

Media Release

Wednesday 23 August 2017

Citizens' Jury welcomed as a step towards wiser democracy in Canberra

The Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy (CAPaD) welcomes the [announcement](#) of a Citizens' Jury to be convened by the ACT Government — the first use of an important participatory tool in the ACT. The Citizens' Jury will examine ways to improve the Compulsory Third Party insurance scheme (CTP) in the ACT.

Beth Slatyer and Peter Tait, from CAPaD, said today, “We welcome the government’s efforts to try new ways to engage citizens in decision making, as we move towards creating a wiser democracy, fit for the 21st century, in the ACT.”

They reinforced the following points made in a statement by Susan Helyar of the ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS):

- “As we move towards the wider use of Citizens’ Juries, the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy (CAPaD) and ACTCOSS recently [released](#) a draft set of principles to ensure that deliberative mechanisms are trialled in a robust, respectful and informed way. We have invited community feedback on these principles between now and the end of September.
- “We hope that the Jury process on CTP attends to the issues raised in the draft principles. These stress the importance of government being a good steward of the core elements of Citizens’ Jury processes, such as random selection, and ensuring that Juries are convened on issues where Government genuinely seeks community views and is committed to acting on them. We also stressed the need for clear and transparent process, adequate time and investment. The government needs to keep the public informed, include the advice they gain through Juries in their considerations, and respond publicly to the recommended actions.
- “We note that the ACT Government has [invited](#) Canberra citizens to help inform the Citizens’ Jury and that a stakeholder reference group will also provide technical support and access to information with a timeframe over several months. We see broad community engagement, adequate time and access to full advice as key success factors in the coming Citizens’ Jury trial in the ACT.”

Ms Slatyer and Dr Tait also called on Canberra citizens and media outlets to take an interest in the Jury and be part of discussions about how we can best use these sorts of mechanisms as a community.

CAPaD seeks to improve the democratic process by:

- developing and supporting citizen, community and civil society *engagement* in decision-making
- *empowering* Canberrans to engage in owning and planning for the common good
- facilitating opportunities for *citizen input* to government deliberations
- developing citizens’ capacity to hold governments and policy makers *more directly accountable*.

Further information is available on the CAPaD website <http://canberra-alliance.org.au>

**For more information or comment please contact
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