



Australian Community
Futures Planning
Newsletter No. 14

We have it in our power to create the world anew

ACFP was set up in March 2020.

Our purpose is to give Australians an efficient means by which they can increase their shares of power and influence in their democracy, take more control of their future, and build the sort of country they want to leave to future generations.

Find us and become involved at www.austcfp.com.au

December 2023

What's been happening at ACFP?

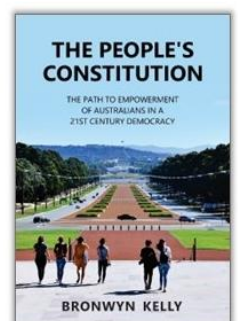
- ACFP has been and still is active in support of an Indigenous Voice in the Constitution and a voice for ALL Australians.
- We've answered Questions on Notice from Parliament.
- A new major essay has been released on Saving Australian Democracy and Sovereignty by Building a New Constitution.
- ACFP articles and interviews continue to appear in the media.

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Put *The People's Constitution* on your holiday reading list. Or listen to a full reading of the book by the author. 



Find *The People's Constitution* in bookstores or at www.austcfp.com.au/publications

ACFP still active in support of an Indigenous Voice

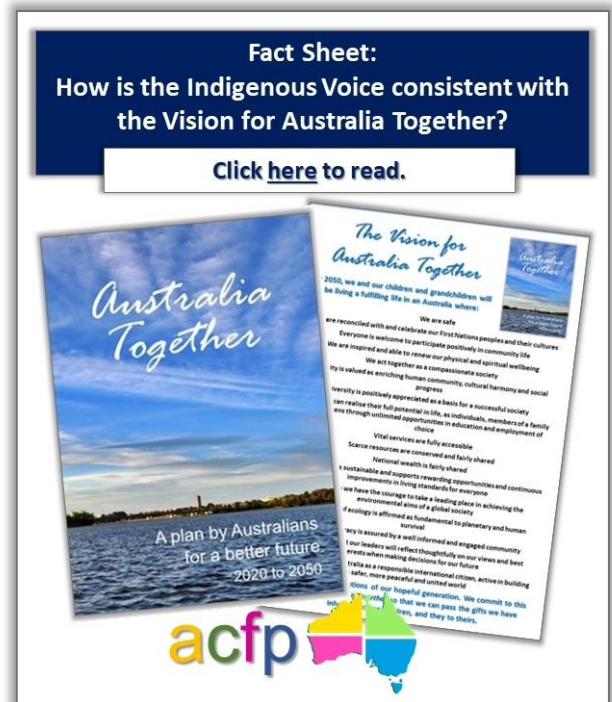
Despite the referendum defeat, an Indigenous Voice can still vastly benefit ALL Australians.

Throughout 2023 ACFP was very active in support of a Voice for Indigenous Australians in the Constitution. With the defeat of the Voice referendum, ACFP announced the need to continue working towards a Voice for Indigenous Australians, including a right to a Voice in the Constitution.

Why is ACFP a strong advocate for the Indigenous Voice? – Because an Indigenous Voice to both parliament and the government is fully consistent with the Vision for Australia Together. Defeat of the Voice is wholly at odds with the Vision and moves us away from the possibility of making our aspirations for the future a reality by 2050 or sooner.

For full details see this Fact Sheet:

[How is the Indigenous Voice consistent with the Vision for Australia Together?](#)



The analysis in the Fact Sheet shows that there isn't a single element of the Vision for Australia Together that wouldn't be enhanced by establishment of an Indigenous Voice. Broader Australia would also be much better off, with enhanced capacity for:

- peace (both at home and in the wider world),
- climate change mitigation and adaptation,
- cultural harmony, and
- genuine fairness in their democracy.

An Indigenous Voice would unambiguously propel Australia towards the Vision for Australia Together, not away from it. By contrast, a rejection of an Indigenous Voice would do great harm to all Australians. Chief among those negative impacts would be:

- a widening of inequality in Australia and the consequent cost of the health impacts of that;
- a progressive weakening of social cohesion and the security that comes from all groups living harmoniously together;
- a loss of the respect of international communities and the attendant economic costs of that;
- a subscription to cruelty instead of compassion and injustice instead of fairness; and
- a reinforcement of the racist clauses of Australia's Constitution, clauses which are discriminatory and which have heavily disadvantaged Indigenous Australians.

ALL Australians need a Voice to Parliament

After the referendum, ACFP observed the week of silence requested by Indigenous Leaders. We also then responded to their [open letter](#) in which they signalled that they “want to talk with our people and our supporters about establishing – independent of the Constitution or legislation – an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to take up the cause of justice for our people.” ACFP has written offering to assist in any way we can. ACFP will also continue to advocate just as strongly for **all** Australians to have a Voice to Parliament. For more information see:

- [The People's Constitution: the path to empowerment of Australians in a 21st century democracy](#); and
- [“Saving Australian Democracy and Sovereignty by Building a New Constitution”](#) – an essay by Bronwyn Kelly.

Further submissions by ACFP to the parliamentary inquiry into human rights

In our last newsletter we reported that ACFP had made a major submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (PJCHR) in its [Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework](#). Our submission argued that legislation to protect human rights is long overdue in Australia but that **full security of rights cannot be achieved unless human rights are enshrined in the Constitution**.

ACFP's Founder Bronwyn Kelly was invited to address the PJCHR. Her testimony focussed on how governments can (*and they do*) all too easily reduce or revoke human rights because rights are not enshrined in the Constitution. But with a process of nation-wide community engagement to build a new Constitution, Australians can finally secure the rights that have long been denied to them in Australian law. Her testimony was well received by the Committee.

[Read the full opening statement and additional material submitted by Dr Kelly here.](#)

[Listen to the testimony and the reactions of committee members here.](#)

Since her appearance as a witness at this Inquiry Bronwyn has received Questions on Notice from the independent Indigenous Senator Lidia Thorpe which she has answered [here](#). The questions go to the heart of why Australians should have human rights in the Constitution. The answers are that human rights are fundamental to democracy. **A state is not a democracy if its citizens have no rights.**

A seven-step program for nation-wide engagement to build a new Constitution

In her testimony to the PJCHR Bronwyn Kelly suggested the need for a program of nation-wide engagement and collaboration for the development of a new Australian Constitution – one fit for a 21st century democracy where everyone has political equality. Dr Kelly submitted an outline of how that process may work. It's called the National Collaborative Process for Development of a New Australian Constitution

ACFP will continue to champion the introduction of such a process. Click [here](#) for more information on the process of [making a new Constitution by the collaboration of Australians](#).

PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA
Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework

Address by ACFP Founder, Bronwyn Kelly, to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, 28 September 2023

Click [here](#) to read the address.

Find out how human rights in the Constitution will benefit everyone, including parliamentarians.

ACFP Founder Bronwyn Kelly talks to parliament about human rights.

Click [here](#) for the full interview.

Episode 36: Testimony by ACFP Founder Bronwyn Kelly in the Parliamentary Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework

Listen to the testimony and response: Australians must have human rights in the Constitution.

The Australia Together Podcast

Episodes 37, 38 & 39

Insights into Human Rights and Democracy in Australia

Listen to Bronwyn Kelly's answers to questions by Senator Lidia Thorpe and Josh Burns MP.

PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA
Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework

A new major essay on processes for building a new Constitution

Thank you to everyone who has offered praise for Bronwyn Kelly's most recent book, [The People's Constitution: the path to empowerment of Australians in a 21st century democracy](#). Interest in the book is growing and all feedback so far has been positive.

But now it's time to begin to think about how we might make a people's constitution a reality. For that purpose ACFP Founder Bronwyn Kelly has released [a new four-part essay](#) which builds on much of the research in *The People's Constitution*, taking it to the next step.

The essay is called [Saving Australian Democracy and Sovereignty by Building a New Constitution](#). It sets out a practical way forward for the making of a new Constitution by the collaboration of Australians. She suggests in the essay that if we learn how to do this well as a nation – *and we can* – then we can rescue our democracy and sovereignty, both of which are very much at risk of loss at the moment.

[Read the full essay here](#) and [listen to a full recording here](#).

The new essay has also been developed in response to the growing problems in Australia's democracy resulting from our lack of human rights. As constitutional expert [Professor George Williams](#) has shown, **there are now "350 laws that infringe on [the rights of all Australians to] freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, freedom of movement, the right to protest, basic legal rights and the rule of law, all of which are essential to a healthy democracy"**.

Executive government overreach is now so serious that it is extremely difficult to prevent human rights abuses by governments. This is something that can only be reversed if Australians can organise themselves better to assume a greater role in their own governance. ACFP intends to help everyone participate in this. [Read about this serious executive overreach in this new article](#).

Other new writing and interviews

ACFP's Founder Bronwyn Kelly has published several articles on Substack and in the media. Click on the pictures for the articles and the radio and podcast interviews. An [article on how the Crown is now the enemy of the People](#) attracted particular attention. Read the [unabridged version on Substack](#).

The Australia Together Podcast
Episodes 40, 41, 42 & 43
Saving Australian Democracy and Sovereignty by Building a New Constitution
An essay in four parts by Bronwyn Kelly
Find how Australians can build a democracy for political equals. Listen [here](#).

PEARLS AND IRRITATIONS
John Menadue's Public Policy Journal
GOVERNMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, POLITICS
Executive overreach in Australia has reached the levels of an autocracy
By Bronwyn Kelly
Nov 24, 2023
To save our democracy, Australians need to build a new Constitution.
[Click here to read the full article.](#)

The State of Australia
acfp Newsletter on substack
PEARLS AND IRRITATIONS
John Menadue's Public Policy Journal
POLITICS
Unmasked: The Crown is the enemy of the People
By Bronwyn Kelly
Nov 30, 2023
Australians need to build a democratic state in which the people are acknowledged as sovereign.
[Click here to read the full article.](#)

Elections do not a democracy make.
The Australian Republican Movement interviews ACFP Founder Bronwyn Kelly
Click here for the full interview.
New Podcast Episode
Dr Bronwyn Kelly on democracy
Talking Independence
Oct 9 - 23 min 5 sec
acfp

The State of Australia
A newsletter from Bronwyn Kelly on progress with Australia's first national community futures plan:
acfp *Australia Together.*
A key lesson from the Voice referendum – human rights must be equal and secure for all.
By Bronwyn Kelly
Unless human rights are first established in the Constitution, other constitutional reforms are unlikely to succeed.
[Click here to read or listen to the full article.](#)
bronwynkelly.substack.com

The State of Australia
A newsletter from Bronwyn Kelly on progress with Australia's first national community futures plan:
acfp *Australia Together.*
After the Voice referendum – what next for a fair Australia?
By Bronwyn Kelly
A Yes vote will speed up Australia's transition to a democracy of political equals. A No vote will slow it down.
[Click here to read or listen to the full article.](#)
bronwynkelly.substack.com

What next for ACFP?

It's been an incredibly busy year for ACFP with:

- the release of *The People's Constitution*;
- [major new essays](#) and academic articles;
- several new media articles and interviews;
- launch of the [Australia Together Podcast](#);
- launch of a new Substack newsletter on [The State of Australia](#);
- [participation in government inquiries](#) on human rights, defence legislation and wellbeing; and
- work to support the Voice referendum.

We have also spent a good deal of time:

- testing and re-testing the [National Integrated Planning & Reporting](#) process that we have devised so that people can efficiently participate in developing [Australia Together](#); and
- designing a [national community engagement process](#) that can allow any and all Australians to participate in building a new Australian Constitution.

A new Australian Constitution is desperately needed if we are to be able to plan a better future for the nation, enjoy the human rights we are entitled to, rescue our democracy, make the government more accountable, and ultimately realise our aspirations for a better future. **So next year ACFP will continue to concentrate on the democratic reforms we have been developing and on expanding opportunities for efficient community involvement in democracy and greater control by Australians over their own nation's future.**

Over the Christmas break we intend to revise [Australia Together](#) to update and expand it. We hope to have Issue no. 7 ready to release in the new year. [You can browse Issue No. 6 of Australia Together here.](#) Suggestions for updates and additional strategies and targets are welcome. And as always, comments on the Vision and Directions for [Australia Together](#) are encouraged. Here's a [link to the forms for comment](#). Next year we will also start exploring options for expanding efficient community involvement in building [Australia Together](#).

Stay tuned for more information and in the meantime enjoy the Christmas break. [Put The People's Constitution on your holiday reading list.](#) Or [listen to a full reading of the book](#) by the author on The Australia Together Podcast.

2023 A very busy year

Release of The People's Constitution

Major essays and interviews on National IP&R, the economy, and saving our democracy and sovereignty.

Submissions to parliament on human rights, defence legislation, and wellbeing.

Launch of the Australia Together Podcast.

Launch of The State of Australia Newsletter on substack

Support for the Indigenous Voice referendum. **acfp says Yes!** Indigenous Australians must have a say in decisions that affect them. There is no justice without a Voice to Parliament for First Nations in the Constitution.

Numerous articles in the media and on Substack on human rights, constitutional reform, the Indigenous Voice, government accountability, democracy, and the need for longer term national planning.

Continuing research for Australia Together and ongoing testing of National IP&R.

ACFP's four-part research program to help Australians build their own plan for a better nation. A 5th component of research has been added.