

26 July 2023

Technology Strategy Branch
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
GPO Box 2013, Canberra ACT 2601
Via e-mail: DigitalEconomy@industry.gov.au

To whom it may concern,

SBS submission – Supporting responsible AI: discussion paper

SBS appreciates the opportunity to respond to the *Safe and responsible AI in Australia – Discussion paper* (the **Discussion Paper**) by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the **Department**).

As with the emergence of many new, unique, and enabling technologies before it, artificial intelligence (**AI**) can and is already delivering significant benefits across the economy and society.

SBS is currently exploring the incorporation of positive uses of AI¹—that may benefit its Australian audiences and stakeholders, including the Australian public-at-large—into aspects of its operations. SBS is therefore interested to ensure that safe and appropriate future adoption of AI by organisations such as SBS is supported, rather than inhibited by AI regulation. SBS's key concern is that any regulation should strike the optimum balance between harm prevention and supporting innovation, evolving a governance framework without hindering or stifling the potential benefits of AI.

As already noted in the Discussion Paper, the development of AI is currently occurring at a pace that is unprecedented, and the uncertainties are numerous. Therefore, a principles-based approach—as to whether and how to regulate—is important to ensure regulatory frameworks are as future-proof as possible rather than unduly tied to technology-models. Technology-based regulation is likely to rapidly become obsolete and fail to adequately and appropriately address future developments and circumstances.

Moreover, any forthcoming regulation should ensure that AI and its applications is fair and beneficial to all individuals, peoples, and entities across the society including those with protected attributes². As a matter of principle both AI and its regulation should reduce or eliminate, rather than increase, any biases.

¹ Positive use cases of AI for a public media providers such as SBS could potentially include (among other things): automation of previous low-level manual tasks; enhanced research and content production capability through information gathering, clustering and summarisation, insights from market and data trends, and access to a broader range of information sources; enhanced searchability of and user engagement with content through improved auto-tagging functionality and optimised distribution strategies; improved personalisation of service offerings; more efficient language translation, subtitling and closed captioning; social media management and moderation.

² As per the Attorney-General's [website](#), In Australia, it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of a number of protected attributes including age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity and sexual orientation [...].

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While not in the scope of this consultation, the issues of intellectual property being used by AI services, either directly or indirectly and to varying degrees, must also be appropriately addressed as a priority to ensure that rights-owners have options to choose whether or not and/or how their material can be ingested by AI services and, if their material is ingested, to be appropriately recognised, credited, and/or remunerated for the use of their intellectual property.

The matter of algorithmic transparency—an issue that appeared to have not been adequately addressed during early development of digital platform services—will likely also arise in relation to AI. This is a matter that policy makers may wish to address earlier on.

Relevantly, the Government could also collaborate with SBS, as a public broadcaster—through SBS's provision of trusted and reliable content, and SBS Media's advertising services—in promoting trust in; the benefits of; the understanding of; and any new developments in AI including in relation to the regulation of AI. SBS is the only national provider of multiplatform media services in more than 60 languages for all Australians, including multilingual and multicultural audiences as well as First Nations peoples—SBS is the home of cross-platform National Indigenous Television (**NITV**) services.

SBS thanks the Department for the opportunity to respond to the Discussion Paper. Should any queries arise, please do not hesitate to contact Michael Coonan (SBS Head of Regulatory and Government Affairs) via michael.coonan@sbs.com.au.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Clare O'Neil', written in a cursive style.

Clare O'Neil
Director of Corporate Affairs