

K Szuminska

Expression of Interest: Civil Society Position, Open Government Forum

I am [a strong supporter](#) of ensuring Australia remains committed to the Open Government Partnership (OGP). I'm committed to helping draft the next National Action Plan (NAP) and to raising awareness about open Government, by actively encouraging open civil society and public dialogue.

As a member of the [Interim Working Group](#) I have made significant contributions to open Government. These include helping to craft the first National Action Plan (NAP), including reforms that overhaul how we access information, along with reforms that aim to embed participation in Government decision-making processes. I've learned a good deal about the practical realities and nuances of what makes a good commitment. I've been part of a team that's built trust to create a more ambitious National Action Plan, and, maintain ambition for further transformative reforms. I've worked effectively with IWG members and Agency staff on co-creation, implementation & tracking progress. Together, the brilliant Open Australia Foundation (OAF) team, the Australian Open Government Network (AOGPN), and an active twitter community (individuals, Civil Society and business), have had many conversations joining dots between different agencies' Open Government reforms, and connections to communicate beyond 'business as usual' practises.

With Civil Society Organisation partners, AOGPN and OpenAustralia Foundation, I created easy to understand instructions and contextual material for potential National Action Plan commitments at opengovernment.org.au, openly documenting experiences to learn from along the way.

I've also participated in a number of International OGP events and gained considerable exposure to evolution of thinking in Open Government networks, content, resources & practices that other countries follow for their NAP.

I know that Australia's civic culture can be reinvigorated by empowering people to take part. I co-founded the pioneering and transformative charity, the OpenAustralia Foundation. We've worked with Parliament and Government bodies to produce useful services used by millions of people. Our work in Open Government has included a number of firsts. We opened up the registers of interests from the House of Reps and the Senate, [created new spaces for people to talk to local Government officials](#), in PlanningAlerts.org.au, which paved the way for work with NSW Government on improving standards for publishing planning application information. We published the Federal Hansard in a searchable, discoverable form and have sent alerts based on people's interests since 2008. We've since made it easier to understand votes in Parliament, information from local, state and federal agencies through a single platform, [RightToKnow](#), and used data to [provide evidence for a submission for the "Inquiry into the Freedom of Information"](#). Our thoughtful civic tech work is internationally respected in the Open Government movement. To truly open government, we need everybody. [Here's where our politicians stand on some Open Government issues](#)

With the support of Transparency International and the OpenAustralia Foundation, I arranged a short but effective [social media campaign](#). At last people asked 'Why didn't we know about this until now?' With more lead time, I envisage greater opportunities to engage with informal networks, civil society and regional based coalitions I'm connected with (eg. OpenAustralia community, AOGPN, Sydney Alliance etc), and plan effective engagement with other groups, as well as the broader public, to develop the next National Action Plan.

I bring solid practical experience, good working knowledge of the Open Government Partnership people and practices, along with an optimistic, ambitious attitude to the table. In drafting the first National Action Plan I have advocated for Civil Society to be recognised as such, and will continue to work to safeguard civil society space. I will continue to advocate for strong National Action Plan created by diverse and meaningful Civil Society groups and will help reach out to them. I look forward to seeing stronger planning, coordination and communication get Australia's First Open Government Forum off to a flying start. I look forward to seeing the Open Government Forum, either as a participant, perhaps on a working group, or as one of its cheerleaders, to grow and evolve.

Read [my profile](#) and more about [OpenAustralia Foundation's Open Government Partnership journey](#)
Got questions? [REDACTED]