

Principles/Criteria for the Trial of Citizens' Juries in the ACT – Jointly prepared by CAPaD and ACTCOSS, August 2017

The ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS) and the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy (CAPaD) share these principles/criteria for the trial of citizens' juries in the ACT, which have been identified through work towards a shared agenda on engagement with thought leaders and stakeholders.

The ACT Government has indicated that it wants to trial citizens' juries in the ACT. This is something CAPaD has been advocating for, and fits within the broader objective of improving participation shared by both ACTCOSS and CAPaD.

Citizens' juries are one tool that can be used to improve democracy in the ACT. We all need to learn when and how they can add value and what will deliver trust in the process. For those reasons it is essential that any trial is conducted in a way that supports the whole community to explore, share and learn together how best to use citizens' juries in the ACT.

The following principles have been developed to ensure citizens' juries are trialled in a robust, respectful and informed way:

1 The drivers, process, output/recommendations and response processes must be transparent and enable accountability.

Indicator: Sponsors provide a public description of the purpose and process (including how the public will be kept informed and how recommendations will be considered and responded to), before the jury is convened so everyone knows what is proposed.

2 Commitment is made to build broad community confidence in the process.

Indicator: The public is regularly updated on progress and receives prompt responses to questions about the process.

3 Sponsors/decision makers have not already made up their minds – they are open to advice and consider it seriously.

Indicator: There are no fixed positions on the outcome on the public record from sponsors and decision makers. The public is kept informed, the jury is given access to available points of contesting advice and government includes the advice in their considerations and responds publicly.

4 Sponsors and decision makers back the process and commit to responding.

Indicator: Sponsors provide a public description of the purpose and process (including how the public will be kept informed and how recommendations will be considered and responded to), before the jury is convened so everyone knows what is proposed.

5 Recruitment and facilitation are conducted by neutral actors with a transparent process.

Indicator: Community feedback trusts the process.

6 A fair spread of evidence/information is provided and drawn upon, and sufficient time is allowed for deliberation.

Indicator: Juror and community feedback confirms that a fair spread of information was provided, and sufficient time was allowed.

7 It is clear how the deep deliberative process relates to broader engagement.

Indicator: Sponsors provide a public description of the purpose and process (including how the public will be kept informed and how recommendations will be considered and responded to), before the jury is convened so everyone knows what is proposed.

8 Evaluation, learning and feedback is demonstrated to the community to be used to continuously improve the process.

Indicator: A public and transparent evaluation process is used to gather and share information about the success and failures of the trial.