

Purpose Media Contributor Guidelines

Purpose Media welcomes stories, ideas and commentary from community organisations, not-for-profits, service providers, advocates, experts and people with something useful to say.

We want to make it easier for more voices to contribute to Canberra's community conversation.

Our preference is for submissions to be **close to publication-ready**. We can edit for clarity, structure, length and style, but Purpose Media holds final editorial control over anything published on our platforms.

What we are looking for

A strong Purpose Media story should be useful to the reader.

It might:

- explain something people need to know
- help someone understand where to get support
- share a practical lesson from a program or service
- explain a change and what it means for the community
- share a community success, challenge or opportunity
- provide expert insight in plain English
- offer a constructive perspective on an issue
- help the next person make a decision, ask a better question or find the right support

We are interested in stories that contribute something, rather than simply promote something.

How long should an article be?

As a general guide:

Short story or update: 500–700 words

Standard article: 700–1,000 words

Feature, analysis or opinion: up to 1,500 words

Longer pieces may be considered where the subject needs more depth.

Clear writing is more important than reaching a particular word count.

Write for people, not organisations

Please write in plain English and assume the reader may know very little about your organisation or sector.

Try to avoid:

- jargon
- acronyms without explanation
- funding language
- internal program language
- corporate-style introductions
- long descriptions of your organisation before getting to the point

Instead, start with why the story matters.

Ask:

Why should someone in Canberra care about this?

Keep the story useful

We encourage contributors to move beyond describing what happened.

Where possible, tell readers:

- what changed
- what worked
- what was learned
- what someone else could do
- where people can find more information or support

- what happens next

A story about a program is stronger when the reader understands **why it matters**, not only that the program exists.

Promotion versus editorial content

Purpose Media is not a free advertising platform. We are happy to publish stories involving organisations, services, programs and events where there is genuine community value.

However, articles should not read like advertisements, media releases or sales copy.

We may edit or remove:

- repeated organisation promotion
- marketing slogans
- excessive links
- unsupported claims
- fundraising language that overwhelms the story
- multiple calls to action
- language that presents an organisation as the only or best option without evidence

If the primary purpose of a submission is commercial promotion, fundraising, recruitment, ticket sales or advertising, we may recommend a paid partnership or advertising option instead.

Calls to action

A clear call to action is welcome where it helps the reader.

For example:

- Find support
- Learn more
- Register for an event
- Download a resource
- Volunteer
- Make a referral
- Contact the organisation
- Read more information

Generally, we recommend **one main call to action** at the end of the article.

Additional links can be included where they genuinely help the reader.

Direct fundraising asks may be considered where fundraising is central to the story, but the article still needs to have editorial value beyond the ask.

Links

Please provide the most useful links for readers.

These might include:

- the relevant service or program page
- a support or referral page
- registration information
- a resource mentioned in the article
- primary research or evidence

Try not to send readers to a generic homepage when a more useful page exists.

Purpose Media may add, remove or change links before publication.

Can the story be published somewhere else?

Yes. We do not generally require exclusive content.

A story may have been published on your own website, newsletter or another platform.

Please tell us if it has already been published and provide the link where possible.

We may edit or adapt the story for Purpose Media rather than republishing it word-for-word.

We may also ask for a different introduction, headline or angle so the article is useful for our audience.

Who is the author?

There are a few ways we can publish a contributed article.

Contributed by your organisation

The article can clearly state:

Contributed by [Organisation]

This works well where the organisation has prepared the article and the perspective is clearly theirs.

Guest contributor

Where an individual has written the article, it may be published under their name and role.

Purpose Media article

Purpose Media may substantially edit, rewrite or develop the original submission and publish it as a Purpose Media article.

In this case, the organisation or contributor may be acknowledged within the article rather than listed as the author.

We will decide the most appropriate format based on how the story has been developed.

Purpose Media holds final editorial control

Submitting an article does not guarantee publication.

Purpose Media may:

- edit for length, clarity and readability
- change the headline
- restructure the article
- remove promotional material
- request additional information
- add context
- add links to relevant support or information
- correct factual errors
- decline a story
- delay publication
- update an article after publication where required

Where an edit materially changes the meaning of a contributor's comments or perspective, we will normally seek clarification.

Final decisions about publication, presentation and timing sit with Purpose Media.

Evidence and factual claims

Please make sure factual claims can be supported.

Where relevant, include links or references for:

- statistics

- research findings
- government policy
- legislation
- funding announcements
- service eligibility
- health information
- claims about outcomes or impact

We may ask for sources before publication.

Quotes and lived experience

Please do not include quotes from another person unless you have permission to provide them for publication.

If you include someone's lived experience, make sure they understand where and how their story may be used.

Purpose Media may contact them directly where we believe clarification or additional consent is needed.

We take particular care with stories involving:

- children and young people
- family violence
- suicide and self-harm
- health information
- disability
- trauma
- legal matters
- people who may be identifiable even if their name is removed

We may change the way these stories are presented to reduce the risk of harm or identification.

Images

Where possible, provide high-quality original images that you have permission to share for publication.

Please tell us:

- who is pictured
- who took the photograph, if a credit is required
- whether everyone pictured has agreed to publication
- whether there are any restrictions on use

Logos and promotional graphics are generally less useful than photographs showing the people, place or activity behind the story.

Purpose Media may choose its own feature image or graphics.

Opinion and commentary

We welcome informed opinion and commentary.

Opinion pieces should:

- make a clear argument
- be constructive
- distinguish opinion from fact
- acknowledge complexity where appropriate
- avoid personal attacks
- avoid presenting speculation as fact
- give readers something useful to think about or do

A strong opinion article should contribute to the conversation, not simply criticise.

Before you submit

Ask yourself:

Why does this matter to the reader?

What will they know, understand or be able to do after reading it?

Is there something useful here beyond promoting our organisation?

Have we written it so someone outside our sector can understand it?

If the answer is yes, we would love to hear from you.

The simple version

Write something useful. Keep it clear. Tell us why it matters. Give the reader something they can understand or do. We can help with the rest.