
ASCA Industry Board - Smart Cities Industry Collaborative

The Australian Smart Communities Association (ASCA), representing over 150 local government organisations has established an Industry Board consisting of leading national and international companies who will work collaboratively with the aim of assisting modern cities that are working towards the new sustainable, interconnected, sharing and digital economy in which smart cities are playing a political and economic leadership role.

We are placing the citizens front and centre in this process and work with cities, communities and their stakeholders (health, education, transport, businesses) who are in the process of developing, or have developed, strategic plans based on digital cities and smart council approaches (eg, holistic, citizen-focused, open government, open data and open systems).

We provide a structured approach to the development of smart cities whereby we put the social and economic benefits of the community before commercial goals; in other words we will deliver smart city projects based on what is best for the community. Based on this principle an independent assessment is made to select the right companies that are able to deliver such an outcome to local councils. Organisations involved in the project team have all committed to this approach.

We are already in contact with local councils that are interested in our approach and this could mean that we should be able to start delivering commercial outcomes for the companies involved over coming months, a dozen councils have already showed interest in this approach and several meetings are now. Some councils are facing problems with the delivery of their current projects and there might be some low-hanging fruit for us here.

What we offer to local councils

As an industry collaborative we assist local councils in developing their own unique smart city. We use and develop open standards for each community on which city platforms can be built. This allows for inter-city and inter-regional sharing which will significantly reduce costs. This also protects cities from locked-in situations.

We are in the best position to help local councils in developing viable business and investment models through innovative concepts for procurement, city-as-a-service models, and through OPEX rather than CAPEX models. These models reduce the financial and political risks attached to new smart city approaches and projects.

Our approach is also rather different from other commercial offerings, as we specifically indicate that we place the community outcomes above those of the individual companies involved. In this way we can deliver the best outcome for each council.



For this to happen there must be a commitment from the members to actively underpin the macro-economic outcomes the program looks to affect, including local economy development. That means looking for local options (within each community) where possible, and then looking to state and national capabilities before resorting to bringing in players from abroad

We will further assist councils by facilitating a locally-based industry platform which is open to local businesses who wish to participate in these projects. It also means making a commitment to mentor and develop the local suppliers beyond the initial opportunity. From experience I know that councils very much like this approach, and a collaborative such as ours is unique in being able to offer it to them.

The group validate technology delivery capabilities from within its members to decide objectively the degree of fit for a specific community. This adds value to councils who then don't have to spend as much time sorting through options that really are not a good fit.

We have observed that a key problem for councils who have restructured themselves into a smart city/smart council is that, despite their strategic approach, the deployment of smart city projects is often facing delays and delivery problems because of the difficulty in aligning the various activities from the different partners involved in these projects. The project team can assist councils with coordinating and streamlining these projects and speeding up the delivery.

Steering Committee

Upon a successful outcome of the initial meeting between the council and the project team the next step will be to establish a local steering committee, which will include council directors, other potential community stakeholders, and members of the project team.

Councils and stakeholders can bring to the table projects that will then be discussed in an open forum consisting of representatives of the local council, members of the project team specifically selected for this project, and selected local businesses.

A key benefit of a holistic steering committee approach is that it can look for synergy, develop cross-sector projects aimed at sharing ICT cost, maximising investments and assets, and delivering the most effective community outcomes.

Federal and State Policy strategies

The structure of close cooperation of local councils and the industry collaborative and the R&D community is very much aligned with the federal Government's Smart City Plan and already several discussions have been taken place. The Industry Board provides advice to Federal and State Governments on both collaborative and private industry issues in relation to National and State-based Smart City Plans.



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