

27<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Plan of Work Team  
Ofcom  
Riverside House  
2a Southwark Bridge Road  
London  
SE1 9HA

**Re: Ofcom's Proposed Plan of Work 2025-26**

The Online Dating and Discovery Association (ODDA) is the global voice for the sector, representing over 300 individual brands operating all over the world.

The ODDA welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the Proposed Plan of Work for 2025/26 and is pleased to see the inclusion of online safety as one of four priorities. Since launching in 2013, we have worked hard to raise standards across the industry and continue to work with our members, policymakers and others to create a dating and social discovery world that's safe, fair, and enjoyable for everyone.

We support the desired outcomes for consumers set out in paragraph 2.24 which we believe will give consumers more confidence while providing greater transparency in the way online services keep people safe online. In particular, we encourage Ofcom to continue providing clear milestones for the publication of codes and guidance.

We also welcome Ofcom's goal of aligning regulatory approaches across different jurisdictions. With many of our members operating in more than one country, consistency in approach is crucial to encourage innovation and boost growth.

More widely, we also support Ofcom's work in partnering with other digital regulators and key stakeholders, including academic institutions, which we believe will help develop the evidence base for Ofcom's areas of focus. As the global trade body for the online dating and social discovery sector, we have been encouraged by the way in which Ofcom has engaged proactively with us so far and would be delighted to provide more regular briefings and insights to develop more informed market intelligence about the sector.

We also welcome Ofcom's keenness to better understand the impact of its work for both consumers and the sectors it regulates. We are particularly keen to ensure that the impact on smaller firms is properly understood and that Ofcom avoids a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to its codes and guidance that could have a disproportionate impact on smaller firms.

We also welcome Ofcom's views on the need for agile regulation. The online industry has grown significantly over the past few years and presents real challenges to policymakers in creating legislation that is future proof. We would like to see a more risk-based approach that is aligned to outcomes as opposed to prescriptive measures. We believe that regulated services should have the flexibility to address the risks they have identified in ways that are appropriate to their services. This will boost innovation and provide Ofcom with the evidence they need to produce future recommendations on measures for adoption.

Finally, we note comments made by the Prime Minister and Chancellor recently seeking ideas from regulators to boost growth. We would like to see the UK take a more proportionate approach to regulation that focuses on known problems that doesn't disadvantage smaller UK businesses who do not have the resources to develop or implement advanced technical solutions.

Your faithfully



**Simon Newman**  
Chief Executive Officer