
AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE of POLICY and SCIENCE

2009 Public Consultation – Summary of Responses

The Australian Institute of Policy & Science (AIPS) conducted an online consultation during July and August 2009. The consultation was open to the general public, as well as AIPS staff, members, directors, and those with a connection to AIPS initiatives such as the Tall Poppy Campaign, Post Budget Health Briefing, and AQ: Australian Quarterly.

The purpose of the consultation was to seek input on stakeholder values in light of a strategic review being undertaken by the AIPS Board of Directors.

Our thanks to everyone who made time to respond. All responses were valued, and received the attention of the Board strategic review sub-committee. The invited response rate was in the region of 20%. Respondents included:

- Members of the Young Tall Poppy network of award-winning researchers
- AIPS members
- AIPS staff and directors
- Attendees at AIPS events
- Attendees at Tall Poppy Reaching Students Program events
- Subscribers to AQ – Australian Quarterly
- University partners
- Corporate partners
- Government partners

Stakeholders perceived current key strengths of AIPS as:

- Promoting science
- Recognising and rewarding excellence
- Educational outreach
- Public science engagement

Stakeholders regarded the following roles as important for AIPS in the future:

- Promoter
- Communicator
- Facilitator
- Educator

Respondents generally regarded the science focus of the Tall Poppy Campaign (where 'science' was interpreted in a broad sense to incorporate science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine) as being an appropriate and important target, although some stakeholders did see value in expanding the Campaign to other disciplines or areas of excellence.

Many respondents expressed a preference for online access to AQ – *Australian Quarterly*, although there was still strong demand for a printed copy. A majority of individuals found the content in AQ of interest. Other popular publications with respondents were *New Scientist*, *Time*, and *Scientific American*.

There were many illuminating suggestions regarding policies and issues that respondents felt were important and relevant to Australia today. Particular scientific issues identified by respondents included:

- Water
- Climate change
- Health
- Energy
- Nanotechnology

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- Molecular genetics
- Convergence of bio- and nano-technologies
- Food supplements
- Population
- Sustainability and resource depletion

A wide variety of issues relating to science policy were discussed, including:

- Science education (and curriculum design)
- Careers in science (including workforce requirements and planning, career paths for new scientists, and curbing the drop in science students)
- The role of science in the policy process, engagement between scientists and politicians, and opportunities to equip scientists to better engage in policy debates
- The role of regulatory bodies
- Encouraging greater accessibility of scientific information between scientists
- Freedom of scientific information
- General value and relevance of science in modern society
- Science communication through community channels
- Knowledge-based economy
- Current and future issues surrounding:
 - Food security
 - Environmental governance
 - Health (particularly E-health)
 - Genetic testing
 - Medical ethics

Following the results of the survey, the Board has set a new strategic direction for the Australian Institute of Policy & Science.

For more information on the new strategic direction, please visit the AIPS website from October 2009:

<http://www.aips.net.au/>

For further information on the results of the survey, please contact:

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