

Open Government Partnership

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The Hon Mark Dreyfus QC, MP
Attorney-General
Australian Government

Dear Attorney,

As Chief Executive Officer of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), in which Australia has been a participant since 2015, I would like to warmly congratulate you on your recent appointment as the Attorney-General in the new Australian Government, responsible for your nation's participation in our Partnership. Your leadership was pivotal in Australia's initial decision to join OGP, with you signing [the letter of intent](#) for membership in May 2013. I look forward to the Partnership benefitting from your leadership once again.

You will recall that the Partnership is an international initiative that brings together reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens. OGP now comprises 77 countries, 106 local governments, and thousands of civil society organizations, who have together made over 4,500 open government reform commitments as part of OGP action plans.

Your new government's emphasis on political integrity strongly aligns with OGP's vision of transparent, participatory, inclusive and accountable governance. In addition to improving and renewing public trust in the Australian public administration, there is substantial opportunity for Australia to emerge as an international leader on this agenda at a crucial moment when democratic and open government values are under threat.

Australia's last OGP action plan, its second, lapsed in 2020. We understand that significant progress was made in co-creating a third action plan, but that it was not approved by the former government prior to the election. Given your government's focus on open government issues, I encourage you to reopen a robust process to co-create Australia's next OGP action plan with civil society, including the many in the community who were energized by open government issues in the leadup to the election.

Specifically, a new co-creation process and action plan would provide a prime opportunity to progress and highlight your government's important commitments to strengthen Australian democracy, including through establishing an independent National Integrity Commission and ensuring its alignment with broader anti-corruption measures, reforming campaign financing, and introducing truth in political advertising laws. Other members of OGP have also used their national action plans to advance more inclusive governance (including through better engaging women and Indigenous communities in public decision-making), and strengthening citizen monitoring and accountability mechanisms related to climate change mitigation measures, which you might also consider.

The OGP co-creation process and the national action plan can be used to ensure more participatory, transparent and accountable development and implementation of reforms, and help showcase your government's commitment and progress. Your leadership in Cabinet would also be particularly useful in ensuring your government remains engaged in supporting the co-creation process, and in the successful implementation of the resulting action plan. Finally, the government's strong focus on these issues also provides ample opportunity for future international leadership within our Partnership.

I note that a new co-creation process may mean that Australia's next action plan may not be submitted until after the current deadline for submission, 31 December, 2022. While OGP's rules dictate that a delay beyond this date will trigger a review of Australia's membership, if a meaningful co-creation process, following [OGP's Participation and Co-creation Standards](#), is ongoing at the time, it would mean that no further remedial action may be necessary. Upon submission of the next action plan, Australia would then be automatically, formally removed from the review process.

My team has already met with officers from your Department to offer their intensive support to commencing a process to co-create Australia's next OGP action plan, and we stand ready to assist the Australian government and community to advance the open government agenda. Further suggestions of procedural improvements to Australia's OGP co-creation processes, and thematic priorities for consideration for the next action plan, are available in the **attached** co-creation brief.

The OGP Steering Committee and Support Unit are grateful for Australia's commitment to our Partnership and look forward to your active engagement with the agenda domestically and globally. Let me also take this opportunity to request a videoconference in the coming weeks to discuss how we can most effectively support the important reforms being pursued by your government.

I very much look forward to our work together.

Sincerely,



Sanjay Pradhan
Chief Executive Officer

