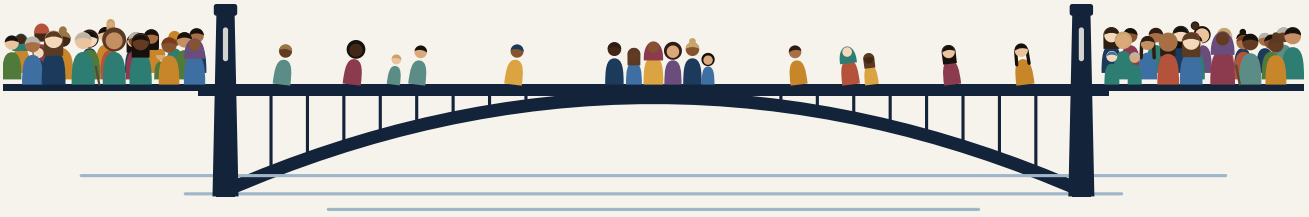
AN INITIATIVE OF THE CONSTITUTION EDUCATION FUND AUSTRALIA

CEFA
Constitution Education Fund

Australian Council for
Civics and Citizenship Education



Educating together for informed and effective participation in Australian democracy

Bringing together key non-government educators in civics and citizenship to increase knowledge of Australian democracy, effective participation and trust in its working.

Established as the result of a National Roundtable on 10 July 2026 of key stakeholders committed to advancing civics and citizenship education and social cohesion. The stakeholders met at Government House, Canberra and were hosted by Her Excellency, Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

Civics and citizenship education in Australia can strengthen our democracy in the face of contemporary challenges, risks and uncertainties.

81% of Australians say strengthening democracy should be a priority. By bringing together those dedicated to it from the non-government sector, we can strengthen civil society, and particularly address declining trust and disintegrating social cohesion.

The good news is that three-quarters of Australians prefer democracy to other systems of government. The bad news is that trust in our federal politicians has fallen to 30.5%, and more than a quarter of young men now say violence can sometimes be justified to advance a cause. (McKinnon Index 2026)

In response, CEFA has created a National Council to bring together non-government participants in the field of civics and citizenship education, through:

1. Mandated civics, citizenship and social cohesion education, and its underpinnings in schools (or school culture).
2. Greater cooperation and learning as between public and private education sectors and schools and universities.
3. The promotion of more effective adult civics and citizenship education through complementary offerings to parents, formal life-long learning offered by the tertiary education sector and other institutions and philanthropic bodies, including effective civics and citizenship education for trainee and professional teachers.
4. The establishment of a national civics and citizenship education body representative of non-government providers and stakeholders to provide a forum for cooperative approaches that will complement and work in collaboration with governments.
5. Identification of areas of need in relation to social cohesion through participatory citizenship education that fosters broader democratic constitutional values.
6. Identification of opportunities for exchange of ideas, advancement of what works, and for collaboration and coordination of civics and citizenship education, activities, research and programs between providers.
7. Coordinated public information campaigns.

Sharing effective grassroots programs, activities and resources that work to optimise informed and educated communities capable of meeting the challenges of social cohesion across diversity of views and participation in our democracy.

Bringing non-government providers and stakeholders together, promoting consistency, cooperation and collaboration for well researched programs, activities and resources that have demonstrable success when implemented.

OUR PURPOSES

1. To propose measures for the advancement of civics and citizenship education in Australia.
2. To facilitate information exchange between civics and citizenship education non-government providers and stakeholders and develop common public policy proposals to governments and public authorities and other relevant parties concerning:
   - **a** the content of civics and citizenship education in Australia;
   - **b** the segments of Australian society in which it should be delivered and the means of delivery;
   - **c** identification of areas of need in relation to social cohesion through participatory citizenship.
3. To provide a mechanism to identify and develop desirable collective action in relation to civics and citizenship education.
4. To identify necessary areas of research in relation to civics and citizenship education in Australia and to advocate for government and philanthropic support for such research.
5. To provide evidence and make submissions to public enquiries concerning civics and citizenship education.
6. To identify, when the opportunity arises, specific research proposals which could involve members of the company.

Five standing committees, open to members.

Members shape the Council's work through its advisory committees.

Civics Education Advisory Committee

To advance public understanding of Australia's democratic institutions, constitutional system, government, the rule of law and civic processes, and to support initiatives that strengthen civic literacy and informed democratic participation in civil society.

Citizenship Education Advisory Committee

To advance active citizenship, civic participation, inclusion and social cohesion by supporting initiatives that encourage individuals and communities to engage constructively in Australia's democratic and civic life.

First Peoples Advisory Committee

To consider matters relating to the inclusion in civics and citizenship education of education about the histories, stories and culture of Australia's First Peoples, their traditional laws and customs and their relationship to Australian society today.

Research Projects Advisory Committee

To explore and develop proposals for research projects directed to the measurement of the advancement of civics and citizenship education in Australia.

Media Advisory Committee

To advise the Council and its Committees on media strategy and the role of the media in advancing civics and citizenship education to address social cohesion, and to provide factual information.

04 — FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE

Spreading what works from State to State.

States and Territories fund and run most schools, so lasting reform has to work through them. The Council's Federal Cooperation Committee is designed to help them test and showcase each other's proven civics and citizenship education programs.

1 **Meet**

Education departments share their successful civics initiatives.

2 **Pilot**

A second State funds a pilot of a program proven elsewhere.

3 **Evaluate**

Governments or an independent body, such as a university, assess results.

4 **Expand**

Programs that succeed in more than one jurisdiction are adopted more widely.

INAUGURAL BOARD

Distinguished Professor Larissa Behrendt AO	CEFA
Professor Rosalind Dixon	CEFA
The Hon Robert French AC	Chair, CEFA
George Harris	CEFA
Tanya Hosch	CEFA
Kerry Jones	CEFA
Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM	CEFA | Together for Humanity
Adam Brodie-Mackenzie	Social and Citizenship Education Association of Australia
Damien Freeman	
Sandy Killick	Democracy Matters
Tom Mooney	McKinnon Institute
Professor Lyn Yates	Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia
Professor Murray Print	

Have your contributions amplified through a national platform, together for Australia.

Your voice matters	Contribute your work to a civil society, knowledgeable about its democracy and build democratic resilience for generations to come.
Collaboration	Join with like-minded stakeholders for education programs, activities and resources that effect positive change in our civil society communities.
Shared knowledge	Learn what is working nationally and in the States, Territories, regions and local communities, and perhaps join in with your favourite projects.
Research	Be involved with research projects that demonstrate what is working.
Shared pathways	By seeking agreement on shared pathways in education for modern Australian society, the Council's work will reach communities across the nation and complement the Government's social cohesion initiatives of 2027.
For every community	The Council aims to bring the best of civics and citizenship education in Australia to every community, such as through schools and universities, libraries and local councils, community and multicultural organisations, Members of Parliament, and online.

THE BENEFITS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

Active. Collaborative. Shared.

Members active in their communities, collaborating across the sector and sharing what works, achieve more together than any of us can alone.

Educating *Together for an Informed Australian Democracy*

Campaigning for social cohesion: by promoting our members and their work, we can encourage Australians to commit to the constitutional values that hold our democracy together.

TOGETHER, WE STAND...

BELONGING

- FOR appreciating Australia's democratic values
- FOR sharing stories to further understand differences
- FOR mutual respect between participants in our democracy
- FOR mutual understanding between communities

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- FOR a fair go
- FOR a harmonious civil society under the rule of law
- FOR cultural and religious freedoms, balanced with responsibilities
- FOR civics literacy, including critical thinking, ethical and moral understandings, honesty and integrity

RESPECTFUL DISAGREEMENT

- FOR civil discourse and safe conversations when it matters most
- FOR shared democratic values: participation, tolerance and acceptance of difference
- FOR standing against misinformation, hate speech, radicalisation, prejudice and discrimination

TRUST IN OUR DEMOCRACY

- FOR the freedom to vote without intimidation, fear or interference
- FOR our constitutional institutions and the people in them, particularly our elected members of parliament
- FOR a democracy that upholds our rights and liberties
- FOR providing factual and reliable information that the people can trust

OUR SHARED COMMITMENT

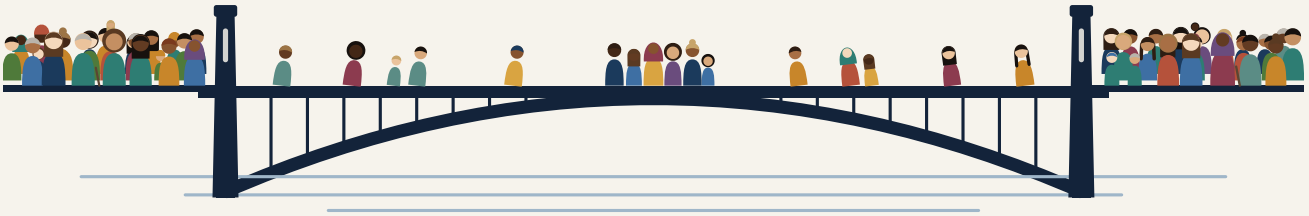
"We commit to a fair go for everyone, achieved if we respect our differences, to civil discourse, and to playing a responsible role in the democracy we share."

07 — HOW TO JOIN

Join the Council.

Membership is by invitation, and there is no fee to join.

Please read the Council Constitution, then complete the application form and email it to **info@cefa.org.au**. The application form is available from **cefa.org.au**.



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FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES

Mrs Kerry Jones, CEO

Mr Phuong Van, Administrator

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THE COUNCIL

A not-for-profit public company limited by guarantee, established to operate as a registered charity.