Tithe an Oireachtais
Houses of the Oireachtas

Guidance Note: Making Submissions to Oireachtas Committees in response to a Public Consultation

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Why do Committees carry out public consultations?

Oireachtas Committees may use a public consultation as a way of seeking input from interested persons, groups and organisations in relation to any matter on its Work Programme. Public consultations normally relate to proposed legislation or important policy areas and help inform a Committee's consideration of such matters.

Why should I make a submission to an Oireachtas Committee's public consultation?

Public consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders and interested persons, who may have a special understanding or expertise, to contribute to the Committee's consideration of a matter, and so input directly into the work of the Houses of the Oireachtas.

How do I make a submission to an Oireachtas Committee's public consultation?

As well as reading this guidance note, you should read the requirements relating to the specific public consultation on the Oireachtas Committees Public Consultation page . Ensure that your submission meets all the necessary requirements. Communications with the Committee should be addressed to the Clerk to the Committee (the Committee Clerk) and sent by email to the email address indicated in the call for submissions.

Does making a submission mean I will be invited to a Committee meeting?

The best approach to contributing to a Committee's work is to send the Committee a written submission in the first instance. The Committee will then decide if an oral presentation is required.

Invitations to public meetings as part of the public consultation process are issued following careful consideration by the Committee. It is not usually possible for Committees to meet all interested parties in the time available to them.

If invited to make an oral presentation at a Committee meeting, it provides a further opportunity for you to clarify and expand on your written submission. It also gives Committee's members the opportunity to ask questions and seek additional information on your submission. Attendance is voluntary (unless a Committee is in compellability mode).

Please be aware that making a written submission does not guarantee an invitation to come before the Committee concerned.

Where can I find a list of public consultations?

A list of all current public consultations and requirements for submission can be found on the Oireachtas Committees Public Consultation page.

How to send your submission

- Please email an electronic document (searchable PDF or equivalent) for the attention of the Committee Clerk to the email address included in the Call for Submissions.
- Please do not send hard copies of your submission, as this may cause confusion and duplication.
- Please do not send your submission to individual committee members. The Clerk will ensure all members receive copies of submissions.

What should I include with and in my public consultation submission?

Your submission should comprise the **submission document** and a **separate covering letter**. Keeping personal information such as home address, email address or telephone number in a separate covering letter facilitates the publishing of a submission document, should a Committee decide to do so at some point, without revealing personal details.

Please advise in your covering letter if you would prefer that the Committee did not publish your name so that the Committee can take this into account when deciding on how your submission should be treated, including if your submission should be published. Please note that the decision to publish your submission with or without your name is a decision of the Committee and while the Committee may take your preference into account, there is no obligation to do so.

In the covering letter, please include:

- your name, email address and contact telephone number
- if the submission is on behalf of an organisation, your position in the organisation
- a brief outline of why you are making the submission
- an indication of whether you would be willing to participate in a public session at a committee meeting
- if you prefer your name and any other personal details not to be published, please state this clearly in your covering letter. However, as already indicated, your full name may be published with any submission you make, if decided by the Committee.

In the submission document, please include:

- a brief introduction, for example, explaining your area of expertise
- any facts or information (evidence) that you have to offer from which the committee might be able to draw conclusions, or which could be put to other parties for a response
- links to any publications you refer to- there is no need to send such publications as attachments

- any recommendations to the Committee; be as specific as possible and summarise your recommendations at the end of the document
- an executive summary of the main points made in the submission in the case where your document is more than 10 pages long

Tips on writing your submission

- ✓ Keep your submission concise and to the point. Please do not include any unnecessary or superfluous material that does not relate directly to the topic.
- ✓ Avoid including any details in your submission that you would have reservations about, if published
- ✓ Avoid arriving at conclusions or making recommendations without indicating the supporting facts or evidence.
- ✓ If you refer to other publications, include links to the publications. There is no need to send them as attachments.
- ✓ Please remember to number your pages and it is helpful to number paragraphs also.
- ✓ Ensure your submission is in MS Word format or searchable pdf format.

Important information

- The Committee cannot consider submissions which deal with matters outside its remit.
- The Committee cannot consider submissions which deal with cases relating to individuals.
- You should not criticise or make charges against any person(s) or entity, by name or in such a way as to make him, her or it identifiable or otherwise include anything that might be regarded as damaging to the person's or entity's good name.
- You should be careful not to comment on matters currently before a court of law, or on matters in respect of which court proceedings are imminent.
- Anonymous submissions should not be submitted and are likely to be rejected.
- Most Committees engage with public policy issues. The Committee is not a forum for making personal representations or promoting a product, service or business, and you should not attempt to do so.

Making a submission is a public process

The operations of a parliament are a public process, and you should be aware that any submissions made to a Committee including your name may be published, in whole or in part, as part of a Committee report, or separately, if the Committee decides to do so.

Note also that the Committee reserves the right not to accept your submission, and it is not obliged to publish any part of it.

How your submission will be dealt with

- You should expect to receive an acknowledgement of receipt within 2 working days.
- The Committee Clerk will circulate your submission to members of the Committee in the manner and within the timelines agreed by the Committee.
- Your submission will form part of the Committee's consideration of the specific topic. The Committee may decide that further action is to be taken in relation to the submission. This may include writing to you for further information, forwarding your submission for a response elsewhere or inviting you to make an oral presentation before the Committee.
- In the normal course of events you will be kept updated of any such decisions.

Usáid na Gaeilge

Is beartas de chuid Sheirbhís Thithe an Oireachtais é fáilte a chur roimh úsáid na Gaeilge agus éascaíonn an tSeirbhís úsáid na Gaeilge leis an tSeirbhís.