

Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

AUGUST 2023

G'day members, supporters and friends

In this [Awakening Democracy](#): Living democracy into being, AGM and contributing to our mission, time to [rejoin / join](#), Active Democracy Bean Voice activity, how to tell a good MP, The Canberra Forum reflection, ... and much more to read and watch.

COMING UP

Living Democracy into being?

August 20 1430 (After AGM) to 16-00; on zoom. [Register here to receive the link](#).

Third in this series of Canberra Conversations about **living democracy**, we will explore in more depth **how to build new political systems to which we can transfer our consent**.

2023 AGM – August 20, 14:00 – 1430, on Zoom.

As foreshadowed, we are refining the constitutional objectives further consequent to members' suggestions at last year's AGM to emphasise the education role more forcefully. Explanation of these changes was sent out last week.

[Link to the AGM zoom here](#). Meeting ID: 872 5464 0042 and Passcode: **887674**.

Please contribute to our mission – support us

We are really keen for people who care about the state of politics in Australia to contribute to fixing the system by joining us. Contributing can include: membership, being on the Committee, donating time to a project or tasks (eg Awakening Democracy compilation), donating funds to support the Awakening Democracy Foundation education activity (not yet tax deductible but we are working on that) ...

We rely on you, as do most NGOs and community groups, for our income to cover the operating expenses: website and email hosting, Zoom subscription, insurances.

And **for members and those wishing to support our efforts**, [please join / rejoin here](#). Thank you to those who have already rejoined and joined. And for the donations that have come in.

Future Zoom events – [listed in our Events Calendar](#). More are in the planning stage.

How to tell a good MP – 2024 ACT Election and 2025 Federal Election

How do we know who to vote for? Who is the best candidate for the job? How do we know our representative is doing a good job. With our sitting MPs, how can we tell. For challengers, how would we pick between them and them and the sitting MP? How are they balancing their party/personal wants and agendas and the wants and priorities collectively decided by us, the voters?

If you want to be involved with other concerned people in the ACT in designing and building a process to answer these and other questions, [please contact me](#).

ACTIVE PROJECTS



The CAPaD Committee has used our [Genuine Engagement Tool \(GET\)](#) to reflect on the **Canberra Forum**. We are finalising our report and will share it soon.

Active Democracy ACT (ADACT) & Australia (ADAus)

Active Democracy Bean - Together, Yes Conversations

Active Democracy Bean's focus this year is having respectful conversations and encouraging community engagement with the Referendum on the First Nations Voice to Parliament. This will be done within the framework of ADB supporting a Yes vote.

Dates and registration links:

Monday 4th September – Together, Yes hosts support session 1-2pm AEST

Register: <https://events.humanitix.com/together-yes-support-for-hosts-q7b2eua6>

Active Democracy Bean Facebook Page

Additionally Active Democracy Bean [has a Facebook page](#) on which they will promote what is on and latest information regarding their activity.

Contact Cath or Jane at activedemocracybean@canberra-alliance.org.au for any support or further information.

More about ADB on their [webpage](#). If you are interested in joining, please [email Cath](#).

The Active Democracy ACT [site is here](#).

OTHER ACTIVITY

Get Political: Communities taking action event (June 3) Video links - coming still

The CIP Convention site is [here](#) if you want to keep an eye out.

THINGS TO READ AND LISTEN TO

Our standing reminder about:

- **Democracy Sausage podcast** from the ANU Public Policy Institute. Lots of very topical topics, and
- **The Remakers podcast**. Australia ReMADE's podcast has a fascinating series of discussions and interviews and is well worth a listen. Both **available** from your favourite podcast service.



[Find more on Democracy Next here.](#)

Defining the DNA of democracy

Democracy is a slippery concept. It might be what we think it is for ourselves (subjective), what political science theorists say it is (empirical) or maybe there is an ideal against which to measure a governance system to say if it is democratic. "The most important thing for democracy is to establish a catalogue of its

constant, repeatable and inalienable features – the so-called DNA of democracy. Such a DNA code could no longer be manipulated or diluted, because nothing without it could be called democracy,” [writes Janusz Ruzkowski](#) (12/7/23).

Unfortunately, the article does not go on to explain what these characteristics are. I have made a stab at some definitions and attributes [in a new View post here](#).

Western Values: universal? They seem to be diverging from the rest of the world.

The Economist reviews the latest trends in the World Values Survey and notes the convergence, from a more divergent range, of international value sets to lie more closely along an axis from collectivist, religious, hyper-tribal survival focused to individualist, less religious, more tolerant sets. Increasing material prosperity hasn't moved the emerging middle class to the latter end of the continuum as previously. See [here](#) (though it may be paywalled).

Also from The Economist: Authoritarians are on the march

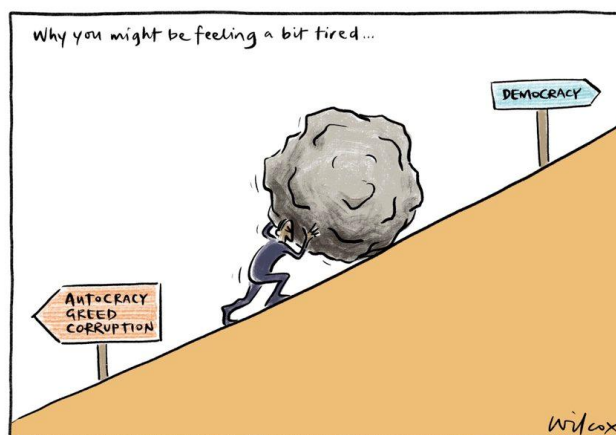
Democracy is, as we are aware, a fragile plant that needs constant vigilant tending to survive. Current political economy circumstances threaten democracy. The Economist [has a look at trends](#).

Addressing massive governance failure

The [Council for the Human Future](#) (CHF) aims to spur people and governments around the world to act urgently on the ten existential threats facing humanity. In his latest book, [How to fix a Broken Planet](#), Julian Cribb lays out concrete actions that we as individuals and collectively can take to help the fix. Resonating with the [Voices of the People Report that initiated CAPaD](#), a common thread is the need to reform/strengthen/ resuscitate democracy to ensure governments are acting to protect our common future. In the context of upcoming elections and CAPaD's work, **who we vote for and how we vote become one of the critical things we can do.**

Finally

A thought from Cathy Wilcox:



From your committee

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

Keep up to date: <https://canberra-alliance.org.au/>

Share ideas: [Twitter @CAPADACT](#)

Find us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1487360858250888/>

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The Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy