

What is the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan?

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is an international body that champions democracy, open government and transparency. As a member nation, New Zealand creates an OGP Action Plan alongside New Zealanders every two years. Usually a Plan has around 5-15 concrete actions that once signed off, government agencies must deliver. New Zealand is monitored on progress against the Plan by an Independent Reviewer and held to account internationally by OGP.

Why get involved?

The more ideas we have to work with, the better we can reflect the views of the community and the better our Action Plan can be for New Zealand. This is an opportunity to directly contribute to the work programme of government agencies and make change.

We want to encourage as many people as possible to take part in the OGP to reflect as many voices as possible. These will be boiled down to the top 5-15 ideas for inclusion in the plan.

How do I get involved?

You can visit our website www.ogp.org.nz, hit the join the conversation button to look at ideas or add your own or follow us on Facebook, twitter and LinkedIn. We are also holding other events including workshops in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch – details on our Facebook page.

What if I want to hold my own OGP event?

You may have an event where you would like to include some discussion of ideas for the plan or you may even want to arrange an event to contribute to the development of the OGP National Action Plan. If so, please let us know - we can provide support including helping with the design of the session. You can contact us at ogp@ssc.govt.nz

We suggest three parts of a discussion:

1: Understanding the opportunity

This is a general overview of the importance of open government, what OGP is, what the National Action Plan is and what is required for the workshop. Further information can be found at <http://ogp.org.nz/our-conversation/>.

2: Generating ideas

Hold a conversation about what makes Government open. You can take some of the ideas already suggested on the website to help people get started. Brainstorm ideas to make Government more open and the problems that ideas would solve.

3: Enter the idea/problem on the website (this is the most important thing)

Log all the ideas and the problem into the OGP website <http://ogp.org.nz/our-conversation/> – make a separate entry for each one.

What does a good entry in the website look like?

OGP says that a good entry:

- focusses on at least one area of open government, for example:
 - providing easier access to information
 - increasing accountability
 - improving transparency
 - strengthening integrity
 - greater citizen participation in government decision-making.
- is able to be completed within two years
- can be broken down into steps, and have measurable outcomes
- has a clear problem statement which identifies what needs to be fixed.

Below is an example of an idea logged on the website that clearly explains its intent, the outcome sought and the rationale for it:

The idea: Establish a public register of lobbyists and require disclosure of lobbying contacts

The government should establish a public register of lobbyists and of lobbying contacts to allow this sort of behind-the-scenes influence to be monitored.

The problem

Political lobbyists exert a significant influence on policy in New Zealand, much of it behind the scenes. This influence corrodes our democracy, leading to suspicion that wealthy vested interests exert undue influence over the formation of policy.

Many countries combat this problem by requiring lobbyists to be registered and lobbying contacts to be disclosed. In 2012 the New Zealand Parliament considered such a proposal, in the form of Keith Locke's Lobbying Disclosure Bill, but it was defeated.

A measure of this nature would increase both public integrity and corporate accountability, while implementing the OGP values of accountability and transparency. The Ministry of Justice is probably best-suited to deliver this commitment. Milestones could include the introduction and passage of legislation, the establishment of the register, and the first regular report from the registrar.

by [IdiotSavant](#) on April 12, 2018 at 01:50PM