Deliberative Democracy Theory and Practice: Crossing the Divide

6 March 2015 | 9.15 am-4.45 pm

University of Canberra | Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis
Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance
Ann Harding Conference Centre, Building 24 | Seminar Room 2

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Workshop Aims

This workshop, hosted by The Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance, is an invitation-only workshop for those working actively in the field of deliberative democracy to share insights about the theory, practice and context of deliberative democracy in Australia.

The aims of the workshop are:

- To provide those active in the field with an opportunity to meet, share, and develop ongoing links
- To share recent theoretical developments in deliberative democracy
- To share the triumphs and challenges of recent deliberative processes held in Australia
- To explore specific issues relating to the practice of deliberative democracy, the application of theory in deliberative processes, and issues associated with the design, implementation, evaluation and embedding of deliberative processes and systems
- To further the development of deliberative democracy

The results of the workshop will be written up into a short report that will be circulated to participants and made publically available once finalised.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Registration, coffee and hellos</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15 – 9:45</td>
<td>Welcome: David Marsh, Wendy Russell</td>
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<td>Who’s in the room?</td>
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<td>9:45 – 10:45</td>
<td>Where are we at, where are we going?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Summary of theoretical developments (Carolyn Hendriks, ANU)</td>
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<td>Summary on practice and context developments (Iain Walker, nDF)</td>
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<td>Roundtable Discussion</td>
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<td>Morning tea</td>
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<td>11:00 – 12:20</td>
<td>Showcase of deliberative processes</td>
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<td>SA Better Together processes</td>
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<td>Mosaic Lab, Vic</td>
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<td>new Democracy Foundation</td>
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<td>Deliberative Democracy in Greater Geraldton</td>
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<td>Questions and synthesis</td>
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<td>12:20 – 12:55</td>
<td>Crossing the Divide discussion</td>
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<td>Small group exploration of questions from participants</td>
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<td>(in themes – see attached)</td>
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<td>12:55 – 1:40</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>1:40 – 2:25</td>
<td>Crossing the Divide discussion</td>
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<td>Report back and synthesis</td>
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<td>2:25 – 3:40</td>
<td>Embedding deliberative democracy session</td>
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<td>Introduction on policy context</td>
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<td>Group discussion of opportunities, challenges and strategies</td>
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<td>Report back 3 best strategies, voting</td>
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<td>Afternoon tea</td>
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<td>4:00 – 4:45</td>
<td>Next steps</td>
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<td>Where should we go from here?</td>
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<td>Suggestions and actions</td>
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<td>Conclusion and thanks</td>
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Attendee list

Lyn Carson, University of Sydney
Helen Christensen, Bayside Council
Lucy Cole-Edelstein, Straight Talk
Nicole Curato, IGPA, University of Canberra
Roger Davis, IGPA, University of Canberra
Selen Ercan, IGPA, University of Canberra
Gail Fairlamb, SA Premier & Cabinet
Paul Fawcett, IGPA, University of Canberra
Chad Foulkes, Healthy Together Geelong
Keith Greaves, MosaicLAB
Janette Hartz-Karp, Curtin University of Technology
Carolyn Hendriks, Australian National University
Ian Holland, Uniting Care
Nicole Hunter, MosaicLAB
Abbie Jeffs, Urban Growth NSW
Emily Jenke, community engagement and facilitation specialist
David Marsh, IGPA, University of Canberra
Kei Nishiyama, IGPA, University of Canberra
Jonathan Pickering, IGPA, University of Canberra
Lucy Parry, University of Sheffield
Desley Renton, City of Melbourne
Martin de los Rios, Coresolv
Wendy Russell, Double Arrow Consulting
Matt Ryan, SA Premier
Nivek Thompson, University of Technology Sydney
Stuart Waters, Twyfords
Iain Walker, new Democracy Foundation
Kimbra White, MosaicLAB
Karen Wright, Uniting Care
Sergio Guillen, Australian National University
Questions

New and Old Methods of Recruitment

• From a practitioner’s perspective, are there recent innovations in participant selection/recruitment that consider other factors aside from representativeness based on demographic characteristics?
• How important is random selection in pursuit of diversity?
• Is random sampling truly representative? And what are the alternatives?
• What are the key issues practitioners face when designing deliberative forums, and trying to assure inclusiveness?
• It is often said that there are trade-offs between inclusiveness and deliberative quality—the more people participate in a deliberative forum, the less opportunity there is to deepen the discussion. Is this a fair impression? Is convening a large-scale deliberative forum a feasible proposition?
• What’s the ‘magic number’ of participants for a productive public deliberation?
• I am interested in the effect of individual personality on deliberation. In the event I observed, one particularly dominant personality proved difficult to control and I felt this had an effect on the rest of the group, as well as demanding a lot of time from the facilitator. I wondered if the attendees had any thoughts on this – not just practical solutions of behaviour management, but also if they think it can have a distortive effect on the quality/outcome of deliberation, and if there is any existing research on this.

Possible Outcomes of Deliberation: Consensus and Beyond

• How would a deliberative event work if it was not aiming at a collective decision/outcome? Ie. As a stand-alone process (I am interested in the value of deliberative democracy as a method of public engagement)
• What to do when deliberative forums fail to yield any agreement/consensus on the issue at stake?
• Processes to go beyond majority democracy when it comes to the pointy end (after thorough discussions, analysis of info, etc) of decision making
• Appreciative versus contestatory inquiry – is deliberation being too narrowly defined?

Design Innovations

• What are some of our most exciting innovations in deliberative democracy and how can we more effectively encourage government/practitioners to keep pushing the envelope/innovating in deliberative democracy?
• Applying deliberative democracy to the private sector – boards and organisations.
• How do we ensure flexibility and appropriateness in design as deliberative processes become more popular and people want ‘out-of-the-box’ designs?
• Flexible process designs – blending approaches etc
• What are the key principles for deliberative processes, and what are different ways that those principles can be met (as opposed to just using a particular process formula)?
• What’s coming up in the future of deliberative democracy?

Promises and Perils of Online Deliberation

• What are the most useful methods for getting collaborative report writing achieved by a jury or other? Can online tools help with this in-between official sessions
• Using technology to support small group process and achieving consensus– in room and in between sessions
• How to use online to do truly deliberative democracy

Impact and Evaluation

• How to measure the impact of participatory democracy
• How do we evaluate for impact when impact pathways are indirect (e.g. when processes raise awareness that shapes future debates?)
• What impact do genuine deliberative processes have on the sceptics and cynics – elected officials or other?
• What evidence do we have for the benefits of deliberative process?
• Can we develop a meaningful deliberative democracy evaluation methodology, including long term impacts, that can be easily applied across the globe?

Toward Deliberative Systems

• Does anyone know of anyone else applying Deliberative Systems empirically?
• Where are there sites to trial new democratic processes in ongoing ways i.e. beyond one-off non-legislated events?
• What forms might trials in these spaces take?
• Who is interested in researching this?
• Citizens usually feel a sense of ‘empowerment’ and political efficacy after participating in a deliberative process. How can these be sustained outside a formal deliberative process?
• How to ‘scale up’ in a time of shrinking resources (in government)
• How to scale up resource intensive participatory democracy sessions
• I’m interested in micro processes – cheap and cheerful while still being credible and having deliberative integrity
• How to best link deliberative processes based on a select number of people to wider engagement processes (larger numbers of people) - jury
processes provide a real feeling of influence to a smaller number of people - how can this be translated to large numbers (whether face to face or online)

**Power in and of Deliberative Forums**

- What decision-making power should the deliberative forums have? Should they remain advisory, or should they have full decision-making authority?
- Have deliberative democrats hit a wall-of-power with decision maker resistance?
- Bringing leadership theory into deliberative practice - what type of leader is needed for deliberative practice to work?

**Taking Deliberative Democracy Forward**

- How should we break in to new areas? Boldly or gently?
- What are the major blockages to getting a deliberative approach to sticky government problems and how do we overcome them?
- What impact do genuine deliberative processes have on the sceptics and cynics – elected officials or other?
- What evidence do we have for the benefits of deliberative process?
- Bringing the wider community along to maximise support for outcomes
- What are the most common obstacles for not doing/resisting a deliberative process?
- What are the highlights/challenges you can expect from a deliberative process? (what has our combined experience told us)
- How can we get more traction in our efforts to encourage/persuade politicians and government administrators to implement best practice deliberative democracy?
- How are we imagining deliberative democracy to be, to look like?
- Is our picture of what DD is potentially raising barriers for those who may otherwise be looking for more democratic processes?