

Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

DECEMBER 2023

G'day members, supporters and friends

It's already December. Seasons and festive greetings to all of you and your families and friends.

In this *Awakening Democracy*: 2024 election planning, Living Democracy into being plans, ensuring human thrival, help asks, ... and much more to read and watch, including some new podcast suggestions.

COMING UP

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](#).

We are applying for a philanthropic grant to help us arrange to do this. Mid 2024 we will be looking for someone, paid, part time, to help run this project ... if we are successful in our application. More later.

HAPPENINGS

Living Democracy into Being

Conversation to continue in the new year.

A group of us are meeting informally to discuss and plan how we might move forward with this in real time, face to face, at a social event.

Meanwhile we are working with the Council for the Human Future on a process to build transformational change in society and politics.

If you would like to join any of these conversations, [please contact me](#).



ACT Government My Little Big Idea project

If any of you are in Page or Richardson, and have been involved in this project, we'd like to know what you think about it. This project is what the Green Neighbourhood Democracy idea became. The websites are [here for Page](#) and [here for Richardson](#). You might even want to try out the [Genuine Engagement Tool!](#)

HELP NEEDED

1. To **set up Google Analytics 4** so we can monitor visits and downloads from our website; if you have the skills, [please contact me](#).
2. To advance our **Education for Civics** project, I'm keen to open conversation with **teachers** who have a better understanding of how this might work. **Does anyone know any teachers who may want to discuss?**
3. Fundraisers – CAPaD is entirely dependent on the resources we can raise to operate. We receive no government and at this stage no philanthropic income.

ACTIVE PROJECTS



The CAPaD Committee has used our [Genuine Engagement Tool \(GET\)](#) to reflect on the **Canberra Forum**. We have finalised our reflection and seeking feedback from Alicia and DemocracyCo, and will share it soon.

Meanwhile the [Report is up on Alicia's website](#) and a 3 minute [video reporting participants experience is also available](#).

Active Democracy ACT (ADACT) & Australia (ADAus) Active Democracy Bean - Together, Yes Conversations

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

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

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.
- **Juice Media** for an [irreverent and spicy look at current politics](#) in Australia and beyond.

NEW Podcast suggestion:

Crazy Town A jokey look at some [really serious topics](#) – political and environmental. Some weird stuff ain't so weird. American, quirky and it grows on you. From [the Post Carbon Institute \(go to podcasts\)](#). **Superlative holiday listening***.

On more serious notes:

Ronnie Salt (The Shot) on the [The Lying Game conservatives use to disrupt politics](#).

An analysis of political and media failures, Michelle Grattan *House of Representatives Speaker's Lecture*: [Is the political system letting down the Australian Public](#).

Continuing the theme of mis/dis-information, [Stephan Lewandowsky and John Cook prescribe an antidote](#) that we can apply.

Economic reform / transformation is closely linked to political transformation. The [New Economy Network Australia](#) (NENA) bring people and organisations working in this space together. They have great resources including recordings of webinars and conferences (in the Podcasts and Events sections). [Co-Canberra](#) is the local node in this network.

A Crisis in Democracy and Representation

This editorial, [in our Resources Hub](#), explores the nature of the current 'crisis in democracy' and concludes that the crisis is "a crisis of a specific form of representation." Late 20th century evolution of western liberal politics with changes to political parties, and change in voters / citizens attitude to how the irresolvable tension between the need for representatives and the distrust of and need to keep representatives accountable has led to changes in citizen trust and behaviour which has been nominated as 'the crisis'.

It concludes "... the contemporary crisis of democracy has its origin in a failure of established forms of citizen's representation. However, their authors do not plead for a revival of direct democracy but - building on the

insights of the representative turn - instead examine a possibility of opening democracy's new dimensions that, while entrusting citizens with political power, avoid perils of populism and plebiscitarianism."

* Compiler's totally biased opinion.

From your committee

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