

Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

JULY 2024

G'day members, supporters and friends

In this [Awakening Democracy](#): 2024 **Democracy in Action** Conversation 2 report back, Know Your Candidate Forums dates and venues (except Yerrabi), AGM notice including notice of constitutional changes, membership renewal time, AD Bean activity, Participatory (Democratic) Budgeting in the ACT ... and lots and lots this month to read and watch.

COMING UP / HAPPENINGS

Democracy in Action Conversations

Conversation 2 report back

Reminder, the **outputs** and **the report** of conversation 1 is [on our Election page](#).



The outputs from this conversation are being collated and will be available on the website and circulated, and feed into -

Know Your Candidate Forums

Come along to hear:

How do the candidates wanting your vote plan to represent you?

How are they going to hear their community's voice?

How will they involve us, the people, in policy and program planning decisions?

Dates and Venues

Murrumbidgee – St James Uniting Church, Curtin; Sunday 22 September– 2.00-4.00pm

Ginninderra – Belconnen Community Centre Monday; 23 September– 7.00-9.00 pm

Kurrajong – Currie Cres Community Hall, Kingston; Tuesday 24 September– 7.30-9.00 pm

Brindabella – Tuggeranong Community Centre Hall; Sunday 29 September– 2.00-4.00pm

Yerrabi – tba (if anyone knows a place to hire in Gungahlin please let me know)

Spread the word please. Voting is one of our citizen powers and knowing your candidates is crucial to knowing who to preference.

2024 AGM

Join us at St James Church Hall, Curtin, 2pm on Saturday August 24th to participate in the governance of CAPaD.

Draft Agenda and past minutes [available here](#).

Constitutional amendments

Early this year Access Canberra released the new model rules for incorporated associations, such as CAPaD. There have also been some minor amendments not made in recent years because our focus was on bringing the objectives to reflect our educational focus and prepares for a DGR application. The new model rules give us an opportunity to tidy up our constitution and bring the language and rules up to date. The proposed changes are [available on our website](#).

Note, only paid-up members can vote.

And it is that time again, when memberships become due.

Please rejoin (or join) and continue to support us. [See here](#). As a volunteer organisation with funding only coming from memberships and donations we are really reliant on you, our membership, for our capacity to undertake our educational work. Memberships fund basic operational costs such as the website, public liability insurance, Zoom subscription and donations support project activity such as hall hire for this year's Democracy in Action!.

ACTIVE PROJECTS

ACTIVE
DEMOCRACY
AUSTRALIA

(ADAus) We continue to receive requests for involvement and for additions to electorate webpages.



Active Democracy Bean

[Beyond the Talk – Indigenous-led solutions NOW!](#)

ANTaR ACT and Active Democracy Bean are working together on a campaign for the 2024 ACT Election to highlight what Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people are calling for in the ACT: real actions and real commitments, leading to real change. More detailed news from Active Democracy Bean [here](#).

They are currently organising visits to MLAs in Brindabella, Kurrajong and Murrumbidgee. If you are in these electorates and would like to be involved, contact activedemocracybean@outlook.com with the electorate you are in and your phone number. We are particularly short on numbers in Kurrajong.

Any questions or interest to join us? Contact activedemocracybean@outlook.com.

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

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

Education for civics

Taking a rest while Democracy in Action conversations are happening.

Do you want to help with this project? [Email us](#).

Participatory budgeting in the ACT – Participatory Democracy in Action

Internationally participatory budgeting is done frequently. From Brazil to Paris and even Melbourne, citizens get to decide how a proportion of their town or city's budget is spent. There is great variation in the scope and extent of the allocation to citizen decision, but the common thread is that having a say over what their taxes are spent on is a powerful participatory democratic phenomenon.

CAPaD plans to advocate to the post October 19th Assembly for a trial of participatory budgeting for the ACT. As a city state Canberra is an ideal place to run such a trial.

ACT Labor is silent on their website about such proposals although in the Budget Papers (a signal of policy intent) there is "increasing the levels of engagement with the YourSay conversations platform" as a strategic priority and a line item for Fostering Neighbourhood Democracy in "2024-25 Budget Technical Adjustments" for \$40,000, which would seem to be a carrying forward of the current program, but nothing going forward. The Greens have **Local People Local Decisions** in their [Policy Platform](#). The Canberra Liberals have their [Putting your Suburb First](#) proposal, putting the choice of projects in the community's hands. I haven't analysed other parties, groups or independents policy platforms and would be keen to know if there are related intents in their's.

Do you want to help with this project? [Email us](#).

THINGS TO READ AND LISTEN TO

Our standing reminders 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.
- [Juice Media](#) for an [irreverent and spicy look at current politics](#) in Australia and beyond.
- [Crazy Town](#) From [the Post Carbon Institute \(go to Products/Podcasts\)](#). 2025 season looking at how to escape Crazy Town.

PhilosphizeThis! Stephen West. A political economy approach to “understand ... the thinkers and ideas that forged the world we live in...”. Current politics focus.

All **available** from your favourite podcast service.

To what extent is local governance in Australia an institution for deliberative power-sharing?

Zoom video now up on [CAPaD's YouTube channel](#).

In fact all our zooms since June 2020, including DemFest 21, are available [here to watch and reflect on](#).

[2XX Behind the lines, long interview with Peter Tait and Barbara O'Dwyer on the Democracy in Action! Educational campaign](#), and more on democracy in general. Scroll down to the June 28th session.

Katarina Lloyd Jones [City News article explaining our Democracy in Action! Campaign](#).

Recent addition to the democracy ecosystem in Australia: Review of The High Performance Political Party CAPaD Views post by Peter Tait.

Justin Ryan of the [Progressive Action Lab](#), argues that at this juncture of Australian politics, progressively inclined people need to organise to be able to form executive government through a new type of political party, which he names the High Performance Political Party. His reason: power rests in the executive government not the legislature in Westminster derived parliamentary systems such as Australia's. To be able to form executive government a group has to be able to win a majority of seats in the House of Representatives and to do that one has to be a political party. [Read on](#)

George Monbiot on Neoliberalism. <https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/latenightlive/late-night-live-george-monbiot-neloiberalism/103854130>

Jenna Price [surveys the pros and cons of abolishing the States in Australia](#) (\$). It's not as wonderful as it sounds. Maybe a fourth tier of government is what is needed?

[Samuel Wilson, Eddie Kowalski, Vladimir Demsar](#), 27 Jun 2024, [The civic health of Australia: a national portrait in 30 charts](#), Swinburne University of Technology. “In this review, drawing on scores of publicly available reports from a variety of Australian and international research teams, the authors present a comprehensive picture of the state of civic health of Australia.”

Survey evidence on Australia's democratic resilience, ANU 2024, [here](#).

“... discusses the strengths and weaknesses of different survey approaches to make inference about associated constructs for the Australian population. The paper then then introduces two surveys with a broadly representative sample of Australian adults, followed by the latest results from them. Using this data we discuss what we know about the demand for democracy in Australia and people's evaluation of whether the supply is sufficient to meet that demand.”

FROM WAVES TO ECOSYSTEMS: THE NEXT STAGE OF DEMOCRATIC INNOVATION

Josh Lerner

Anti-democratic movements are surging around the world, threatening to undermine elections and replace them with oligarchy. Pro-democracy movements mainly focus on defending elections, even though most people think that elections alone are inadequate. While elections dominate current thinking about democracy, the history and future of democracy is much broader. For over 5,000 years, people have built up competing waves of electoral, direct, deliberative, and participatory democracy. We are now seeing a transition, however, from waves to ecosystems. Rather than seeking one single solution to our ailing democracy, a new generation of democracy reformers is weaving together different democratic practices into balanced democratic ecosystems. This white paper provides a roadmap for this emerging next stage of democratic innovation. It reviews the limitations of elections, the different waves of democratic innovation and efforts to connect them, and key challenges and strategies for building healthy ecosystems of democracy. [Here](#).

DEMOCRACY AS FUN

“My father always said you can’t just take democracy for granted. You’ve got to look after it like it’s a garden. You’ve got to cherish it. Because if you don’t, weeds will grow”

William McInnes.

From your committee

A pdf vesion of this Awakening Democracy is available [on our website here](#).

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

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

Share ideas: [Twitter \(X\)](#) @CAPADACT

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

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Election related material authorised by Peter Tait Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy