



Media release

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Leadership summit confirms public participation is essential to open government and participatory democracy

Ms Elizabeth Tydd, NSW Information Commissioner, Open Data Advocate and CEO of the Information and Privacy Commission NSW (IPC), today hosted a leadership summit to promote the importance of public participation and showcase leading public participation initiatives among senior NSW State government executives.

“Genuine collaboration between government agencies and citizens is essential to effectively harness citizens’ ideas, knowledge, wisdom and skills in the development and implementation of effective policies and service delivery models,” said Ms Tydd.

“Today’s Summit provided senior executives within government responsible for implementing change applied insights into the benefits and opportunities presented in this vital leadership approach. Governments hold information that informs its decision making – this information should be actively applied to ensure meaningful engagement with citizens and promotion of a more participatory democracy.”

Attended by some 80 senior government executives, the Summit was opened by the Attorney-General, the Hon. Mark Speakman SC MP, and featured an opening address by NSW Public Service Commissioner Graeme Head, and a keynote presentation by social researcher and author Dr Rebecca Huntley.

A panel discussion by experts included Elizabeth Tydd, Iain Walker of newDemocracy, and Tom Burton of The Mandarin.

Speakers and panelists offered first-hand insights into improving public participation, assessed the benefits of collaboration techniques, and offered candid insights to promote citizen collaboration and co-design.

Facilitated by renowned strategist and organisational consultant Martin Stewart-Weeks, the Summit included opportunities for audience participation and discussion.

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“The Summit is one of a number of recent initiatives by the IPC to promote public participation within government agencies,” said Ms Tydd.

“Together with Agency Information Guides, and public and agency-based consultations that the IPC has undertaken, the Summit will contribute towards a broader charter for public participation that will help enshrine the centrality of public participation in government agency decision making.”

Ms Tydd is available for interviews to discuss the Summit – contact the number below.

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