

Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

FEBRUARY 2025

G'day members, supporters and friends

In this [Awakening Democracy](#): CAPaD moves to Blue Sky; a job description for elected representatives, questions for the 2025 election candidates at 2025 Candidate Forums, \$ needed, ... more to read, hear and watch.

CAPAD MOVES TO BLUE SKY; FIND, JOIN AND FOLLOW US THERE @CAPADAUS.BSKY.SOCIAL

AND

WE ARE ALSO PLAYING IN MASTODON IF THAT IS YOUR PLATFORM: @CAPADAUS.MASTODON.SOCIAL

COMING UP / HAPPENINGS

ELECTION 2025 EDUCATION ACTIVITY

We all have Job Descriptions: why not MPs? What is an MP's job description?



This activity follows from the 2024 Democracy in Action! Conversations, the outputs from which and Election education activity report are [on our Election page](#). It is the next phase of a longer project to design and build a performance reporting mechanism for our parliamentarians.

A series of brief articles explaining the whys and wherefores of an [MP job description can be found here](#). In essence though, MPs have a very important job – governing the country. We all have a vague idea what they do but do we really understand their job? Do they understand their job? We vote for them. How can we know they are up to the job if we aren't clear what we expect them to do? How do we know they are doing their job well if there are no criteria to assess them against?

We looked to see if job descriptions exist in other countries and found none specifically do. However, there is a broad understanding of what the components of a job description would contain. We have drawn these elements together and drafted a job description for our MPs. [That is also available here](#).

It seems likely that the election will happen April, fitting in around Easter and school holidays. The latest it can occur is May 17. The plan is to hold one (or two) conversations in February or March to use the job description to craft a couple of questions for candidates for the Candidate Forums. Similarly to last election, we plan a Candidate Forum in each of the three federal electorates in late March.

DEDUCTIBLE GIFT RECIPIENT STATUS UPDATE

Alas, we were not successful.

Education Activity Costs Money

With our election education activity resuming over the next few months, we need to be able to hire venues for the candidate forums (all up \$1250 for the ACT election), pay for advertising where the media won't report us for free (\$660).

Please help us by [donating here](#) today.

ACTIVE PROJECTS

ACTIVE
DEMOCRACY
AUSTRALIA

(ADAus) Not much current action.



Active Democracy Bean

Local Politics in the Pub resumes on February 17th at the Austrian Australian Club, register [here](#) (registrations preferred but not essential). Peter Tait will be introducing the MP Job Description.

Local Politics in the Pub continues, third Monday of the month.

At 10-12, Saturday 1 March, **ADB monthly meetup**, 31-37 Townshend Street Phillip.

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

Active Democracy Bean [has a Facebook page](#) for the latest what is on and information. More about Bean and ADB on their [webpage](#). **The Active Democracy ACT site is here.**

Living Democracy

For the next few months our energy is going into the election. Following that ...

Participatory Budgeting in the ACT

The ACT government has had a few trials of participatory budgeting, one as part of the Better suburbs process in 2018 and again with the recent Fostering Neighbourhood Democracy Pilot in Page and Richardson. CAPaD would like to move this from a series of disconnected pilots to be embedded in the ACT Budget process. More after the election.

THINGS TO LISTEN TO, WATCH AND READ

Our standing reminders about:

- [Democracy Sausage podcast](#) from the ANU Public Policy Institute. Lots of very topical topics.
- **Juice Media** for an [irreverent and spicy look at current politics](#) in Australia and beyond.
- **Punters Politics** [another comedic look](#) at Australia's political goings on.
- **Crazy Town** From [the Post Carbon Institute \(go to Products/Podcasts\)](#). 2025 season coming soon.

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

Recent CAPaD Views

Living Democracy in practice: Spokes Council model [is outlined here](#).

A second piece putting this experience into a participatory democracy framework, [A Democratic Governance Toolkit, is here](#).

[Democratic governance vs autocracy and unfairness](#)

5.5 minute read.

Among my holiday reading were three books looking at different aspects of 'democracy',

- Anne Applebaum's *Autocracy Inc.* – the dictators who want to run the world (Allen Lane, 2024);
- Heather Marsh's *Binding Chaos* – mass collaboration on a global scale (Must Read Inc, 2020); and
- Erica Benner's *Adventures in Democracy* – the turbulent world of people power (Allen Lane, 2024).

[Here's some reflection](#) on them and what might inform CAPaD's work.

CAPaD Submission to the Inquiry into the operation of the 2024 ACT Election and *Electoral Act 1992* is available [here](#).

Goodbye to Democracy – not just yet. (NYT \$/free login with registration). [Here](#).

Playbook for Defeating the 1% Through Nonviolent Struggle

It's happened before. It needs to happen again. [Here](#).

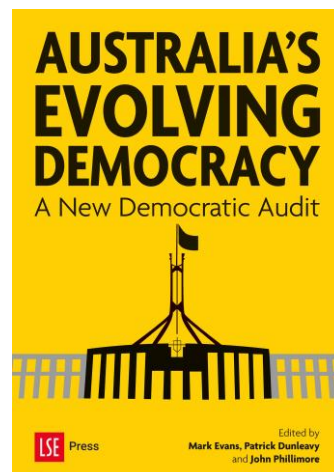
And from Juice Media <https://youtu.be/-oxQ5fmiI9M?si=ZCGDTw1tS844rQuJ>.

Australia's evolving Democracy: a new democratic audit.

[Available to download here](#).

Reports Australia is only one of 24 full democracies (without quibbling on the definition of democracy) in the world. Concludes: our 'democracy' is under stress with declining public trust in government, but overall there is strong satisfaction with the ideal of democracy.

"Australia must make its system of government more representative, accountable and responsive ... stronger focus on integrity ... act transparently."



THINGS TO MAKE YOU GIGGLE AND THINK



From your committee with *our wishes for 2025*.

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

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

Share ideas: BlueSky @CAPADAUS

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

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