation will be run by Finance in close collaboration with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, the Department of Communications and the OGP Taskforce.

Any and all interested groups are encouraged to run meetings or mini-consultations to pull together your contributions.

Taskforce

The OGP Australia Taskforce is a temporary group of individuals from government, civil society and industry to assist in the oversight and running of the Australian OGP National Action Plan Draft consultation. The group will be chaired by **Professor John McMillan AO** (OGP Australia Taskforce Chair and Australian Information Commissioner) and will meet fortnightly for the duration of the consultation (October 2013 – April 2014).

Meeting minutes will be reported on this website for transparency and we welcome your feedback and input. The Taskforce is responsible for reviewing the consultation process and contributions, giving feedback to the consultation coordinators in Finance, determining ways to improve public engagement, reaching out to civil society and industry, and generally helping get a good outcome for open government in Australia.

Membership of the Taskforce will be determined through [Stage 0](#) of the consultation, so nominate your suggestions there.

Background

Australian participation in the Open Government Partnership

The Australian Prime Minister signed a letter of intent to join the Open Government Partnership in May 2013. To become a member of OGP, participating countries must endorse a high-level [Open Government Declaration](#), deliver a National Action Plan developed with public consultation, and commit to independent reporting on their progress going forward.

One of the outcomes of the Australian Gov 2.0 Taskforce Report was a [Declaration of Open Government](#) in July 2010. Australia still needs to develop a National Action Plan and then commit to progress reporting.

The first internal meeting about OGP was held in July 2013 convened by the Attorney General Department (AGD) with representation from the following departments and offices:

- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)
- Department of Finance (Finance);
- Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C)
- National Archives Australia (NAA)
- Department of Communications
- AusAID
- Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

It was agreed by initial agencies that the Department of Finance was in the best position to take the lead on developing the National Action Plan. Once delegation for responsibility of OGP was moved from the AGD to Finance, Finance were able to begin public discussion and consultation about the Australian National Action Plan.

Finance allocated resources and are working closely with the OAIC on this website, broader consultation and the National Action Plan Draft. Please see the blog posts for the latest stage of the consultation to contribute your thoughts and feedback.

The Australian Information Commissioner, Prof John McMillan, and a representative from DFAT attended a meeting in Washington DC on 12 July 2011 at which plans for the OGP were explained. Australia was formally invited to join on 18 August 2011. The OGP was officially launched on 20 September 2011. A further meeting was held in Brazil in April 2012.

At the Senate Estimates hearings on 16 October 2012, Senator Lee Rhiannon asked Prof McMillan about the status of the Government's discussions regarding the OGP. Prof McMillan stated that a decision to join the OGP requires 'a decision at the highest levels of government', and that OGP membership could be of substantial benefit to Australia:

'it is of benefit to Australia to take heed of the substantial developments that are occurring internationally in relation to open government. Australia has achieved a great deal but there are many examples internationally from which Australia can learn about further

implementation of open government. Participation in international forums is certainly an advantage to all countries.'

The OGP agenda is consistent with Australia's open government agenda as expressed in the report of the Government 2.0 Taskforce, *Engage: Getting on With Government 2.01* (December 2009), and the Australian Government's *Declaration of Open Government* made in July 2010.

Australia's consideration regarding the OGP has been the subject of several Freedom of Information applications by high-profile FOI and open government advocates. The documents published include the OAIC's letter to AGD in January 2013 supporting Australia's participation in the OGP, and outlining the timetable for Australia's possible membership, the tasks to be undertaken (including the preparation of a country action plan).

Timeline of actions to date

- Australian Information Commissioner Prof John McMillan and a DFAT representative attended a meeting in Washington DC on 12 July 2011 at which plans for the launch of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) were explained.
- USA Secretary of State Ms Hillary Rodham Clinton wrote to the then Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs the Hon Kevin Rudd MP inviting Australia to join the OGP on 18 August 2011.
- The OGP was officially launched on 20 September 2011 in New York by President Barack Obama and President Ms Dilma Rousseff (Brazil). A further OGP meeting was held in Brazil in April 2012; attended by 1200 country delegates, civil society and business representatives.
- In initial discussions with interested agencies, the OAIC expressed an interest in coordinating Australia's joining and ongoing engagement with the OGP. In August 2012 the AGD asked the OAIC to outline the steps it would take in relation to the requirements to join the OGP and the resource commitments that the OAIC would make available.
- In January 2013 the OAIC advised AGD to support Australia's participation in the OGP and outlined the timetable for Australian's possible membership and the tasks to be undertaken (including the preparation of a country action plan).
- The Australian Prime Minister signed a letter of intent to join the Open Government Partnership in May 2013.
- The first internal government meeting was held July 2013, chaired by AGD where there was agreement to delegate responsibility to Finance given the expertise around Gov 2.0, open data and the Gov 2.0 Taskforce consultation.
- August-Sept 7th 2013 the APS was under Caretakers Conventions and public engagement on OGP work could not begin.
- October 2013 – Delegation was transferred from AGD to Finance.
- October 2013 – Australia sent a delegation to the [2013 OGP Annual Summit](#) in London and announced ongoing support for OGP, including the launch of the Australian National Action Plan Draft Consultation.

About OGP

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a multilateral initiative, [founded by eight countries](#) including the USA, UK, Indonesia and Brazil and was launched in September 2011 by President Obama and Brazilian President, Ms Dilma Roussef. The OGP is a multilateral initiative aimed at securing concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, increase civic participation, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to make government more open, effective, and accountable. It is fostering new ways of the citizen and the state working together to solve common problems. In the spirit of multi-stakeholder collaboration, OGP is overseen by a steering committee of governments and civil society organizations.

OGP was formally launched in September 2011 when eight founding governments – Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States – endorsed an [Open Government Declaration](#), and published national [OGP action plans](#) with [specific open government reform commitments](#). In just two years, the eight founding OGP countries have been joined by a further 53 countries bringing the total to [61 participating countries](#). Their combined population is 1.94 billion, based on the 2012 statistics from the [World Bank](#) (the latest available figures).

The OGP has attracted strong support from countries and non-government organisations. The delegates to the Brazil meeting foreshadowed an ambitious range of projects, such as the Open Government Partnership Action Plan for various countries. The OGP agenda is broad and extends to disclosure of interests, public ethics, anti-corruption, service delivery, budgetary efficiency, public safety and corporate accountability. There is some overlap between the OGP agenda and that of other multilateral and international forums in which Australia participates.

Further details are available on the OGP website, www.opengovpartnership.org.