

Developing a National Not-for-Profit Blueprint

Seeking your input now

Thriving society needs a strong not-for-profit (NFP) sector. Australia's NFP sector is powered by millions of people from all walks of life. It is central to our communities, our democracy and our economy. It is a major means through which our society cares for people, planet and cultures. This paper invites your input on a vision for the NFP sector's future and the actions that need to be prioritised by the sector and government to realise this vision.

NFP organisations come in a variety of forms and sizes and have a lot of different purposes. The environment in which the sector operates is made up of many moving parts. This summary is accompanied by a more detailed issues paper (NFP Sector Development Blueprint Issues Paper) which asks specific questions and provides you with information on the background and purpose of the NFP Blueprint.

Building on the NFP sector's existing strengths and learning from the past, the Blueprint Expert Reference Group's early discussion identifies future **key qualities** of the sector as being:



Effective and responsive to change

An ageing society, climate change, and digital transformation are affecting the needs to which the sector responds, the perspectives which it must include, the ways in which people give, and available public resources. The future NFP sector will help prevent harms and strengthen communities, anticipate and support productive change, and contribute to the innovations and debates needed for healthy society.



People-powered and centred

The greatest assets of the NFP sector are its volunteers, its staff, and the people who participate in its activities and use its services. An effective future sector is committed to working with people and communities in designing and improving its offerings. It is also committed to working with governments who make the policy decisions that affect us all.



Diverse, inclusive and cross-culturally capable

NFP sector organisations will always represent a variety of views, issues and interests. It is important to value diversity of age, identities, cultures and abilities within NFP organisations and sector leadership. This allows the sector to support future needs and succession and be responsive to the communities, people and missions it serves. It includes respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and community control.



Collaborative and connected

There is a rich history of collaboration and community connection within the NFP sector. The future operating environment must support this vital quality. It underpins the sector's role in meeting society's needs, advocating for people and issues, and generating knowledge to improve systems. Collaboration is also needed to support operating needs within the sector as it responds to changes that increase demands on resources.



Digitally enabled, informed by evidence and data capable

The NFP sector collects a huge amount of information about its members, clients, workers and donors. It also generates extensive evidence about societal issues and ways to respond. In a digital society, the sector needs to protect and make best use of data and evidence to improve its work, advocate for reform, and maintain community trust.



Resourced and resourceful

A strong future sector will make best use of its own assets, be fairly resourced for its work and forward development, and contribute its expertise to future workforce planning

- What do you think of these key qualities of the future sector?
- What is missing or needs to be framed differently?

Priority areas for action

Guided by the terms of reference for the Blueprint's development and the Blueprint Expert Reference Group's early discussions, the priority areas for action by the sector and reforms by government, detailed in the full issues paper, include:

- Core principles for:
 - better service design, delivery and resourcing
 - investment in the changes needed by both the sector and funders.
- Encouraging more – and better targeted – giving. This includes supporting the priorities of the National Strategy for Volunteering.
- Diversity and succession of sector leadership, investment in the paid and unpaid workforce, and an improved voice for the sector in national workforce development.
- Improved digital inclusion and capability, and support for digital transformation.
- Mechanisms for:
 - good government-sector communications
 - investment in evidence generated through the sector
 - protection of NFP rights to advocate.
- Coordinated sector regulation and transparent application of tax concessions. This includes governance standards that support both public accountability and sector purposes.
- Full funding of sector services, and approaches to tendering and procurement that strengthen organisational sustainability and the benefits of collaboration.
- To meet current and future sector needs, maximising the use of:
 - sector assets
 - sector leadership in social finance developments.

Questions to consider

- What are the most pressing areas for action from your perspective?
- What is missing and what is of lower priority?

The NFP sector is powered by people. A vision for its future and priorities for action will be strengthened by your contributions. The Blueprint Expert Reference Group invites your comments, reflections and ideas.

How to contribute

We invite your response to the above questions and/or the full issues paper (NFP Sector Development Blueprint Issues Paper). You can make a submission through the Department of Social Services (DSS) [Engage](#) platform. While the consultation is facilitated through DSS Engage, the process is sector-led and not owned by DSS.

Submissions will form part of the next stage of deliberations and action in developing the Blueprint. Submissions can be made until 20 December 2023.