

Government 2.0 Taskforce Request for Project Proposal

Project 8: Online Engagement Guidance and Web 2.0 Toolkit for Australian Government Agencies

Scope:

Develop guidelines and other resources to assist Australian Government (Commonwealth) agencies with understanding the application of Web 2.0 tools and techniques for community engagement in a policy development, service delivery and regulatory/compliance settings.

Recommend a toolkit of Web 2.0 technologies and provide guidance material that Australian Government agencies can use to engage online, based on principles of shared services and re-use.

Context:

Online engagement has the potential to 'democratise' public administration and policy development by offering a much richer mix of spaces in which people can talk, listen, debate, argue and contribute their ideas and aspirations to the public conversation. Web 2.0 tools and techniques, however, are still relatively new and untried in Government and many agencies are still either reluctant to adopt them or lack the skills and understanding to know how to use them effectively.

Agencies would be more willing to try Web 2.0 tools and techniques if they were provided with clearer guidelines about the options available to them and in circumstances they are appropriate, how to use them effectively while still managing risk and compliance issues.

There are many Web 2.0 tools and technologies available but very few of them meet all of the requirements of Government agencies. In line with other whole of Government initiatives in relation to IT spending, there are significant advantages to providing a common, trusted toolkit for Government agencies to use for their online engagement activities. Different agencies also have different requirements and capabilities when it comes to deploying new IT infrastructure, so the Toolkit would need to cater for different combinations of in-house and hosted deployments, as well as providing suitable whole of Government licensing arrangements for hosted Web 2.0 tools and cloud computing services.

The toolkit should be mindful of Government preferences around non-customisation and re-use, and policies on information management, security and IT architecture but should not be restrained by them where there is a strong case for change or innovation. Consideration should also be given to how the existing [GovDex](#) online collaboration system could be modified/upgraded to form part of the Toolkit. The results of the Taskforce's crowdsourcing and consultation activities (e.g. competitions, roadshows) should also be considered by the successful contractor to inform the recommendations for the Toolkit.

The recommended Toolkit may be implemented at a later stage to assist government agencies to adopt and more widely use Web 2.0 technology.

Objectives:

- Building on existing guidance provided by [the Australian Public Service Commission](#) and in the [Australian Government Web Publishing Guide](#), develop new guidelines and decision

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making tools for Commonwealth agencies engaging online that provide practical advice and examples on issues including:

- When to engage online
- modes of online engagement
- resourcing and governance
- legal issues (e.g. copyright, privacy, risk management)
- communication style and tone
- community formation and management (e.g. responsiveness, moderation)
- record keeping
- evaluation
- integration with agency outputs and outcomes
- case studies of agency success stories
- security issues
- Identify Web 2.0 tools and technologies suitable for use by Australian Government agencies including, but not limited to:
 - Blogs
 - Wikis
 - Discussion forums
 - Collaborative workspaces
 - Photo and video sharing
 - Community/networking tools
- Identify and cost any further development required in order for these tools to meet common user, technical and legal requirements from a whole of Government perspective
- Provide advice on how the toolkit and guidance could be maintained and enhanced once operational
- Provide an overview of key licensing issues that would need to be addressed at a whole of Government level
- Provide high level costings for deployment of the Toolkit components under centralised, distributed and/or hosted deployment models, including ongoing management, maintenance and support costs

Deliverables:

1. Provide a blueprint to guide the assembly of the Toolkit. The blueprint should recommend and cost the tools to be used in the Toolkit, describe and cost the modifications required to make these tools easily usable by government, and advise government on how it should settle issues such as licensing, privacy and security with respect to these tools. The blueprint should be provided to the Gov 2.0 Taskforce Secretariat via email (gov2secretariat@finance.gov.au) by 21 October 2009 (earlier is preferred).
2. Report on online engagement guidance for agencies provided to the Gov 2.0 Taskforce Secretariat via email (gov2secretariat@finance.gov.au) by 10 November 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; discussion of issues; and recommendations.

The successful contractor will be expected to include an element of 'crowdsourcing' as one part of the project, ensuring that it draws on a process of open engagement through a variety of online mechanisms and tools with as wide and diverse a range as possible of views and ideas from inside and outside government.

In consultation with the contractor, the project interim and final report will be posted to the Task Force website, in the same way as the earlier submissions were made public, with an opportunity for people to comment and add their views and responses to the report's findings and recommendations.

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As part of the project, the successful contractor may be asked to provide services to further inform the Taskforce or assist with researching/authoring/editing sections of the Taskforce report. The Taskforce may also request progress reports and/or draft versions of the report be provided, and members of the Taskforce may choose to collaborate with the successful contractor on the project.