



# Australia's Charities and Not-for-profits

## Written Submission

The Options Paper, Australia's Charities and Not-for-profits sets out proposed replacement arrangements for charities in Australia. The paper outlines policy directions proposed by the Government to introduce effective replacement arrangements that reduce the burden of regulation on the civil society sector.

The paper is being released to seek feedback from charities and interested parties on the proposed replacement options. Comments and feedback will inform development of the replacement arrangements. A summary of written submissions will be provided on the Department's website in September 2014.

Please use this submission template to provide your feedback on the proposed replacement arrangements for charities in Australia.

*Completed submissions are to be sent by 20 August 2014 to:*

**consultationwithcharities@dss.gov.au** (preferred method) OR

Civil Society and Programme Delivery Policy Branch

Department of Social Services PO BOX 7576

Canberra Business Centre, ACT 2610

**Submissions received after 20 August may not be considered.**

Unless otherwise stated, the information and feedback you provide may be used for publishing purposes. Please state if you do not wish for your comments to be published.

## Instructions for completing the Submission Template

- Download and save a copy of the template to your computer.
- Refer to the *Options Paper, Australia's Charities and Not-for-profits* for context and discussion questions.
- You do not need to respond to all of the questions.
- Please keep your answers relevant to the topic being addressed, we ask that submissions be limited to two pages.

**Name (first and surname):** Joanna Siejka

**Name of organisation:** Youth Network of Tasmania

**Stakeholder category (e.g. service provider, client, peak body, academic):** Peak Body

**State/Territory:** Tasmania

**Contact email address:** ceo@ynot.org.au

### **Response to Options Paper:**

The Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT) appreciates the opportunity to provide this submission relating to *The Options Paper, Australia's Charities and Not-for-profits*. YNOT believes there is a need to maintain and protect the regulatory functions currently held by the ACNC. YNOT supports these functions as they are effective, sector-centred, and streamlined. YNOT believes that the ACNC has the potential to reduce the regulatory burden on charities, increase public trust in the work of the sector, improve their accountability and transparency, and function as a central source of information and advice.

The ACNC has only been operational since the end of 2012 and YNOT recognises that it is still in the early stages of development. As such, many of the objectives of the ACNC, particularly in relation to reducing 'red tape' and duplication have not yet been fully achieved. However, work that has commenced in a number of jurisdictions, particularly in South Australia and the ACT, has shown progress towards these aims, and has given the sector an indication of the usefulness of the ACNC in supporting a streamlining of reporting, and a reduction of 'red tape'.

YNOT supports the concept behind the ACNC in relation to having one centralised compliance report – ie that ATO updating, Business affairs annual returns, uploading of Audited financial report, updating of new committee details –all happening through one place. YNOT does not support the notion that abolishing the ACNC will reduce 'rep tape' as YNOT believes that 'red tape' can be more sincerely and effectively reduce through centralised reporting. YNOT strongly encourages a continued pursuit to achieve centralised compliance.

YNOT also recognises that not all organisations have a website, therefore for these charities maintaining a publicly accessible website with all the required information will be inconvenience and in some cases unrealistic, creating further burden on these charities.

YNOT's main concern is in relation to preserving the functions the ACNC are responsible, rather than the commission as an entity. YNOT believes it is a better use of resources to build on what is currently in existence and maintain the current organisation. Failing that, the functions of the ACNC need to be maintained and if they are separated out to other regulatory bodies this needs to be communicated effectively to the sector. While YNOT recognise that the Government signalled its intention to abolish the ACNC prior to their election, YNOT continues to strongly support the work of the ACNC, and express concerns relating to the prospect of returning to the situation of ineffective regulation prior to the operation of the ACNC.

YNOT believes that government regulation in relation to managing risk in charity compliance is necessary and imperative in fostering accountability and transparency. YNOT reiterates the sectors commit to the functions of the ACNC and its desire to continue upholding their ACNC commitments as much as possible to create a more efficient sector.