

Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

APRIL 2021

G'day members and friends

In this [Awakening Democracy](#): some insights into CAPaD's theory of change; more about the link between low levels of trust and inequality (and loss of wellness); Can we mend democracy; Demfest 21, and lots to read on citizen participation.

Our Theory of Change

Why talk about a theory of change?

Writing down how we do what we do and why we do it that way helps us be clear on how we work and why do we work the way we do. So here it is:

We seek to harness the power of ordinary people to work with government to achieve responsive, accountable and transparent public policy and implementation. We consider that when community members and their parliamentary representatives actively collaborate to set the policy agenda, design policy and legislation, monitor and evaluate the outcomes, decisions that enhance our common good are more likely to result.

We want to help overcome the disenchantment and lack of trust in government that permeates Australian society, by countering the current dynamic that is characterised by powerful political parties, vested interests and deliberately confusing public information which result in community disengagement from politics.

We do this by promoting discussions among people in the community about how to get good government, advocating for deliberative methods such as citizen juries and citizen assemblies, and helping community members identify people who will represent them well and govern with them. By doing this we want communities to have the power to achieve the future they hope for and need.

OR more briefly for the website

CAPaD seeks to harness the power of ordinary people to work with government to achieve responsive, accountable and transparent public policy and implementation, to change the current dynamic of powerful political parties, vested interests and deliberately confusing public information which result in community disengagement from politics.

We do this by promoting discussions among people in the community about how to get good government, advocating for deliberative methods such as citizen juries and citizen assemblies, and helping community members identify people who will represent them well and govern with them.

COMING UP

Our Democracy ACT

Eight people met by zoom on March 28th and opened discussion about what an Our Democracy project in the ACT might look like. This is an active and developing conversation. The next chapter of the discussion is by zoom on Sunday April 11th. Link has been sent separately by email to all members and supporters. [Contact the Secretary](#) if you don't have it and want to join in.

Demfest 21 – Awakening Democracy 2021

We have set a date: **the weekend of November 6 and 7th**. Please put this in your diaries.

We want to bring together community groups who are active in their electorates seeking better representation for themselves to share their learnings and experience. We want to enrich the movement for better democracy in Australia.

New stuff to read and look at

[Voters Not Politicians](#), Katie Fahey, The People Executive Director, [talking about young people working to overturn gerrymandering in Michigan](#). “a voter-led, pro-democracy political reform movement”. [25mins] Much more [about the process here](#).

As well they are stimulating a group **#COME TOGETHER** to link up people who are interested in change at [The People](#).

[Australian Futures Project](#)'s (renamed in March as **Next25**) [webinar on democracy](#): a conversation between **Ralph** Ashton, **Amelia** Loye, and **Carolyn** Hendricks as they spoke about what is currently working in Australia, what isn't, and where we can do better. Different relationships with media new and traditional, system evolution nor reform, participating in the system and activating their agency ... and so much; worth a listen.

[Practicing Democracy as if the future mattered](#) by Trevor Hancock. A double article looking at some initiatives for improving community democracy in Victoria, Canada. The second article is [Creating communities fit for the 21st Century](#).

Democratic lotteries could empower everyday people to make policy decisions free from politicking and the demands of special interests. Adam Cronkright – coordinator of '[of by for](#)' and co-founder and director of Democracy in Practice. [Listen to his Sunday Extra interview on the ABC](#).

From your committee, with best wishes for 2021

Contact us: secretary@canberra-alliance.org.au

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