

# Attachment A: Measuring What Matters: Consultation Feedback form

To be completed by meeting host after each meeting and returned to [measuringwhatmatters@treasury.gov.au](mailto:measuringwhatmatters@treasury.gov.au) by 26 May 2023.

## Meeting details

Meeting host name/ organisation: The Healthy Urban Environments (HUE) Collaboratory

Meeting host contact details [phone or email]: [huecollaboratory@thesphere.com.au](mailto:huecollaboratory@thesphere.com.au)

### Meeting host

- ☐ Member of Parliament
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ Non-government organisation
- ☐ Business
- ☒ Academic
- ☐ Community group
- ☐ Individual
- ☐ Other [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Meeting date: 22/05/2023

Meeting location: virtual

### Participants attending:

- ☐ Member of a community organisation
- ☐ Businesses
- ☒ Academics
- ☐ Union members
- ☐ Individuals
- ☒ Other [State Government agencies](#)

Number of participants: 6

## What matters to Australians?

1. Did the five emerging policy themes Prosperous, Inclusive, Sustainable, Cohesive and Healthy resonate with meeting participants?

☒ Yes ☐ No if not, why not [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

2. Which of the following themes are most important to you? (Select three)

☐ **Prosperous:**

*A growing, productive and resilient economy*

☒ **Inclusive:**

*A society that shares opportunities and enables people to fully participate*

☒ **Sustainable:**

*A natural environment that is valued and sustainably managed in the face of a changing climate for current and future generations*

☐ **Cohesive:**

*A safe and cohesive society that celebrates culture and encourages participation*

☒ **Healthy:**

*A society in which people feel well and are in good physical and mental health now and into the future*

3. Which themes or descriptions were most frequently discussed? (Select three)

☐ **Prosperous:**

*A growing, productive and resilient economy*

☒ **Inclusive:**

*A society that shares opportunities and enables people to fully participate*

☒ **Sustainable:**

*A natural environment that is valued and sustainably managed in the face of a changing climate for current and future generations*

☐ **Cohesive:**

*A safe and cohesive society that celebrates culture and encourages participation*

☒ **Healthy:**

*A society in which people feel well and are in good physical and mental health now and into the future*

4. What do you see as the most important issues for future wellbeing? Are these captured by the emerging policy themes?

The HUE Collaboratory applauds the Australian Government's aspirations to recognise wellbeing as being of highest importance to the Australian population. Importantly, we are encouraged by the Government's proposal to reflect on wellbeing holistically, that it is the outcome of interconnections across multiple domains in life rather than solely or primarily reflect in economic prosperity.

The five proposed themes overlap with the works of the HUE Collaboratory, which seek to understand the dynamic interrelationships between the built and social environments and human health and wellbeing. We use interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral expertise and knowledge to inform stakeholders across sectors, enabling them to adjust current policies and practices to better support healthy living in our urban environments. Recognising the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing, as proposed in this consultation is, therefore, at the utmost core of what we do.

5. How might the descriptions be amended to best reflect our priorities?

Currently, each of the five themes is further detailed by a list of exemplars highlighting different aspects of the themes. This emphasises and adds to the recognition of the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing that the proposed Statement and its framework aim to achieve. All of these are outcomes-oriented and are appropriate inspirations and aspirations for a more cohesive, healthy, inclusive, resilient and sustainable Australia.

To improve their practicality, each description may be linked to a benchmark or standard that can be effectively measured against as well as is meaningful to real-life, practical situations. For example, can ‘an economy that provides opportunities for all Australians’ be sufficiently reflected by monitoring changes in the unemployment rate only, or could other opportunities and aspects (e.g. volunteering, under-employment, work fulfilment) also be included and measured? Likewise, there must also be clear action plans—whether by stating clear links to existing policies and programs or by highlighting the need to establish these—for how these aspirations may be achieved and continually improved over time.

Therefore, each description should include more details to clearly spell out their intentions and related actions.

6. Are there any indicators and existing data sources that will be critical to inform the emerging policy themes?

Most government agencies at the State and Federal levels already procure extensive lists of indicators to reflect on their respective portfolio interests. Some are currently released publicly through different research and data institutes like the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and specially funded research infrastructures like the Australian Housing Data Analytics Platform. We encourage the government to conduct an audit of existing indicators to avoid duplications, and to standardise definitions to facilitate across-the-board comparisons.

Outside of downloadable datasets, many, and increasingly so, are visualised on dashboards for real-time monitoring. A notable shortcoming of these dashboards and e-portals is their emphasis on quantitative measures that more readily reflect the breadth of the issues. The more qualitative, human side—or the depth of the issues—is often deprioritised or neglected. Given the Statement’s intended focus on wellbeing and their policy relevance, we recommend that any indicators devised comprise a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures, to more fully reflect the breadth and depth of the issues. This is especially so if the intention of some of the themes and descriptions are to change policy and practice, where qualitative evidence, as well as those that are more quantitative, are both required to provide the relevant contexts to the causes and effects of the issues. This is

highlighted in some of the recent research that the Collaboratory has produced (e.g., Liu et al. 2023; McIntyre et al. 2021; Morrison et al. 2021).

Concurrently, our research has highlighted that existing data collections in Australia less readily reflect the diversities of our populations. Many published datasets on health and wellbeing, for example, currently do not sufficiently reflect sub-group differentiation at a reasonable geography that can effectively aid policy decision-making (e.g. Liu et al. forthcoming). Data on many population sub-groups are also currently not collected (such as individuals who identify with the LGBTQIA+ communities but are not in a de facto relationship or marriage, as highlighted in Gorman-Murray et al. 2022) so that these sub-groups continue to be invisible within our policies and practice. Following the WHO's (2022) proposal, we recommend improving current data collection practices so that oft-overlooked groups are more readily reflected in the indicators. Appropriate geographic levels should also be considered, so variations across and within regions may be highlighted to elicit appropriate policy responses. Some of these data collections may benefit from technological advancements to provide alternative or improved data sources (e.g., Pfautsch et al. 2022).

#### References:

- Gorman-Murray, A., Prior, J., de Leeuw, E., Vincent, A., Cadorin, R. & Choi, C. (2022) *Queering Cities in Australia: Making public spaces more inclusive through urban policy and practice*. Healthy Urban Environments Collaboratory, Maridulu Budyari Gumal (SPHERE) and Arup. <https://doi.org/10.52708/QPS-AGM>
- Liu, E., Lagisz, M., de Leeuw, E. & Yang, H. (2023) *Place-based Health Interventions in NSW: A rapid review of evidence*. The Healthy Urban Environments Collaboratory, Maridulu Budyari Gumal (SPHERE) for the Cancer Institute NSW. <https://doi.org/10.52708/PBHI-EL>
- Liu, E., Lagisz, M., Reid, A. & de Leeuw, E. (2022) *Appraising Health Precinct Audit Tools: Rapid systematic review of evidence*. The Healthy Urban Environments Collaboratory, the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research: Liverpool, Australia. <http://dx.doi.org/10.52708/HPAT5154>
- Liu, E., Yang, H. & Harris, P. (forthcoming) *Land Use Planning for Equitable Health Outcomes (LUPEHO) – A preliminary review of two land use planning instruments*. The Health Urban Environments Collaboratory, Maridulu Budyari Gumal (Sydney Partnership for Health, Education, Research and Enterprise) and the Centre for Health Equity, Training, Research and Evaluation, Part of the Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity, UNSW Sydney. <https://doi.org/10.52708/LUPEOH-EL>
- McIntyre, E., Prior, J., Legg, R., de Leeuw, E. & Harris, P. (2021, embargoed) *Place-based Planning for Health: Discussion Paper for Health Infrastructure New South*. Institute for Sustainable Futures and the Healthy Urban Environments Collaboratory, Maridulu Budyari Gumal (SPHERE).
- Morrison, N., Barns, S., Dunshea, A., Paine, G., Pry, J., Sajan, J., Thompson, S. & van Den Nouwelant, R. (2021) *Making Healthy Places: NSW built environment practitioners' perspectives on place-making opportunities that help deliver health and wellbeing outcomes*. Maridulu Budyari Gumal (SPHERE). <https://doi.org/10.52708/LCWA1416>
- Pfautsch, S., Wujeska-Klaue, A., Piracha, A., Paolini, R., van den Nouwelant, R. & Morrison, N. (2022) *Despicable Urban Places: hot car parks*. Western Sydney University. <https://doi.org/10.26183/7q7a-f148>
- WHO (2022) *Setting Global Research Priorities for Urban Health*. World Health Organization: Geneva. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240041820>

7. Is there any additional information you would like to see in the Measuring What Matters Statement? If so, please outline.

The HUE Collaboratory exists to improve the health of Australians living in urban environments. We achieve this by facilitating partnerships between those who shape and have an impact on cities. These partnerships undertake research and activities to build our understanding of how urban environments can deliver better, more equitable health outcomes. We use this understanding to inform government policy and practice in the planning and development of urban areas. The collaborative nature of ensuring wellbeing, therefore, should be more clearly highlighted in the Statement.

As noted above, more details on how each theme and description may be measured and monitored over time are necessary. Further, some of our research shows limitations on current data collection

practices, so nuances, especially those concerning Australia's diverse communities and population groups, remain unreported. This can constrain the opportunities to devise relevant action plans and policy responses, limiting the potential of the two emerging policy themes of Inclusive and Cohesive. This may require the release of previously unpublished data and improved data linkages so that the causal effects of the related action plans can be more effectively measured and monitored. This may be facilitated by the data-sharing accords that many Commonwealth and State/Territory agencies are currently establishing.

We also recommend that the indicators and monitors are revisited periodically, to ensure that they continue to reflect the policy themes and descriptions, and as data sources and quality that populate them improve. Their associated benchmarks or standards should be updated regularly to encourage continued improvements.

The purpose of the Statement needs to be more than just reflecting the changing status quo of Australia's wellbeing. It must be accompanied by appropriate action plans to address current shortcomings and facilitate on-going improvements. Measures and monitors can play an indicative role, but changes and improvements must come from policy and practical actions (e.g. Kent et al. 2022).

#### Reference

- Kent, J., Harris, P. & Thompson, S. (2022) 'What gets measured does not always get done', *The Lancet: Global Health*, 10(9): E1235. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(22\)00321-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(22)00321-7).