Framework of Principles
For Science Communication Initiatives

Australia aspires to be an innovative society with a scientifically engaged community and a technologically skilled workforce. The *Inspiring Australia* strategy aims to build a strong, open relationship between science and society underpinned by effective communication of science and its uses.

In approaching the issue of science engagement together across industries and sectors, the goal of a scientifically engaged Australia will be far more attainable.

To that end, the *Framework of Principles* has been developed to support a unified and consistent approach to policy development and program implementation by Australian organisations, businesses and governments towards advancing science engagement in Australia.

Principles essential for quality science communication

The principles recognise these key features as essential for quality science communication:

1. strategic direction and goals;
2. relevance to Australians;
3. credible science;
4. defined target audience;
5. evaluation; and
6. program design which enables effective delivery.

These principles are expanded on below.

Principle 1: Strategy

Includes a clearly articulated strategy with purpose, expected outcomes and key performance indicators

Guiding Considerations

- The stated goals and outcomes in the strategy are linked.
- Measurable performance indicators.

Principle 2: Relevance

Targets identified needs, priorities and trends.

Guiding Considerations

- Current issues, needs and priorities relevant to Australians are targeted.
- Feedback and adaptability to ensure ongoing relevance to target audience are enabled.

Principle 3: Credibility

Demonstrates credible, defensible and accurate science

Guiding Considerations

- Rigour, accuracy and authority of the science being communicated.
- Sufficient qualified personnel are available for implementation and to address any challenge relating to credibility.

Principle 4: Target Audience

Designed with a defined target audience(s) in mind

Guiding Considerations

- The audience is considered for its science interest and engagement as well as geographic and demographic factors.
- Accessibility and delivery mechanisms appropriate to the target audience are incorporated.

PRINCIPLE 5: EVALUATION

Provides for adequate evaluation

Guiding Considerations

- An appropriate evaluation strategy is employed to assess key performance indicators and outcomes, and accounts for issues/difficulties in measuring long-term outcomes.
- Evaluation results are shared to provide performance feedback to government to guide and inform future improvement and investment.

PRINCIPLE 6: DESIGN

Has clear rationale for its delivery mechanism

Guiding Considerations

- The most effective mechanism is indentified for the strategy, and incorporates sufficient flexibility to maintain relevance or to be scaled-up as required.
- Potential risks are identified, assessed and mitigated.

Further Principles for consideration, especially in the case of government involvement

Further Principles include:

7. support for a scientifically engaged Australia as articulated in the *Inspiring Australia* report;
8. clarity on the need for government involvement;
9. consideration of government collaboration across Commonwealth departments and agencies, states and territories; and
10. responsiveness to Australia's demands and needs.

These principles are expanded on below.

Principle 7: Support

Actively works towards a scientifically engaged Australia[1] as broadly outlined in the *Inspiring Australia* report

Guiding Considerations

- Contributes to a scientifically engaged Australia addressing one or more of the 15 Inspiring Australia recommendations.
- Addresses a government science communication priority as identified by the *Inspiring Australia* strategy.

Principle 8: Clarity

The rationale for government being involved or not involved is clearly identified, and supported by the best available, relevant evidence

Guiding Considerations

- The rationale for government involvement considers alignment with existing activity, cost/benefit analyses and the best available evidence to address appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency factors.
- Alternatives to government support are considered.

Principle 9: Collaboration

Collaboration opportunity and consideration of the most appropriate Government department(s) and/or agency/ies to be responsible for design and delivery

Guiding Considerations

- Collaboration with other Government departments and agencies is considered, undertaken or supported.
- Is assess for its appropriateness to national, state or territory government involvement.

[1] For a definition of a "scientifically engaged Australia" please refer to pp 2-4 Section 1.1 of "Inspiring Australia – a national strategy for engagement with the sciences" at Inspiring Australia online.

PRINCIPLE 10: RESPONSIVENESS

Identification of needs and/or priorities

Guiding Considerations

- The need is articulated as a response to identified gaps, opportunities and demand as supported by the best available, relevant evidence.
- Aligns strategically with one or more priorities as articulated in the *Inspiring Australia* report or other government policy.