THE SMART NATION

2022 AUSTRALIAN ELECTION PLATFORM

SmartCitiesCouncil
Australia New Zealand
The most remarkable advances in Australian history have spurred both economic and social advantages, thanks to visionary leaders and thinkers who saw the possibilities – and acted upon them. Rail connections, water treatment and hydro electricity generation are just some. These and other great turning points in our history were made possible by infrastructure investments. And the return on those investments? Competitive advantages that have persisted for decades.

As urbanist and writer Jane Jacobs argued in "Cities and the Wealth of Nations" (1984) – the engine of economic development is a city and its surroundings. Cities, not countries, she insisted, are the constituent elements of a developing economy and have been so from the dawn of civilisation. Civilisations fail when their cities do.

Today we have the chance to create more advantages for our country, our citizens, our cities and regions and towns, our business and industry – and along the way, our planet. This is critical as we manage continued population growth, address our infrastructure backlog and adapt to a changing climate.

We can do all of that by investing in smart infrastructure. By that we mean deploying proven information and communications technologies - smart devices, sensors and software - that give our existing infrastructure the equivalent of digital eyes and ears. These intelligent devices enable more efficient and effective monitoring and control of our energy and water systems, transportation networks, human services, public safety operations - basically all core government functions.

In the long term, the policy priorities and initiatives presented in this document will support our progress toward building a smart nation, to enable Australia to prosper locally and compete globally.
KEY PRIORITIES

Connectivity and Inclusion for a Smart Nation
- Australian Digital Inclusion Roadmap
- Digital Connectivity and Inclusion Fund
- Australian Centre of Excellence for Digital Inclusion

Global Leaders in Infrastructure and the Built Environment
- Digital Built Australia Centre of Excellence
- National Urban Mobility Challenge

Growing Regional Digital Strength
- Smart Regions Development Fund

Co-Investment, Scaling Outcomes
- National Smart Places Acceleration Program

Innovation for All, at Scale
- Reforming our Innovation Settings
CONNECTIVITY AND INCLUSION FOR A SMART NATION

RECOMMENDATION 1
Digital Connectivity and Inclusion Fund

Goal: Accelerate ubiquitous connectivity of next generation telecommunications and digital inclusion for the nation.

As a first step, it is critical for the nation that a Digital Inclusion Roadmap be created, seeking to not only accelerate next generation digital connectivity, but also building digital capability for every Australian.

Informed by the development of an Australian Digital Inclusion Roadmap, the Digital Connectivity and Inclusion Fund will support:

- New collaboration models between government and the private sector to accelerate the roll-out of 5G connectivity
- Affordability and inclusion by prioritising use cases that can support vulnerable communities and regions where access to reliable and fast connectivity has traditionally been compromised, and affordability has been low
- Digital literacy programs across the nation, coordinated by a new 'Australian Centre of Excellence for Digital Inclusion' providing the training and equipment, along with incentives to embrace digital services and business solutions that enable greater opportunity and resilience in business management and service delivery, particularly for small and medium sized enterprises.
RECOMMENDATION 2
Digital Built Australia Centre of Excellence

Goal: Accelerating the digital transformation of the built environment to enhance productivity, create new jobs and deliver better infrastructure and services.

Sitting within Infrastructure Australia, the Digital Built Australia Centre of Excellence will have the remit to advance:

- The 'Digital by Default' agenda set within the 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan and the six recommendations of the "Delivering Outcomes: A roadmap to improve infrastructure industry productivity and innovation" publication
- National digital built environment and construction productivity targets that drive transformation in the sector
- New procurement guidelines and industry transformation roadmap
- Funding a cohort of digital built environment lighthouse projects to demonstrate the new minimum specifications for 'digital by default'
- PropTech accelerator support program focused on encouraging innovation across the full asset lifecycle - planning, design, construction and operation/retrofit.
GLOBAL LEADERS IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATION 3:
National Urban Mobility Challenge

Goal: Establishing Australia as a global smart mobility leader, building an ecosystem of collaboration hubs that advance next generation mobility.

The **National Urban Mobility Challenge** will comprise the following:

- Three year program with seed funding of $500,000 per year to catalyse a national mobility innovation agenda
- Series of private/public partnership hubs around Australia, each focussed on a thematic opportunity area, for example:
  - Electric vehicles as core infrastructure for microgrid deployment
  - Urban last mile freight as a net zero enabler
  - New streetscape design standards to encourage greater uptake of personal mobility devices
- Supported by a secretariat hosted within Infrastructure Australia
- A reform agenda around standards, to incubate innovation, including through Austroads, the Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines, and National Transport Commission
- Linking the outcomes of the Challenge to future grant programs with local and state governments.
GROWING REGIONAL DIGITAL STRENGTH

RECOMMENDATION 4
Smart Regions Development Fund

Goal: Ensuring regional Australia embraces opportunities to deliver better infrastructure and services through scaleable technology and data solutions.

A dedicated Smart Regions Development Fund to catalyse smart technology and data solutions investment in regional Australia, comprising:

- $50M/year for 3 years
- Priority to target collaboration between cities and towns in regional areas
- Focusing in on key priority investment areas such as:
  - Digital connectivity coverage
  - Water security for critical regions
  - E-commerce capability
  - Tourism analytics and economic development
  - Resource management.
CO-INVESTMENT, SCALING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDATION 5
National Smart Places Acceleration Program

Goal: Scaling technology and data solutions to help build community resilience and enhance service delivery across the nations cities and towns.

Building off the government's previous Smart Cities and Suburbs program, this proposed Smart Places Acceleration Program would comprise:

- $100M/year for 3 years
- 50/50 match funding with public/private/academic collaborative teams
- Strategic focus on investment in 'activating' data and generating insights for decision making
- Mobilisation 'Incubator' series to prepare teams for collaboration and project delivery
- Knowledge exchange program of activities to facilitate:
  - peer-to-peer support in specifying and procuring solutions
  - sharing approaches to smart cities procurement processes
  - how smart cities standards are embedded in projects to guide action and scale opportunity
- Procurement innovation a priority initiative to accelerate engagement with small and medium enterprises
- Demand aggregation priorities to scale demand, leverage private capital and accelerate outcomes
- Linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for greater alignment with global opportunities.

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INNOVATION FOR ALL, AT SCALE

RECOMMENDATION 6
Reforming our Innovation Settings

Goal: Catalysing scalable innovation that supports our economic prosperity, competes globally and delivers environmental and social value.

A Digital and Innovation Reform program to support:

- National concerted effort to reform procurement processes to support existing and emerging small business
- Program providing support on how to connect innovation to economic and social value
- 'Scalability funding' to ensure innovation doesn't get trapped in cycle of ad-hoc low risk pilots
- 'Future Workforce Program' that supports manufacturing of enabling technologies (eg. electrification of mobility)
- Economic recovery through strategically directed enabling technologies that can support advanced and additive manufacturing to support electrification of mobility, manufacturing of products and materials for climate resilience, and capability building for the future workforce.