

# Government 2.0 Taskforce Request for Project Proposal

## Project 6: The Value of Public Sector Information for Cultural Institutions

### Scope:

Assess and quantify the economic and social benefits of making government information held by cultural institutions more widely available. For example, a cost benefit analysis of the social value of the additional outreach of the Powerhouse Museum in releasing various 'orphan' works into Creative Commons licensing.

Develop a tool or method to assist cultural agencies in providing open access to information. The tool or method should consider costs for open access, "second-best principles" for pricing data and could also include decision support on intellectual property issues.

### Context:

There is currently a mixed approach across government to the pricing of information. In the electronic world, the marginal costs of providing information are lower than in a paper-based environment, which could suggest that different pricing approaches might be appropriate. Furthermore, information is often considered as a 'public good', which also might impact on thinking about appropriate pricing policies.

When should agencies charge for access to information? Should agencies charge when they are providing value-added services? Should "second-best principles" be applied to pricing public sector information? What might constitute 'value added services' (eg customisation of information)? In what circumstances should agencies be able to recover the costs of obtaining the information or providing access? A common model in the private sector is 'freemium' distribution whereby many, often most, users are supplied with some product or service for free whilst others pay for use in large scale large scale commercial enterprise (for instance AVG anti-virus) or for some premium product (for instance Word Web). Are there similar models for public sector information and/or do they merit further consideration?

It is hoped that, through strategic management of copyright and new Web 2.0 licensing tools like Creative Commons<sup>1</sup>, we can more easily provide the necessary permission to promote better access to and reuse of public sector information. In the short term this means using current copyright law and practice to do a better job and in the longer term assessing the appropriateness of existing copyright law for a digital environment and any changes that should be made to address problems. What sort of public sector information should be released under what form of copyright license? When should government continue to utilise its intellectual property rights?

### Objectives:

- Encourage open access by quantifying the economic and social benefit.
- Encourage use of open content licensing by providing a way for agencies to identify concrete benefits.
- Inform the Government 2.0 Taskforce in its consideration of recommendations that will encourage the adoption of Web 2.0 by Government.

### Deliverables:

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<sup>1</sup> Creative Commons seeks to support the building of a richer public domain by providing an alternative to the automatic "all rights reserved" copyright, dubbed "some rights reserved, i.e. reasonable, flexible copyright (from Wikipedia)

## **Government 2.0 Taskforce Request for Project Proposal**

A report provided to the Gov 2.0 Taskforce Secretariat via email ([gov2secretariat@finance.gov.au](mailto:gov2secretariat@finance.gov.au)) by the 19 October 2009. The report will be in Microsoft Word DOC format, Rich Text Format RTF or OpenDocument Text ODT. It will contain at minimum: executive summary; findings; cost benefit analysis, discussion of issues; and recommendations.

### **Cost Estimate:**

Estimated budget for this research is \$40 000 GST inclusive.

### **Additional Work:**

The successful contractor may be asked to provide additional expert services to further inform the Taskforce or assist with researching/authoring/editing sections of the Taskforce report.