



Standards Australia

Outcomes Report

Contributor Forums 2026



About the Contributor Forums

Each year, Standards Australia hosts forums with our senior leaders, contributors and stakeholders to share progress on our strategy and seek input to ensure it generates the value for our stakeholders

Our contributors are at the centre of what we do as Australia's peak standards body. Their participation and expertise enable us to develop standards that support safe communities and an efficient Australian economy.

Standards Australia is undertaking one of the most significant reviews and improvement programs in our organisation's history.

Following the completion of the independent Standards Development End-to-End Review, we committed to improving the way standards are developed, supported and governed across the standards ecosystem.

We also committed to be honest, transparent and provided timely updates on the results of the findings, our plan to address the recommendations, and the progress of our work.

In addition to online and hybrid sessions held earlier in 2026, these recent forums were an important part of our journey and provided an opportunity to discuss our operating model changes, the foundations we have put in place to respond to the review, and our areas of focus for FY27.

Held across Australia and online, the forums brought together more than 350 contributors, committee leaders, nominating organisations and stakeholders to share the findings of the End-to-End Review, discuss the changes already underway and explore what improvements would have the greatest impact on the contributor experience.

We are pleased to share that 98% of participants rated the forums as having met or exceeded their expectations.

Most importantly, the forums provided another opportunity for us to listen.

Contributors shared valuable insights based on their experiences across technical committees, working groups and international activities. Their feedback helped validate the findings of our End-to-End Review while also shaping how we prioritise our response and implement future improvements.

These conversations will continue to play a critical role as we work to make it easier to participate in, contribute to and lead standards development activities.

2026 Contributor Forum schedule

Date	Location
Monday 27 July	Melbourne
Thursday 30 July	Perth
Monday 3 August	Brisbane
Tuesday 4 August	Canberra
Friday 7 August	Sydney
Thursday 10 September	Virtual

What we heard

Contributors valued the opportunity to connect, contribute and hear directly from leadership

Across the forums, contributors valued the opportunity to connect with peers, share insights from their committee and stakeholder experience, and hear directly from Standards Australia's leadership about the organisation's direction and the future of the standards development system.

The discussions reinforced the value of open, practical engagement.

Contributors welcomed the chance to test ideas, understand the rationale for change and help shape the priorities that will guide future improvement.

The recommendations of the End-to-End Review were strongly validated and supported. Contributors recognised the continuing importance of standards to Australia and expressed a deep commitment to the system and its future success.

There was also a clear message that implementation now matters. Contributors supported acting on the recommendations and committing to meaningful change, so the standards development process better supports contributors today while also being positioned for success in the future.

Enhancing future forums

Contributors also identified practical ways to strengthen future forums and maintain momentum between events.

Participants encouraged Standards Australia to continue sharing outcomes nationally, provide clearer visibility of progress and explore more regular engagement opportunities.

There was interest in greater collaboration across committees and in digital tools that make it easier for contributors to provide feedback, share ideas and stay connected between formal sessions.

Contributors also suggested that future sessions would be enhanced by providing agendas, pre-reading, discussion topics and pre-work questions earlier. This would give participants more time to prepare, consult their stakeholder networks and bring more informed perspectives to the discussion.



Making standards development simpler, clearer and more effective

A recap on the End-to-End Review Findings

The Standards Development End-to-End Review found that Australia's standards development system is highly valued and underpinned by the expertise, commitment and goodwill of contributors.

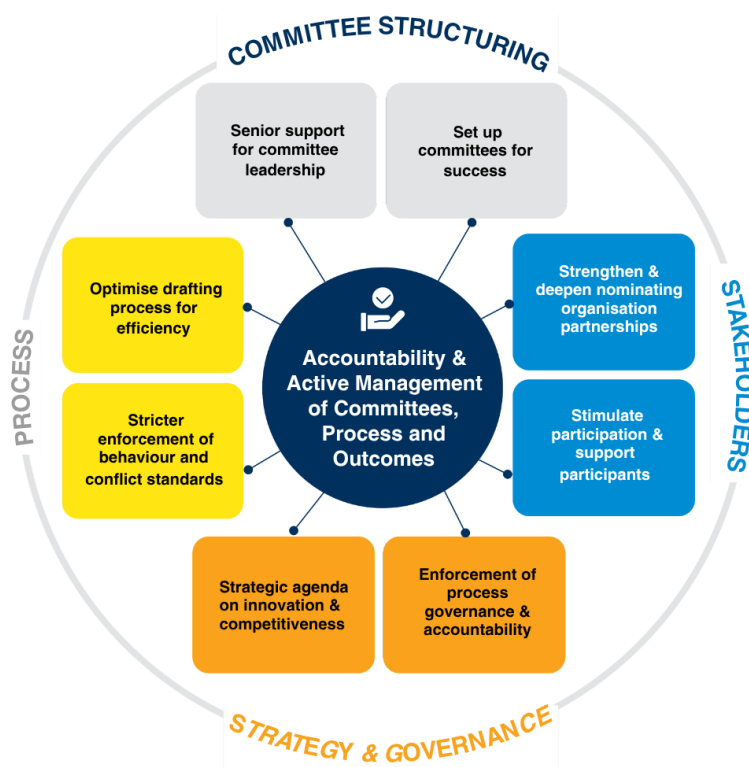
It also found that the system must continue to evolve so it remains modern, inclusive, responsive and fit for purpose in a rapidly changing environment.

The review identified the need for a stronger shift from administrative support to more active end-to-end management of standards development, supported by clearer accountability, stronger committee leadership, improved governance, better tools and a more strategic approach to participation, international alignment and future capability.

The Contributor Forums supported and reinforced these findings

Contributors again recognised the importance of standards to Australia, the strengths of the existing system and the passion of those who participate in it.

At the same time, they confirmed the need to act on the review recommendations and make practical changes that better support contributors, improve transparency and strengthen confidence in the standards development process.



Standards Australia has now translated the nine recommendations into a structured implementation program, with 70 actions in place to guide delivery.

During the forums, we talked through the foundational changes already underway, including operating model changes, clearer roles and accountabilities, strengthened governance and escalation pathways, sector-specific capability building, improved support for committee leadership, greater focus on drafting efficiency, and the progressive modernisation of digital tools and ways of working.

In particular, contributor feedback reinforced several key themes that directly support the changes now being implemented.

Governance and participation

- Contributors supported stronger governance, clearer decision rights and more consistent committee leadership, reflecting the review's call for Standards Australia to take more active end-to-end accountability for the conduct of committees and their outcomes.
- There was clear support for more consistent approaches to conflicts of interest, behavioural expectations, term limits, escalation pathways and issue resolution.
- Feedback also reinforced the importance of committee composition, balanced participation and the need to make it easier for contributors from government, smaller organisations, emerging sectors and under-represented stakeholder groups to participate effectively.
- Contributors welcomed the focus on more active engagement with Nominating Organisations, clearer expectations of committee members and stronger pathways for participation across the standards ecosystem.

Process and transparency

- Contributors reinforced the need for simpler, clearer and more proportionate pathways for proposal development and approval, recognising the different needs of new standards, minor amendments and committee-supported work.
- Feedback supported earlier committee and stakeholder involvement, clearer status updates, transparent rationale for key decisions and better visibility of expected timeframes.
- Participants asked for greater clarity around the Standards Australia operating model, organisational roles, points of contact, service expectations, ownership of key agreements and communication channels.
- There was strong interest in more consistent, action-oriented communication, including committee calendars, work program visibility, progress reporting and clearer records of key decisions.
- These themes directly supported the review's focus on stronger process governance, service expectations, early issue resolution, improved documentation and reduced avoidable delay.

People and capability

- Contributors supported stronger onboarding that helps new and existing members understand project objectives, governance arrangements, roles, expectations, international links and meeting rhythms.
- Feedback reinforced the value of mentoring, peer support and practical guidance for contributors, Chairs and Standards Australia staff.

- Participants supported capability building in facilitation, consensus-building, stakeholder engagement, conflict management, issue resolution and sector-specific knowledge.
- There was also recognition of the importance of editorial and technical drafting capability, including support to translate agreed technical intent into clear, accessible standards language.
- These insights reinforced the review's finding that future improvement depends not only on process changes, but also on building the leadership, sector expertise and practical capability needed to support committees more actively and consistently.

International participation

- Contributors supported a more strategic and better coordinated approach to international participation, including clearer expectations, decision-making principles and funding arrangements.
- Feedback reinforced the need to better explain the principles, considerations and benefits associated with the adoption of international and overseas standards, including when deviations may be required.
- These comments aligned with the review's call for standards development to support national competitiveness, innovation, international alignment and the national interest.

Technology

- Contributors reinforced the importance of modernising digital tools, including more practical support for the Online Standards Development system and easier access to relevant information, previous decisions and committee materials.
- There was interest in using technology to reduce administrative effort, improve collaboration and support more efficient drafting, while maintaining appropriate human expertise, governance and quality assurance.
- Feedback also supported the development of clear and responsible frameworks for the use of artificial intelligence in standards development.

The way forward

Our immediate areas of focus

The End-to-End Review implementation is an important three-year program of work, designed to make standards development simpler, clearer and more effective for everyone who participates in the system.

Foundational change is already underway.

This includes updates to our operating model, internal training and upskilling, policy and procedure review, improved reporting, and alignment with our technology roadmap. Key changes are also being implemented, including mandatory onboarding for new committee members, the introduction of Heads of Agreement for complex projects, clearer escalation pathways, stronger management of Code of Conduct matters, and strengthened Declaration of Interest enforcement.

Contributor feedback has helped inform the areas of focus for FY27.

It reinforced the need for practical, visible action that improves the contributor experience, strengthens governance and transparency, builds capability, supports international participation, and modernises the tools and systems that underpin standards development.

With that feedback in mind, our FY27 priorities are grouped around the areas where contributors told us action will make the greatest difference:

Contributor engagement and communication

- Enhance future Contributor Forums through improved planning, stronger facilitation, more discussion time, earlier distribution of agendas and pre-reading materials, and continued national sharing of outcomes.
- Provide contributors with national visibility of forum outcomes, implementation progress and broader updates on the three-year program of work.
- Create additional opportunities for collaboration, engagement and knowledge sharing between committees throughout the year, including through digital tools governance, user groups and regular contributor updates.
- Increase education and awareness of the value of standards and standards participation across industry, government, the professions and the wider community.

Transition and contributor support

- Implement mandatory onboarding for new committee members and strengthen support for existing contributors through mentoring, meeting-management support and practical guidance.
- Expand internal training, sector-specific capability building and Online Standards Development training so contributors, Chairs and Standards Australia teams are better supported.
- Broaden participation opportunities and recognise the contributions of government representatives, smaller organisations, volunteers and emerging areas of expertise across the standards ecosystem.

External governance and assurance

- Strengthen governance frameworks that support effective management of conflicts of interest, conduct concerns, dispute escalation, committee-in-confidence expectations and breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- Strengthen oversight of committee composition, committee processes and committee performance through clearer assurance, audit and reporting arrangements.
- Publish and apply service level expectations and develop committee health and risk reporting to support greater transparency and accountability.

Process, roles and accountability

- Develop more proportionate proposal and project pathways, supported by clearer triage, Heads of Agreement for complex projects, status reporting, decision transparency and published service level expectations.
- Provide clearer information about organisational roles, key contacts, committee responsibilities, drafting responsibilities, service models and accountabilities, including clearer role definition for Chairs and Standards Australia teams.
- Improve decision records, meeting documentation, committee calendars and progress reporting to strengthen institutional knowledge and support continuity across committees.

International alignment and participation

- Provide greater clarity around international participation, funding arrangements, adoption principles and the justification required where Australian standards do not align with relevant international or overseas standards.
- Strengthen the justification process for non-alignment with international or overseas standards, supporting a more consistent and transparent basis for decision-making.

Technology, tools and AI

- Finalise the roll-out of the new login system, roll out the Meetings Portal and increase use of Online Standards Development.
- Create a digital tools investment roadmap and establish a digital tools governance and user group to support contributor input and ongoing system updates.
- Establish clear governance and assurance frameworks for the responsible use of artificial intelligence in standards development, supported by dedicated AI implementation capability.

Thank you

The Contributor Forums reaffirmed what our three-year End-to-End Review found: Australia's standards system is built on the expertise, commitment and goodwill of its contributors.

The discussions were constructive, practical and future-focused. Contributors strongly supported the direction of the improvement program and provided valuable insights to help ensure changes are targeted, meaningful and effective.

We thank all contributors, committee leaders, nominating organisations and stakeholders who participated.

The feedback shared through these forums will continue to inform our implementation program as we work together to strengthen Australia's standards development system and create a better experience for everyone who contributes to it.

This is not the end of the conversation. It is an important milestone in an ongoing partnership to build a stronger, more transparent and more effective standards development system for the future.

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