

Australasia Showcase

Core Values Awards 2020



2020 IAP2 Australasia Showcase Core Values Awards

CONTENTS

Australasia Research

Institute for Public Policy and Governance: University of Technology Sydney	01
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Australian Organisation of the Year

Central Coast Council	02
Melbourne Water	03

Project of the Year

Shire of Augusta Margaret River, Climate Action Augusta Margaret River and Elton Consulting	04
City of Sydney	05

Community Development

Sydney Olympic Park Authority	06
-------------------------------	----

Disaster and Emergency Services

Department of Transport (Regional Roads Victoria)	07
---	----

Environment

Northern Beaches Council	08
Shire of Augusta Margaret River, Climate Action Augusta Margaret River and Elton Consulting	09

Health

RACQ and democracyCo	10
----------------------	----

Infrastructure (Construction Stage)

The Department of Transport (Regional Roads Victoria)	11
Lendlease Engineering and Brisbane City Council	12

Infrastructure (Planning and Design Stage)

City of South Perth	13
Transport for NSW	14

Planning

Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, Articulous, Gold Coast Waterways Authority, City of Gold Coast, Deicke Richards and John Gaskell Planning Consultants.	15
District Council of Yankalilla	16
City of Sydney	17

CATEGORY

Australasia Research

Institute for Public Policy and Governance: University of Technology Sydney

Community Engagement in Australian Local Government: The Practice and its Pressures

Community engagement has become an imperative of Australian local governments. Driven by legislative requirements and increasing demands from communities, there has been a proliferation of practitioners, policies, frameworks and reports that aim to enhance public involvement in decision-making. The facilitation of this involvement is lauded as a demonstration of democracy in action; however, the practice in its current form is in relative infancy. As such, issues surrounding the practice and professionalisation are emerging which require examination and careful consideration. These issues include the increasing commercialisation of community engagement, social closure created through professionalisation, and the impacts of current practices on the quality and effectiveness of local democracy.

This research critically explores the practice and professionalisation of community engagement in Australian local governments. The exploration is guided by an explanatory mixed-methods research approach that combines quantitative and qualitative instruments to ensure a robust and thorough exploration. The main instruments for collecting data are a census of local government community engagement practice, a survey of community engagement practitioners and a series of semi-structured interviews with senior practitioners.

The relevant literature, findings and analysis are presented in a series of seven publications. The first outlines the legislative environment in which local governments have been increasingly required to undertake community engagement. The second presents empirical data which show how Australian local governments understand and practise community engagement, and the third uses participatory budgeting to explore how Australian local governments 'adopt and adapt' community engagement processes. The fourth problematises the commercialisation or growing 'industry' that has emerged around community engagement. The fifth problematises the professionalisation that is occurring in community engagement, while the sixth presents empirical data on the practitioner cohort in Australia and identifies how they differ by work context. The seventh and final paper explores the tensions that practitioners face and how they manage them.

The research makes a contribution to the body of knowledge by presenting empirical evidence about the historical development and contemporary legislative requirements for local governments to undertake engagement. It also discusses how Australian local governments are practising engagement and provides basic demographics and experience of the practitioner cohort and describes the type of work they do and the tensions they experience in practice.

It is of relevance to policy makers, public managers, professional associations and practitioners through its call for more evidence-based approaches to policy-making in engagement, its data which can be used for benchmarking, its considerations for organisations planning to conduct participatory budgeting, its data on the barriers practitioners need to overcome when working in public institutions and the data on the challenges faced by practitioners.

CATEGORY

Australian Organisation of the Year

Central Coast Council

A fresh start for engagement

Central Coast Council has been challenged, enriched and rewarded in its journey to genuinely embed the value of public participation into the fabric of the organisation over the last three years. In turn, the Central Coast community's sentiment about how Council seeks their participation in decision making has shifted from lack of trust and an uncollaborative approach, to positive satisfaction that Council provided opportunities for them to voice their opinion and be involved.

The opportunity of the newly created Central Coast Council in May 2016 saw the foundations and governance for an approach to excellence in public participation endorsed in one of the very first frameworks and strategies of the new Council in early 2017. The plan to support the transformative process of internal culture change and shift public participation was systematic and multi-pronged.

Leadership buy-in transcended the initial endorsement of the engagement strategy and framework to a culture of active involvement, a Community of Practice, training and development and, importantly, respect for the advice offered by the organisation's professional engagement practitioners.

The right to be an active participant in decision-making has moved beyond a core value to become principles embedded in specific Council policies, such as our first region-wide Climate Change Policy endorsed in 2019. The policy places collective decision making, collaboration and partnership with the community, business and other stakeholders at the heart of climate change action on the Central Coast, and recognises shared learnings and responsibility for implementation.

Seeking our community's local perspectives and needs for a region with 344,000 residents spread across over 1680 square kilometres has required a diversity of engagement tools. Together with the community we have tried and tested new face-to-face and online methods and harnessed the expertise and relationships of our community development team to engage with some of our hardest to reach communities.

Council's place-based engagement Let's Talk series evolved from our residents' desire and direct feedback on how they preferred to be consulted. We responded to preferences by facilitating place-based face-to-face opportunities for residents to talk with professional staff about holistic planning and activities for local neighbourhoods and by creating a corresponding online space to reach commuters, families and other busy people.

The community's understanding of the practical nature of how their input impacts decision-making has been improved with participants reporting that they feel informed about engagement outcomes as a result of consistent 'closing the loop' reports. These reports are used as supporting material for the elected local government representatives to consider their decisions at a Council level.

Central Coast Council's next wave of adaptation for engaging with the community will take on board all the groundwork, structure and learnings of the last three years to continue to work with the community on their resilience and recovery in the face of the successive impacts caused by devastating bush fires and floods, and now the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now more than ever the Central Coast community understand engagement, know how they can actively participate, and find out how their voices influence the decisions that shape the future of their region.

CATEGORY

Australian Organisation of the Year

Melbourne Water

Next Generation Engagement at Melbourne Water

In 2016, Melbourne Water embarked on one of the biggest organisational change programs ever undertaken in the water industry through the Next Generation Engagement Program (Next Gen).

Just as Melbourne Water's vision recognises the important role that water plays in enhancing life and liveability for greater Melbourne, Next Gen acknowledges the role we play in the lives of all Melburnians and the vast number of touchpoints that our work has across our city and beyond.

Next Gen set out to embed best practice engagement across all aspects of our organisation through three key building blocks: **Policy, Practice and People**. It was founded on a genuine commitment to the IAP2 Core Values and aimed to propel us from good practice to best practice and beyond. The project is now complete and operates as business-as-usual for our 1000 staff.

Today, engagement at Melbourne Water is supported at the highest level. Our Board has endorsed our Community Engagement **Policy**, which drives our approach, and the Leadership Team has created an engagement-specific Strategic Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to drive performance and investment in engagement right across the organisation.

These are underpinned by a bespoke operating model, which adapts the IAP2 Spectrum and sets a consistent benchmark for the expected minimum level of engagement for everything we do, and toolkit of procedures, guides and templates that support engagement at every level. This ensures that Group-specific engagement objectives and needs are clearly articulated and aligned to the organisational goals.

We also have an organisation-wide Evaluation Framework that measures how we're doing and provides comparative data for all engagement activities across the organisation. This assists us to demonstrate the value of engagement and has driven investment by our Leadership Team to continually improve our engagement practice.

Our **practice** is always evolving. We engage in a range of ways, from tried and tested methods such as community bulletins, focus groups, doorknocks and pop-up events to more innovative approaches such as deliberative panels, co-design, digital platforms and social media. Since our YourSay page was launched three years ago, we have had over 64,000 visits, received 1,215 insights and had over 1,800 community members register to follow our key projects. Recently, we developed an interactive game (Drip Trip) that takes players on a personalised urban water cycle adventure to educate the community about our services in support of engagement on our 2021 Pricing Submission.

We have successfully embedded the policy and tools for our **people** through internal communication campaigns and an enormously successful masterclass series that was attended by over 700 staff. Next Gen is supported by a competency framework for engagement which has helped to build capacity and capability across our technical teams and all new engagement staff are enrolled in IAP2 training as part of their induction.

Our commitment to innovate and evolve our engagement practices aligns with our commitment as signatory of United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CATEGORY

Project of the Year



Shire of Augusta Margaret River, Climate Action Augusta Margaret River and Elton Consulting

Climate Action Plan/Summit

A collaborative and participatory approach to community climate action

There is a global movement to take action on climate change and reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2050. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River in Western Australia is committed to achieving this ambitious target locally, building on its sustainability achievements to date and driving towards a carbon free and climate resilient future. In late 2018, the Shire resolved to take a bold approach to emissions reduction, replacing their Local Energy Action Plan and committing to the development of a Climate Action Plan. This was done by creating a whole of community approach, with the objective to build education, awareness, commitment and action to mitigate climate change.

From the outset, the Shire demonstrated their intent to embed the IAP2 Core Values in their participatory approach that would promote sustainable decision-making. They established Climate Action Augusta Margaret River (CAAMR) comprised of community, business and youth representatives. This group was empowered to take a leadership role to set achievable goals, establish practical actions and collaborate across the community, business, peak bodies, government and community groups to establish the Augusta Margaret River community as a leader in climate action.

Over a three-month period, wide-reaching community engagement was designed, planned for and executed, to underpin the development of the Shire's inaugural Climate Action Plan. A blend of tried and tested as well as innovative consultation methods and techniques were adopted, to reduce the barriers and encourage participation, mitigate consultation fatigue, and most importantly 'walk the talk' and offset carbon emissions during the consultation process.

Initially, stakeholders were directly engaged across a series of community workshops, a road show of pop-up engagement forums, a youth summit, hosted by Margaret River High School, and a community survey.

A comprehensive communications plan and establishment of a brand, which provided the project with its own unique and local identity, drove a high participation rate.

In total, these proactive consultation activities resulted in 247 unique actions and proposals being identified and gathered from the community in regards to reducing carbon emissions and mitigating climate change. The proposals were then consolidated by the CAAMR for consideration at a Climate Action Summit. In May 2019, a Climate Action Summit was hosted by the World Surf League (WSL) at Surfers Point in Margaret River in conjunction with the Margaret River Pro, a surfing competition, which forms part of a global competition. This partnership between the community, Surfing WA and the WSL provided a great opportunity to raise the profile of the Summit locally, nationally and internationally.

The event resulted in the WSL preparing a short film for sharing with the community and their global membership through online channels <https://vimeo.com/341049010>.

Over 100 participants were tasked with prioritising a number of foundational projects from the actions and proposals collected in the pre-summit consultation phase. To set the Summit's tone, key note speaker Professor Tim Flannery and other presenters including author and environmentalist Ben Elton, representatives from the Climate Council and youth leaders from Margaret River High School, were engaged to provide a broader context to delegate discussions and inspire the community to be aspirational in shaping their future. Use of innovative technology supported real time voting and feedback and a transparent and consensus approach to decision-making by assisting participants in prioritising projects and establishing project plans.

Eleven Foundation Projects and a governance model were agreed too, in driving forward the establishment of the Plan. All delegates were asked to complete a personal pledge with the aim to encourage attendees to continue the conversation and actioning beyond the end of the Summit. In early 2020, the Shire in collaboration with CAAMR has prepared a Climate Action Plan which details the corporate and community commitments towards achieving the outcomes determined at the Summit. The plan is in draft form following a period of public consultation and waits final determination by Council.

CATEGORY

Project of the Year

City of Sydney

Planning for 2050

Commencing in 2018, the City of Sydney undertook an extensive community engagement program to support the development of a new Community Strategic Plan to 2050. The objectives of the Sydney 2050 engagement were to:

1. Share with the community what we have planned for the decade in Sustainable Sydney 2030 (our current plan) and confirm if we are still heading in the right direction.
2. Share future trends and workshop new ways of thinking about 2050 to inform and identify long-term community values and priorities.

The engagement program needed to capture the breadth of our community – the 1.3 million people who live, work, visit, do business or study in the city every day. It also needed to delve deeply into the challenges of city-making. The process was iterative as we developed a community vision through values, future trends, challenges and ideas for action. Throughout the process, the insights from the community informed the research and vice-versa.

The first step was to work with Councillors and our expert advisory panels to develop our approach which focused on gaining clarity on engagement outcomes and aligning these with the City's engagement principles. Desired engagement outcomes included achieving strong participation from people under 30, bringing experts and community together and increasing civic efficacy and empathy.

Early engagement with the community allowed us to test approaches and to understand hopes and concerns for the future. These insights were used to shape the questions we asked in the broad engagement phase. We also asked, 'how will we know the engagement has been a success?' to inform our evaluation framework.

Like many community strategic plan projects, we sought broad input across the community through:

- a survey of over 5,000 people
- 33 pop-ups at events in our villages and libraries
- 12 community sessions including 2 in Mandarin, 1 in Spanish
- 23 workshops with children and young people in schools and universities
- creative writing and leadership programs – I am Sydney and Emerging Civic Leaders
- workshops with First Peoples, small business, cultural and nightlife sectors and our advisory panels
- community and business group briefings.

We made our data available through data-story maps and VR experiences to help inform community feedback. We then tested our research and broad community engagement findings at a stakeholder workshop attended by 300 stakeholders from government, business and the community.

A deliberative program that included a Youth Summit, a Children's Summit and a Citizens' Jury took a deeper look at how Sydney could be transformed in the future. 100 students deliberated on the outcomes of the school workshops and presented their transformative ideas to the Lord Mayor. The 3-month long Citizens' Jury considered the engagement and research findings along with 2000 ideas generated by the stakeholder workshop, youth and children's summit and those submitted by the community online. They sought expert advice and recommend eight concepts that will transform Sydney.

The outcomes of the Sydney 2050 engagement are now online and have been reported to Council and back to participants. Updates to Council on the proposed directions of the plan and how these respond to the community engagement outcomes have commenced. However, the Covid-19 crisis has delayed the finalisation of the plan. The City will now also use the insights from the Sydney 2050 engagement as we map out the recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

While the engagement program included a mix of engagement approaches designed to bring different people into a meaningful conversation about the future, we always ensured the purpose and outcomes of each activity aligned, and the findings could be synthesised into a coherent community voice. We ensured that the overall program had a purposeful trajectory from exploring community values to developing transformative concepts. We hope the result will be a Community Strategic Plan with a clear community vision and priorities that we are confident are supported by evidence.

CATEGORY

Community Development

Sydney Olympic Park Authority

Sydney Olympic Park Disability Inclusion Engagement - Development and Implementation of Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2019-22**Sydney Olympic Park Disability Inclusion Engagement**

From October 2018 to June 2019, Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) developed its Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2019-22 for the Sydney Olympic Park precinct. This plan was informed by extensive **community engagement on access and inclusion** in line with IAP2 core values in both its development and implementation stages till December 2019.

SOPA had 385 staff and a daily precinct community of 17,500 workers, 4,500 residents and 1,800 students. The purpose of the engagement process was to

- inform the Authority's Disability Inclusion Plan 2019-22 and its ongoing implementation;
- engage our staff and the daily Sydney Olympic Park community on its access and inclusion needs and priorities;
- engage precinct users which includes disability organisations;
- identify access and inclusion celebration opportunities.

The key project challenges included limited time and resources; lack of a comprehensive database of stakeholders and service providers responsible for provision of disability and inclusion initiatives or clients in the local area who received them; a business approach predominantly centred on improving the built environment and less on non-physical forms of disability and a perception that improving disability inclusion is slow and costly.

The engagement process was divided into two stages:

Stage 1 - DIAP development

The project focus was to identify and engage relevant staff from amongst precinct businesses and venues through a place-making approach. An **"improve, remove and celebrate" campaign** was established which included a **"DIAP Ideas Wall"** on which feedback could be provided.

The ideas wall encouraged feedback on what things can SOPA do to improve and celebrate access and inclusion and remove barriers. This Ideas Wall was used across all engagement opportunities:

- stakeholder workshop (40 participants);
- community and stakeholder surveys (168 responses);
- staff forum (250 engaged);
- inclusion events with pop-up feedback stalls (1250 engaged);
- Strategic planning sessions with our access advisory committee.

The engagement methodology covered the "Inform, Consult, Involve" aspects of the IAP2 spectrum for the most part.

SOPA also "collaborated" with inclusion and disability organisations to deliver inclusion activations.

The DIAP was publically available on SOPA website in June 2019 and the access and inclusion achievements promoted in our 2018-19 Annual Report. Both documents highlighted the value of the engagement process and place activations.

Stage 2 - DIAP implementation

SOPA supported and hosted a number of **place-making initiatives** in the precinct which ensured ongoing engagement on the DIAP for up to 3,000 in the precinct. This included:

- Expansion of the access advisory committee to include representation from local disability businesses;
- Establishment of an internal staff DIAP + RAP champions group
- Hosting of a lived disability experience audit of select precinct facilities and venues.
- Co-sponsoring Accessible Arts Arts Activated conference (August 2019) and Festival of Inclusion (November 2019)
- Hosting 3-day Paralympic sports activation in partnerships with 9 disability sports organisations (December 2019)
- Initiating an events grants program which encouraged funding of inclusion events.

All initiatives brought to the precinct people with a disability and disability sector organisations. They included pop-up engagement stalls on disability inclusion and sought partnerships in its implementation. Through the process, SOPA won the support and cooperation of a number of these stakeholders and improved relationships with them in line with IAP2 core values.

The success of the engagement has inspired SOPA to setup a precinct inclusion and engagement network in 2020.

CATEGORY

Disaster and Emergency Services

Department of Transport (Regional Roads Victoria)

Golden Ball Bridge - North East Victoria

Rethinking our traditional approach to public participation during recovery, the **Golden Ball Bridge Disaster Recovery Project** (<https://youtu.be/svCn-j4RfFk>), presented us with an opportunity to facilitate community influence in the Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) recovery-decision making process.

Golden Ball Bridge, is located along a key Victorian tourism, freight, commuter and bus route for the Beechworth community and Indigo Shire, supporting local assets: internationally renowned food and wine; local tourism operators; restaurants; primary producers; micro-breweries and the significant Murray to Mountains Rail Trail.

The massive overland flooding event of December 13, 2018 devastated residential and business sites, ceased day to day activities and community connections, while damaging significant road infrastructure, including the Golden Ball Bridge, on the Beechworth-Wangaratta Road.

With our traditional approach in hand, we intended to **inform** the community of the damage, the required lengthy closure while the bridge was repaired, and provide them with the detour information. We soon abandoned our traditional approach after community recovery meetings revealed they needed the road and bridge open as soon as possible, for their social and economic survival. This was a huge change for the Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) decision-makers, which required adapting their processes to allow for a community-centred approach. We advocated internally and increased public participation to **collaborate** including **involve, consult and inform** to better understand how we could support a resilient recovery.

With major challenges along the way and a community that expected urgent action, we (RRV) were in uncharted territory. Our engagement plan, embedded with the IAP2 core values, deliberately sought public participation through five project objectives, focussing our work on our circle of influence. Designed to challenge the status quo of a traditional approach but also provide our RRV Project Delivery team comfort that we would be sticking to our remit and not impede delivery times. We shaped a successful engagement plan and found an innovative treatment - a temporary bridge structure called a Bailey bridge. This provided comfort to our RRV decision-makers that our public participation was considered, controlled, manageable, achievable and 'the right thing to do' - a sustainable decision for all involved.

By doing the right thing and being a passionate engagement team, we genuinely engaged with a highly impacted community, that needed our advocacy to influence the RRV decision-making process. Delivering better outcomes for all and building community resilience through recovery - a 'win-win' situation for all.

We're enthusiastic players in the engagement process because it's amazing what great ideas we harness from the feedback that constantly influences our decision-making. It compels us to be adaptive, flexible and to innovate. The Golden Ball Bridge project has left a lasting impact on our organisation. The innovative Bailey bridge challenged the status quo of RRVs engineering approaches and has since been used on other RRV projects. Our RRV Engagement team is proud to now be an ongoing facilitator in post emergency resilience, helping to shape a new community-centred road to recovery.



CATEGORY

Environment

Northern Beaches Council

Protect. Create. Live Northern Beaches Environment & Climate Change Strategy 2040

Working closely with our community, Northern Beaches Council developed the fresh and engaging Protect. Create. Live – Northern Beaches Environment and Climate Change Strategy 2040 (the Strategy) which provides a unified 20 year vision for environment protection, sustainability and action on climate change.

Our 3-stage community engagement process:

- Fostered community champions
- Collaborated with decisions makers
- Involved local interest groups early
- Made the document easy to access and read
- Used short videos and social media
- Trialled interactive software
- Constantly reviewed data analytics
- Provided regular updates

We turned challenges into opportunities to innovate and try new things.

Found our Youth

We turned public interest following the climate strikes into an opportunity to have a conversation with our youth, substantially increasing our engagement focus with this usually hard to reach demographic. As a result, we achieved a considerably larger youth response during public exhibition, with at least 22% of formal submissions coming from people aged 25 and under.

Tried New Approaches

We needed our engagement to be the first spark in motivating our community into action on environmental protection, sustainability and climate change. We did this by using a behavioural economics to sculpt the language and messaging to make it inspiring and easy to understand.

Co-Designed an Innovative Structure

We co-created an innovative two-tiered target approach with our Councillors and Environment Strategic Reference Group. This approach, with aspirations and commitments, allowed the Strategy to reflect the rapid, far-reaching change required to address climate change, balanced with the need to keep it realistic and within our resource capabilities.

Did we get it right?

Overall, we were able to gain widespread, overwhelming support for the Strategy both from our internal and external stakeholders. We had:

- Over 45,000 interactions with our community through social media
- Over 6,000 views of the project video
- 3,131 visits to our project page
- 346 written contributions from 183 different participants.

The value of building on past feedback, collaborating and involving our community early was demonstrated with over 86% of the feedback received from the community during public exhibition supported the strategy.

Our community champions supported the Strategy publicly:

"It is clear that the Council not only cares about the opinion of its constituents, but also takes action to make changes, ensuring everyone is fairly heard so the Strategy can reflect best practice public participation."

Sophie Scott, Environment Strategic Reference Group member.

Ultimately, on 18 December 2019, Council unanimously adopted the 20-year vision.

So yes, we have a great foundation, a roadmap to continue the journey with our community to "act now to tackle the challenges our environment faces and protect it in the long term" Mayor Regan, 2019.



CATEGORY

Environment

Shire of Augusta Margaret River, Climate Action Augusta Margaret River and Elton Consulting

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CATEGORY

Health

RACQ and democracyCo

Rethink CTP Online Citizens' Jury - Complex engagement in the shadow of a global pandemic

The Rethink CTP Citizens' Jury is unique and exciting because it demonstrates that a complex engagement process on a complex topic can be moved online and be extraordinarily successful.

Compulsory Third Party (CTP) Insurance schemes provide passengers injured in motor vehicle accidents recompense for their injuries – it covers the costs of medical support, money for lost income & quality of life compensation.

RACQ commissioned a comprehensive process of community engagement to consider the question - ***“How can our motor injury insurance scheme be improved to better support people injured on Queensland roads, now and into the future?”***

RACQ is a member-owned organisation, where the profits of their commercial business lines (such as insurance, bank and assistance) are invested back into RACQ for the benefit of their one million members. To this end RACQ is interested in seeking to ensure that road accident schemes such as the CTP scheme meet the needs of their members, and road users more generally – now and into the future.

DemocracyCo designed and delivered the engagement process, which aimed to understand what the community wanted from the CTP scheme, so that RACQ could advocate accordingly with government.

The process was focused on the public ('community's) contribution and at the 'collaborate / empower' level of the IAP2 Spectrum. The community participated in three ways:

- 1) Citizens' Jury – supported by a deliberative guide
- 2) Community survey conducted online and supported by a deliberative / discussion guide – involving over 1000 people
- 3) Submissions

A Citizens' jury of 40 randomly selected Queenslanders was convened to consider the following remit:

“How can our motor injury insurance scheme be improved to better support people injured on Queensland roads, now and into the future?”

The Jury was:

- Representative: Jurors were randomly selected to be representative of the public at large using random stratification sampling using census data.
- Informed: Expert witnesses provided information to the jury on the key aspects of the issue.
- Impartial: Witness testimony was as balanced as we could make it to ensure fair treatment to all sides of the issue.
- Deliberative: The jury deliberated in a variety of formats, weighing up choices and finding common ground

DemocracyCo started this process in late 2019, but the Jury did not meet for the first time until Feb 2020. Mid way through the Jury's series of meetings the world changed and COVID 19 meant that concluding the Jury's work, meant moving online. Using a combination of online platforms, over the final two days, the Jury talked about their ideas, changed their ideas to respond to views of others, voted on their ideas and ultimately wrote their own report online.

At a time when governments are having to curtail personal liberties: now more than ever governments need to be engaging with their communities. This project demonstrates that it can be done and done successfully online!



CATEGORY

Infrastructure (Construction Stage)

The Department of Transport (Regional Roads Victoria)

The Great Ocean Road: caring for a community icon

Rarely has there been a piece of infrastructure that is as tightly woven into the identity of local residents and the broader Victorian community as the Great Ocean Road. It's the pride of the nation and the world's largest war memorial to those who served in WW1. It celebrated 100 years in September last year. We invite you to view our video (<https://youtu.be/EPFSxYfrxYE>) about the road upgrade.

7.8 million visitors a year drive the road to take in the panoramic views as the road winds along cliff tops, up to breathtaking headlands, down onto the edge of beaches, across river estuaries and through lush rainforests. Those features that make the road so beautiful also make it highly vulnerable to the tenacious coastal elements, and it must be maintained constantly.

The Department of Transport's Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) is today the custodian of this national icon. But, RRV is so much more than a road maker. RRV is a community partner and advocates for engagement.

Everything we do on the road – from bridge building, sending Geotech abseilers up vertical cliff faces, shoring up landslides, pinning down crumbling hills and using the latest technology including thermal imaging, drones and our own network of weather stations to monitor the road, involves community consultation. The conversation never ceases.

There are 20 distinct townships along the Great Ocean Road (GOR), all of which are actively engaged in this upgrade package. We need deliver major upgrades to the road with minimal impacts to the communities whose identities and livelihoods are tied to the road, and the visitors who travel along it.

As at April 2020 there are over 100 projects on the GOR underway including maintenance to rock armour, rock netting, bridge strengthening, gateways, safety improvements, slow turn outs and speed reviews. From the locals who feel a direct ownership of the road, to those who make their living from it and to the 7.8 million who visit it every year, we reach out and consult broadly to inform projects as they take shape.

To minimise disruption, RRV consults early and comprehensively. Conversations and feedback inform our engineering processes. Once our construction plans have been developed we inform broadly to ensure people know the impacts and can make their travel plans.

Great Ocean Road landowners are mostly a mature demographic and trust in traditional engagement methods including face-to-face discussions, on-site or local meetings and direct mail. The use of traditional methods in our engagement aims to be genuinely inclusive, empathetic and to nurture local ownership and partnership in all our projects.

We have 40 people in our key stakeholder group who represent their township communities and help to disseminate information locally. Our conversations and evaluations have clearly informed us that the Great Ocean Road communities prefer to have face-to-face conversations and to receive information from established local groups that they trust. Working with these trusted groups has been a key part of our approach. Our key stakeholder list also includes emergency services, local government and state government delivery partners (DWELP, Parks Victoria, Tourism Victoria).

We're enthusiastic players in the engagement process because it's amazing what great ideas we harness from the feedback that constantly influences our decision making. Our mantra is "Meet the locals. All of them!"

We continue to be able to deliver our huge program of work along the Great Ocean Road, while balancing the needs of the community, because their local knowledge is sought and incorporated into our work. This not only helps build public support for our work but has also contributed to innovative project and engineering outcomes as we're pressed to look for different ways to deliver.

Our greatest achievement is having built our reputation on trust and being a genuine, caring community member.

RRV thanks our Great Ocean Road community partners for helping us care for this national icon.



CATEGORY

Infrastructure (Construction Stage)

Lendlease Engineering and Brisbane City Council

Kingsford Smith Drive upgrade: a new entry statement to Brisbane

Brisbane City Council's Kingsford Smith Drive upgrade is transforming one of the city's most significant transport routes into a vibrant urban corridor with the Brisbane River as the centrepiece. The design and construction of the project is being completed by Lendlease Engineering.

Brisbane City Council and Lendlease share a vision for creating a lasting piece of infrastructure that is more than just a road. In addition to providing increased road capacity, the upgrade will deliver significantly improved pedestrian, cycle and public transport facilities, upgraded public utility infrastructure and the rejuvenation of public spaces. A tree-lined boulevard and public art has also been included to provide a vibrant urban corridor and memorable experience for all road users.

The upgrade is being constructed in a highly urbanised environment impacting approximately 69,000 motorists daily, and approximately 7,500 properties. The diverse range of project stakeholders includes local residents, businesses, schools, community groups and road users, all of whom require tailored engagement with the project team due to differing communication needs and levels of interest.

In addition to the typical impacts of construction activities (noise, dust, vibration), the project has also managed a number of challenges including interruptions to services, impacts to property access and works within private properties, significant local road closures, geotechnical challenges impacting on construction timeframes and a highly complex construction methodology.

The community relations function of the project is provided by a team of community engagement professionals from Lendlease and Brisbane City Council, supported by their respective corporate teams. The project's Community Team is embedded within the wider project team and has been based on site since construction started in 2016.

Throughout the design and construction of the project, the project's communications team has endeavoured to ensure opportunities for meaningful engagement have been identified and implemented and information has been transparent, meaningful and timely.

Our approach

From the outset of the project, the project team employed and continues to deliver an engagement approach based on best practice, proven theory and recent project experience to address stakeholder questions, challenges, concerns and misconceptions about the upgrade.

Throughout construction, the Community Team has implemented a multi-channel approach to reach as many stakeholders as possible through a variety of traditional and digital communication methods, that is adaptive and responsive to community needs. This has ensured all stakeholders who want to engage with the upgrade have an opportunity to via a channel and time that suits them, with a familiar Community Team member.

The Community Team have also involved stakeholders in the construction and decision-making process, consistently demonstrating public participation values to implement a focused and tailored approach to arrive at mutually agreeable positions for adjacent construction activities, and to manage stakeholder expectations.

Given the significance of the project and its duration, the team employed collaborative and interactive campaigns to enable and empower stakeholders to provide input, including consultation and collaboration on public art, works within private property, reinstatement of items with historical significance and the planning of construction activities to minimise ongoing impacts.

This has largely been possible because the Project's Community Team has remained embedded within the construction team, allowing the ability to participate and influence planned construction activities, deliver timely and accurate construction information, and seek to minimise or avoid impacts where possible.

Outcomes

Since the award of the Design and Construct Contract in late 2015, the team have conducted more than 30,000 community interactions and engaged with more than 8,500 individual stakeholders, with less than four percent of total interactions being complaints. Engagement has aligned with all phases of the IAP2 engagement spectrum, including several opportunities for genuine community collaboration and empowerment, which has culminated in successful outcomes for both the project and Brisbane residents.

CATEGORY

Infrastructure (Planning and Design Stage)

City of South Perth

City of South Perth: Connect South

The Connect South project was developed through the City of South Perth's commitment to providing high level of stakeholder engagement from inception to project completion. The \$7.5 million project to enhance and invigorate the Mends Street precinct and foreshore is located at one of the City's most high profile commercial, tourism and residential areas, which includes the iconic South Perth Foreshore and the Perth Zoo.

The project grew from the 2015 South Perth Foreshore Strategy and Management Plan, in which the community and stakeholders identified Node 1: Mends Street as the highest priority for redevelopment.

Located in a prominent, high profile precinct, the City understood the community and stakeholders' high expectations and ownership of the area and embedded engagement in project planning to shape the vision, concept design and development. The City's engagement approach foundations include the IAP2 Core Values, built on high level of public participation through a range of methodologies to solve challenges and this resulted in the creation of an inclusive and activated public space.

With the support of a \$2.5 million grant from the National Stronger Regions Fund (Round 3) in late 2017, and a further \$5 million contributed by the City, the Connect South project aimed to transform Mends Street into the urban heart of South Perth and a destination for regional and international visitors, while improving public amenity through place activation, wayfinding, access to transport and greater economic opportunity.

The City's project team had a deep understanding of the area, its history, environment, and relationships with key stakeholders and local community. With a long list of stakeholders that would need to be involved, many competing interests and opinions in the area, as well as some recent contentious projects, this complex engagement project was impacted by past history that could potentially derail the project. Given the background, context and team knowledge, there was an understanding of the importance of taking all relevant stakeholders on the journey, from start to finish, and the only way to achieve that would be through a highly responsive and flexible stakeholder engagement process.

The City reached out to stakeholders existing and new, building the connections on a foundation of transparency, authenticity, trust, consistency and respect.

Over more than two years, the City of South Perth carried out this significant, comprehensive and collaborative engagement, with hundreds of people participating, through multiple activities, over eight different stages.

Although Connect South faced significant challenges throughout the project the engagement was planned to be flexible and responsive, and able to integrate new engagement steps and stages without compromising the overall objectives of the project.

Overall, the engagement process enabled the City to truly understand the community's vision and concerns and reach new collaborative outcomes. It built strong relationships, trust, understanding and enabled City staff and Elected Members to experience good decision making and project outcomes by providing strong engagement from start to finish.

Construction of the piazza and streetscape upgrades to Mends Street began in February 2019 and were completed by December 2019. This vibrant and dynamic community space, now officially known as 'Mindeerup' (meaning 'place of the shore' in the local Noongar language, a name developed by the City's own Aboriginal Reference Group), has become an iconic destination and gateway for the City of South Perth.

CATEGORY

Infrastructure (Planning and Design Stage)

Transport for NSW

Involving community in the design of the Princes Highway upgrade in the face of bushfire and COVID-19 crises

The NSW South Coast community play a vital role in helping us shape the future of a safer, better connected and more sustainable Princes Highway.

Despite the challenges faced by the COVID-19 pandemic and 2019/2020 bushfire season, the Princes Highway upgrade project team demonstrated agility and innovation to involve south coast communities in the development of transport solutions that will define their region for future generations.

To achieve positive and sustainable outcomes for the community, we adapted our engagement approach in response to the limitations of the coronavirus pandemic and learnings from the bushfire season. Positive communication outcomes were achieved despite the widespread hardships by ensuring our engagement strategy remained firmly grounded in our core belief that those affected by an outcome to a decision have the right to be involved in the decision making process.

The Princes Highway forms the critical link between Sydney, the NSW South Coast and Victoria. It helps drive the state's third largest regional economy, is relied upon by over five hundred thousand locals and welcomes almost four million tourists each year.

In March 2019, the Australian and NSW governments committed more than \$1.5 billion to upgrade the Princes Highway between Nowra and the Victorian border, completing the full upgrade of the Princes Highway.

Putting the customer at the centre of the decision making process

One of Transport for NSW's core values is placing the community at the centre of our decision making process. A key component of the early stages of planning for the Princes Highway Upgrade projects, was seeking to understand the customer's movement in and around their community and the value they put on their place. These questions were central to our engagement approach.

Overcoming the challenges of bushfires and COVID-19 to effectively involve community

The communities we're engaging in are still dealing with the trauma and hardship of an unprecedented bushfire season. Hundreds of homes and livelihoods were lost on the NSW South Coast.

To achieve optimal community participation in our program, we needed to adapt our plan through innovation to effectively involve a traumatised community. This included:

- delaying consultation to enable the community to focus on their bushfire recovery
- providing TfNSW regional staff with bespoke training opportunities, to better equip them with dealing with traumatised communities
- Working with emergency services to understand which community members and stakeholders have been affected to inform how we both involve them and then how we communicate with them using sensitivity and empathy.

Further adaptation was required during the consultation period, when the evolving COVID-19 impacted the circumstances we could engage. We rapidly moved the planned face to face drop in sessions onto a Facebook Live format; a first for Transport for NSW. Planned briefings with stakeholder group were also moved to video conference. Our agile response to unprecedented challenges resulted in positive engagement outcomes for the program and was widely appreciate by the community and stakeholders.

CATEGORY

Planning

Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, Articulous, Gold Coast Waterways Authority, City of Gold Coast, Deicke Richards and John Gaskell Planning Consultants

The Spit Master Plan: from conflict to consensus

Project background

The future of the Southport Spit (The Spit) on the Gold Coast has been a source of tension over recent decades, with conflicting views among community, residents, industry and business groups resulting in no clear direction for its future.

In August 2017, the Queensland Government committed to delivering a community-led master plan to revitalise The Spit and increase its benefit as a community asset. The Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning led the 18-month master planning and engagement process in collaboration with the City of Gold Coast and Gold Coast Waterways Authority.

The aim of the master plan was to strike a balance between protecting The Spit's unique character, while providing appropriate development opportunities to improve community infrastructure and create jobs through tourism, entertainment and recreation.

Engagement

Engagement occurred between February 2018 and April 2019, involving four master planning workshops and public consultation periods, online surveys, pop up sessions, stakeholder, landholder and community group meetings; a youth film and photo visioning competition; a youth enquiry by design process; a dedicated stream of indigenous engagement; and a custom-adaptation of an engagement platform that enabled the community to visually compare, contrast and comment on 70 sets of options.

The collaborative community engagement for The Spit master plan was based on three key approaches:

1. The community and stakeholders were given a clean slate to start from rather than a range of draft master plan options, allowing the community and stakeholders to genuinely be at the forefront of The Spit master planning process
2. Actively reaching out to a diverse Gold Coast community, with more than 31,000 people informed about the plan, generating more than 23,000 pieces of survey feedback. This included dedicated engagement activities for youth and indigenous groups.
3. Committing to a community-led process that enabled meaningful community and stakeholder input through face-to-face activities, including an 'enquiry by design' process. The collaborative master planning enquiry by design workshops involved a cross-section of the community and stakeholders who could create and prioritise opportunities and ideas.

Results

As a result of the engagement process, every idea in the final master plan can be traced back to ideas generated or proposed by participants in the master planning process or through the public engagement activities.

During the consultation, discussions about The Spit shifted from being a source of conflict, to being a platform for shared values and a shared future.

Community and stakeholder engagement has resulted in a single vision for the future which has widespread support from state and local government, community members, industry and business. It has been lauded by participants, industry and government as best practice engagement.

The resulting master plan has received strong community support with 94% of attendees at pop up sessions for the draft master plan indicating positive or neutral attitudes towards the outcomes for The Spit.



CATEGORY

Planning

District Council of Yankalilla

Nature's Best, Let's Plan The Rest

Summary

The District Council of Yankalilla used extensive, innovative tools and techniques to successfully and actively engage over 10% of our diverse and dispersed community in strategic planning for the future, within a modest budget. We attribute our success to strong community buy-in through adopting an outreach approach; intensive hands-on Mayor and CEO ownership and involvement in the process; and integrated use of traditional, face-to-face and online tools to achieve robust outcomes.

About us

Our small permanent community is made up of 4,500 people (our Resident Ratepayers) but swells on weekends and holiday periods with up to 16,000 estimated residents (our Non-Resident Ratepayers) and visitors. Our two wards include rural communities, small townships and localities, as well as more densely populated communities.

As the local Council we represent the needs of our residents and ratepayers, both now and into the future. From October 2019 until February 2020 we undertook a significant process of connecting with the community to inform the development of our Strategic Management Plan 2020-2030.

Connecting with our Community

In line with our recently adopted *Connecting with our Community* framework, we were keen to open up a conversation with the community to listen, learn and identify what's important to local people. This process was titled *Nature's Best – Let's Plan the Rest* and was the biggest community consultation ever undertaken by our Council, engaging with over 10% of our diverse and dispersed population in a conversation about the future.

We designed and facilitated six highly participatory *Township Forums* across the district, with over 230 people attending to share their priorities for the future. 300 people attended our *What's the Future* events where we heard from panels of local experts who engaged in conversations about specific topics of relevance to our district.

Over 400 people attended our *What's the Future of Normanville Foreshore* interactive and innovative SpeakOut event. In addition to this, we visited three schools in the district, engaging over 60 children and young people in conversations about the future of our district.

For those who preferred not to attend events, we received over 172 returned surveys that were distributed to all ratepayers. We had 779 unique site visitors to *Your Say Yankalilla*, with 375 clicking, downloading, and viewing information; and 72 people making or reacting to comments via this page and our Facebook page.

High innovation and even higher satisfaction!

Our innovation was exemplary. This included using a 'one size doesn't fit all' methodology, taking a community outreach approach, use of social media, using engagement digital tools from the outset, and ensuring strong buy-in from internal and external stakeholders from the beginning, meant that we punched above our weight for small regional Council. The feedback received from community members who were involved in the process speaks volumes as to the success of this process.

CATEGORY

Planning

City of Sydney

Planning for 2050

Commencing in 2018, the City of Sydney undertook an extensive community engagement program to support the development of a new Community Strategic Plan to 2050. The objectives of the Sydney 2050 engagement were to:

1. Share with the community what we have planned for the decade in Sustainable Sydney 2030 (our current plan) and confirm if we are still heading in the right direction.
2. Share future trends and workshop new ways of thinking about 2050 to inform and identify long-term community values and priorities.

The engagement program needed to capture the breadth of our community – the 1.3 million people who live, work, visit, do business or study in the city every day. It also needed to delve deeply into the challenges of city-making. The process was iterative as we developed a community vision through values, future trends, challenges and ideas for action. Throughout the process, the insights from the community informed the research and vice-versa.

The first step was to work with Councillors and our expert advisory panels to develop our approach which focused on gaining clarity on engagement outcomes and aligning these with the City's engagement principles. Desired engagement outcomes included achieving strong participation from people under 30, bringing experts and community together and increasing civic efficacy and empathy.

Early engagement with the community allowed us to test approaches and to understand hopes and concerns for the future. These insights were used to shape the questions we asked in the broad engagement phase. We also asked, 'how will we know the engagement has been a success?' to inform our evaluation framework.

Like many community strategic plan projects, we sought broad input across the community through:

- a survey of over 5,000 people
- 33 pop-ups at events in our villages and libraries
- 12 community sessions including 2 in Mandarin, 1 in Spanish
- 23 workshops with children and young people in schools and universities
- creative writing and leadership programs – I am Sydney and Emerging Civic Leaders
- workshops with First Peoples, small business, cultural and nightlife sectors and our advisory panels
- community and business group briefings.

We made our data available through data-story maps and VR experiences to help inform community feedback. We then tested our research and broad community engagement findings at a stakeholder workshop attended by 300 stakeholders from government, business and the community.

A deliberative program that included a Youth Summit, a Children's Summit and a Citizens' Jury took a deeper look at how Sydney could be transformed in the future. 100 students deliberated on the outcomes of the school workshops and presented their transformative ideas to the Lord Mayor. The 3-month long Citizens' Jury considered the engagement and research findings along with 2000 ideas generated by the stakeholder workshop, youth and children's summit and those submitted by the community online. They sought expert advice and recommend eight concepts that will transform Sydney.

The outcomes of the Sydney 2050 engagement are now online and have been reported to Council and back to participants. Updates to Council on the proposed directions of the plan and how these respond to the community engagement outcomes have commenced. However, the Covid-19 crisis has delayed the finalisation of the plan. The City will now also use the insights from the Sydney 2050 engagement as we map out the recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

While the engagement program included a mix of engagement approaches designed to bring different people into a meaningful conversation about the future, we always ensured the purpose and outcomes of each activity aligned, and the findings could be synthesised into a coherent community voice. We ensured that the overall program had a purposeful trajectory from exploring community values to developing transformative concepts. We hope the result will be a Community Strategic Plan with a clear community vision and priorities that we are confident are supported by evidence.

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