

Invitation to comment

This paper raises key issues and many further questions for consideration. The questions posed at the end of each section throughout the paper are summarised below. Comment is encouraged on these issues and questions related to the social and community impacts of ICT. We would like to hear your views and your own experiences.

The period for consultation on the papers is open for several months, ending on **31 March 2005**.

This paper, the companion paper and the full set of case studies are available online (see www.dcita.gov.au/ie/community_connectivity).

The Department welcomes submissions in the form of responses to the discussion questions, comments or further information. Interested parties are encouraged to provide written submissions and comments by email to community.connectivity@dcita.gov.au.

Submissions and comments can also be made in hard copy. They can be sent to:

The Manager
Community Connectivity
Access Branch
Information Economy Division
Department of Communications, IT and the Arts
GPO Box 2154 Canberra ACT 2601

Submissions and comments can be faxed to 02 6271 1780. Faxed submission should be no more than five pages long.

Interested parties can provide verbal comments on the papers:

On *The role of ICT in the building communities and social capital* please contact
Dr Deborah West
Community Connectivity, Access Branch, DCITA
Tel: 02 6271 1645

On *ICT transforming the nonprofit sector* please contact
Ms Mary Gorman
Community Connectivity, Access Branch, DCITA
Tel: 02 6271 1689

Or please contact
Mr Peter Huta
Manager Community Connectivity
Tel: 02 6271 1047

Summary of discussion points

Trust

Trust is an essential element of and required to build social capital. It is also something that develops over time and operates at a number of levels and in different forms (i.e. transactional trust, social trust).

- How can trust be developed and maintained in relation to online engagement with business, government and organisations?
- How can trust be developed and maintained in the various forms of online communities?
- Moreover, what undermines trust in each of these contexts?
- What role (if any) should business and government play in developing and sustaining different forms of trust in each of these contexts?
- What other (if any) values and norms have a significant impact in the online world?
- Are citizens and consumers sufficiently aware of the online threats that they need to consider and safeguard against? If not, what practical measures might address this?
- Are there effective sanctions for those who transgress online against shared values and norms?

Social networks

- How is the Internet (and ICT generally) impacting on the building and development of social networks?
- What is the role of government (if any) in the ways that the Internet is being used to build and develop social networks?

ICT and social capital

- What is the potential (and limit) of the Internet (and ICT generally) to build and maintain bridging social capital?
- Are there potential (and actual) negative aspects of the building of social capital online? If so, what are they?
- What is the role of government (if any) in addressing the potentially negative aspects of building social capital?

The impact of ICT on social capital

- What other evidence is there that ICT can and is both supplementing and transforming social capital?
- What factors might restrict the potential of ICT to supplement and transform social capital?
- What is the role of government (if any) in supporting the potential of ICT to supplement and transform social capital?