

# SUBMISSION WRITING AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

## Monitor

CCACT staff monitor the following sources for consultations:

- ACT Government [YourSay Conversations](#)
- ACT [Legislative Assembly Inquiries](#)
- [DCCEEW Consultations](#)
- [ACT Development Applications](#)
- [National Capital Authority Consultations](#)
- [EPBC Referrals and Listing Assessments](#) in the ACT and NSW

Working Groups and Member Groups can also alert the Council to a consultation.

CCACT is also contacted by the ACT Government for targeted stakeholder consultations.

## Prepare

CCACT consider whether the consultation is a strategic priority:

- Is this a policy priority of the CCACT?
- Is this a priority for a Working Group or Member Group?
- Is the topic receiving significant media or public attention in the ACT?
- Are we jointly submitting with another Conservation Council or environmental group?
- Will a submission have influence on the decision-making process?
- Is there a risk in not making a submission?

Member Groups are welcome to make their own submission and will often make them on consultations the CCACT is not submitting on.

## Engage Stakeholders

CCACT team and Working Group chairs determine whether the submission will be led by staff, a Working Group, or volunteer.

CCACT team may reach out to specific stakeholders for their input, or to work together jointly.

CCACT team may hold a webinar or member group workshop on the topic; or produce a submission guide.

## Plan and Draft

CCACT team or Working Group:

- Identify and research key issues
- Begin drafting using the CCACT submission template
- Set a timeline for drafting and communicate to stakeholders providing input

CCACT team or Working Group circulate draft to all stakeholders that have contributed for their comments and/or for them to include in their own submission.

## Review and Publish

CCACT team or Working Group provide the document to the Executive Director at least 2 working days prior to its due date.

Executive Director edits and CCACT team finalise the submission.

Executive Director submits the submission.

CCACT team publish a blog post under the '[Latest News](#)' tab on the website and a copy of the full submission.



# SUBMISSION WRITING TIPS

## Submission Structure

- **About the Organisation:** Introduce who you are as an organisation; your core values and beliefs, what differentiates you from other groups, and provide specific contact details.
- **Executive Summary:** A strong, front-loaded summary (which can be in dot points) outlining the shared values, the core problem, proposed solutions, and a high-level overview of your recommendations.
- **Summary of Recommendations:** A consolidated list of all your recommendations compiled near the front for easy reference by skim readers.
- **Body Sections (Addressing Terms of Reference/Questions):** Break the main text down to explicitly answer the inquiry's individual questions or terms of reference.
- **Conclusion:** A final section that reiterates your summary and emphasises the need for action.

## Writing Tips

- **Front-load key messages:** Place your takeaway messages or core recommendations at the front of the submission, or use them as headings, so skim-reading public servants or committee members can see them immediately.
- **Keep it original:** The most effective submissions are unique and written in your own words. They outline a few key concerns specifically relevant to your circumstances or your organisation. Submissions that copy exactly from a template may be considered only as one submission, so it's important to personalise your work. Keep in mind submissions may be published publicly, so only include detail you are comfortable sharing online.
- **Make tangible asks:** Your specific policy recommendations should never be general statements. Ensure they focus on developing or changing a law or policy (e.g., exact updates or text changes required or amending a program or process (e.g., what process needs to be initiated)). If making a financial ask, include specific dollar figures and time periods.
- **Values-based messaging:** Start with and embed your own key messages and values, rather than using the language or frames of opponents or vested interests (even when rebutting myths). You might want to use real-world case studies to bring the policy issues to life.

## Common Mistakes

- **Burying the lead:** Hiding key arguments or recommendations deep within the text instead of front-loading them where busy readers can see them immediately.
- **Adopting the opponent's framing:** Accidentally reinforcing a critic's or opponent's view by repeating their negative framing or myths, even when your goal is to debunk them.
- **Vague or weak recommendations:** Making general, abstract statements or passive "asks" instead of proposing concrete, specific changes to laws, policies, programs, or funding
- **Overloading text with jargon:** Heavily using internal industry terms, academic language, or unexplained acronyms that make the submission dense and difficult for an audience to read.