

2024 ACT Election Education Activities SUMMARY REPORT



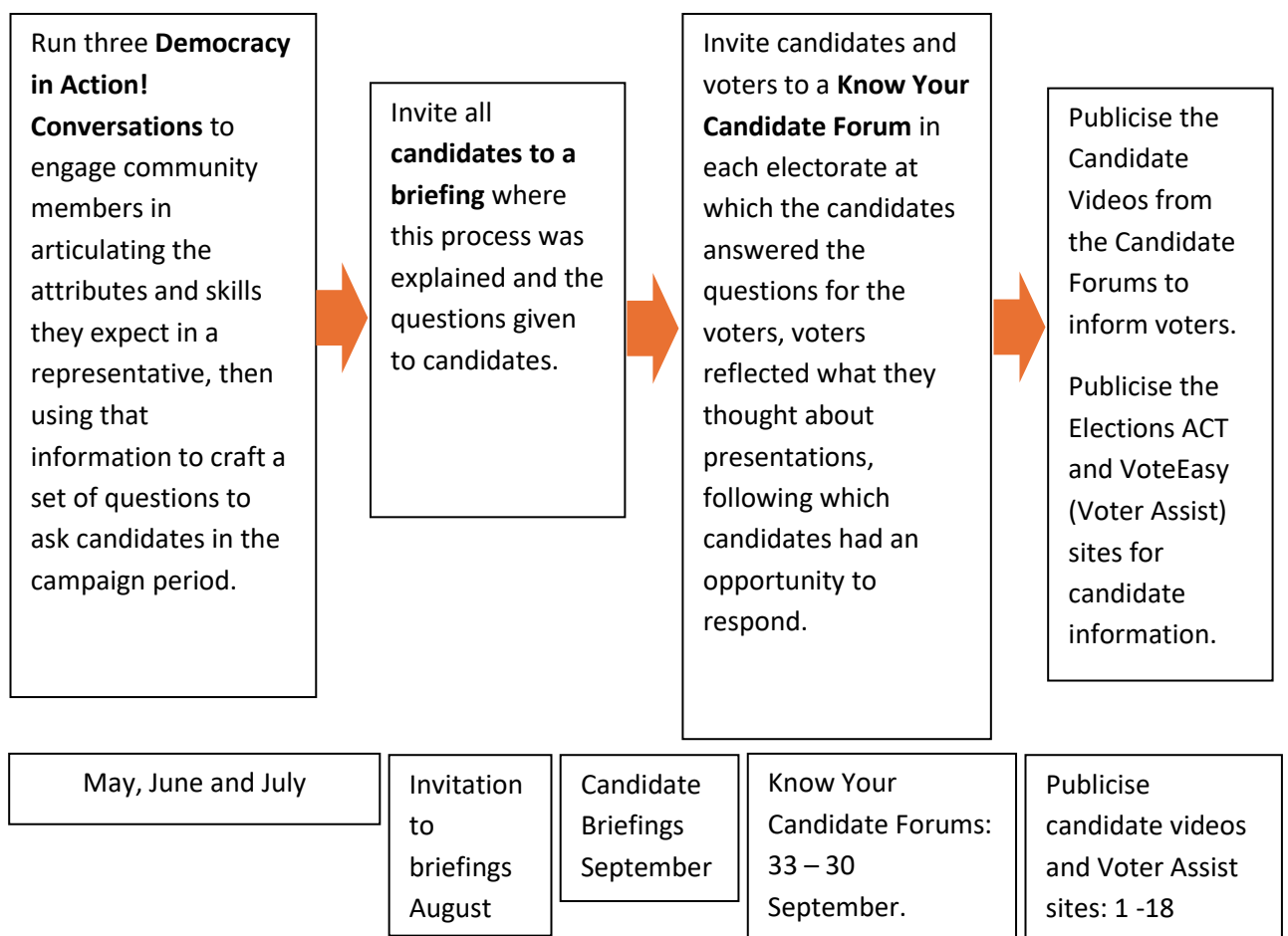
CAPaD - *Awakening Democracy*
The Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

Background and Executive Summary

The purpose of the campaign was run an experiential learning education process to prompt voters and candidates, and their parties where relevant, to think differently about how election campaigns could be run and how voters might assess candidates in order to choose who to preference beyond party policy and promises. Further the aim included inviting candidates to think about how to be a representative who meets the community’s expressed expectations and to use this framing in their campaigns.

It is based in CAPaD’s theory of change in that one of the pathways to good government that benefits the public good is for voters to choose MLAs (representatives) who have the skills and attributes that will make it likely that they will govern for the public good.

There were four phases to the education activities:



Each phase was accompanied by a publicity campaign.

Each of these phases is explained and discussed below.

Throughout the pre-election period, we attempted to publicise the events and the outputs of the conversations and candidate responses through our connected networks, social media networks and the news media.

The potential impact of this activity was evaluated using surveys before and after each Democracy in Action! Conversation and from surveys sent to voter attendees and candidates who attended the Know Your Candidate Forums. In addition, monitored website traffic and candidate video views.

Finally we wanted to see if candidates used material from the briefings in their information and campaign. We were limited by our capacity to review all candidate material, so were limited to what we could find on voter assist websites and in some media discussions. With a few exceptions, candidates did not do so.

Following the election, the CAPaD Committee held a debriefing to reflect on the activity in order to inform future election education activity.

Summary in Numbers

Democracy in Action! Conversations

Total attended 3	7
Total attended 2	4
Total attended 1	19
Number of individuals over all	30



Thirty people contributed in total to the three conversations with, however, only seven attended all three. The conversations resulted in a list of expectations that Canberrans have of the skills and attributes that they want in their MLAs. This is similar to other lists produced at other events in Canberra since 2018, which supports the validity of this result.

The final conversation produced five questions distilled from the more substantial skills and attributes list for presentation to candidates by members and supporters when out and about, and to be the foundation for the candidate briefings and the Know Your Candidate Forums.

The surveys of participants demonstrated that they found the Conversations useful for improving knowledge about representation, increased understanding of MLA skills and attributes and enhanced confidence in assessing candidates.

Candidate Briefings

AllCandidates	13	All candidates of whom we became aware, were invited to receive a briefing on the Democracy in Action! Conversations.
ALP	0	
AnimaJP	0	
Belco	1	Six briefing sessions were held, attended by Fiona Carrick Independents (2), Strong Independents (2), Independents for Canberra (7, with an undertaking to brief the other candidates) and the Greens (1, who undertook to brief the other candidates).
Family First	0	
Fiona Carrick	2	
First Nations	0	
Greens	1	The briefings allowed CAPaD to share directly with candidates the expectations we had distilled from the Democracy in Action! Conversations, to invite them to the Know Your Candidate Forums, and to have a conversation about various aspects of our theory of change that relies on a different way of doing election campaigning, where the focus is on the qualities, skills and attributes of the candidate as a person who will be a representative rather than as a vehicle delivering party / group policies and promises.
IFC	7	
Liberals	0	
Strong Ind	2	
Other Independents	0	
DLP	0	
Libertarians	0	

The candidates we spoke with seemed to be open to the idea of focusing on candidate attributes and skills as the focus for campaign activity, although in practice the media, established political party processes and traditional community expectations about how an election campaign is run made the implementation of this ideal a challenge for them at the election.

One can note the predominance of minor parties / groups and independents in the attendees.

Use of CAPaD Content

Within capacity limits we watched voter assist sites and opportunistically media for what could be use of content from the candidate briefings in campaign material. With three notable exceptions (Independents for Canberra and Belco Party), candidates seemed not to have used any content.

Know Your Candidate Forums

We invited all candidates to present a response to the questions reflecting Canberra's expectations, distilled from the Democracy in Action! Conversations. The educational purpose was to promote a new approach to thinking about election campaigning from policies and promises to knowing candidates as people who had the qualities, skills and attributes to be a good representative. The aim was to influence the thinking and practice candidates, parties and voters.

Forum	Candidates briefed	Candidates at Forums	% of Candidates	Candidates apologised		Voters at Forums (present & online)
Yerrabi	2	9	35%	4		18
Ginninderra	3	14	42%	2		24
Kurrajong	4	12	35%	2		27
Murrumbidgee	2	9	33%	5		43
Brindabella	1	8	33%	3		26
Totals	12	52	35%	16	11%	138

Attendance was reasonable and overall feedback was that candidates and voters appreciated both the opportunity and the novelty of this broadened focus for election campaigns.

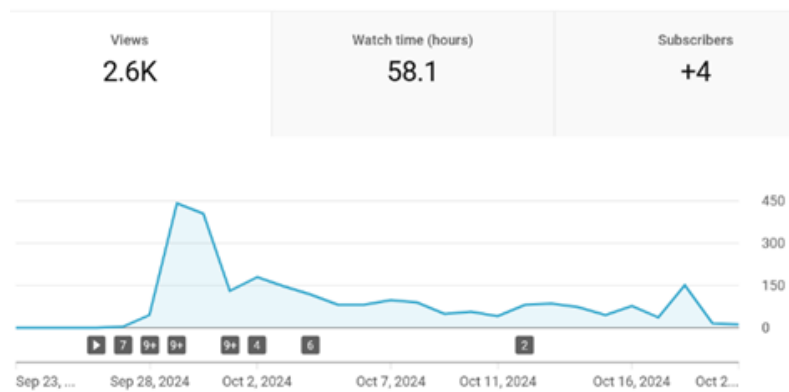
The low candidate response, particularly from the major parties was disappointing.

Two thirds of voter survey respondents, noting this may be a biased sample of attendees, reported it changed how they voted. Ninety per cent said the forums were helpful.

Candidate response was more mixed.

Candidate videos

Your channel got 2,555 views in the last 28 days



	Total Views	Average views
Strong Indeps	23	23
ALP	202	20
Belco Party	79	26
Carrick	23	23
Family First	242	24
Greens	268	21
IFC	359	36
Liberals	149	25
Independent	93	31



Reasonable number of views, particularly around the time of the Forums but extending up to 19 October, limited by the difficulty with attracting media attention.

The full detailed Report can be [found here](#).