



Australian Community Futures Planning

Frequently Asked Questions about National Integrated Planning & Reporting

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What's in this fact sheet?

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National Integrated Planning & Reporting – National IP&R – has been developed by Australian Community Futures Planning to enable Australians to maximise their influence as political equals in their own democracy.

Use this fact sheet to find out all about National IP&R.

Follow developments in National IP&R at <https://www.austcfp.com.au/national-integrated-planning-and-reporting>

Frequently Asked Questions about National Integrated Planning & Reporting

What is Integrated Planning & Reporting?

- **Integrated Planning & Reporting** or **IP&R** is a form of community engagement for planning a better society, environment, economy and governance system within a democracy over a long term – at least ten years.
- It is a process of:
 - building a community-owned plan for a better future that is independent of politics, and
 - reporting back to the community on progress in making the plan a reality.

Integrated Planning & Reporting
is a democratic long term planning
process driven by the community –
from the bottom up.
It is planning
for the people by the people.

What is National Integrated Planning & Reporting – National IP&R?

- National Integrated Planning & Reporting or National IP&R is a new form of IP&R adapted to helping Australians organise themselves to plan for their nation's future.
- Integrated Planning and Reporting has been active as a democratic engagement process in Australia for more than a decade, ever since legislation was passed in some states to introduce the process for local councils, compelling them to involve their communities in planning for their preferred future.
- However, prior to 2020, IP&R had never been used to prepare a plan for an entire nation. That changed with the establishment of **Australian Community Futures Planning – ACFP** – and the introduction of **Australia Together**, Australia's first national community futures plan being built *by the community for the community*.



Australia Together,
our first integrated national plan, is being built
by Australians for Australians using
National Integrated Planning & Reporting.

For more information on **Australia Together** see **Frequently Asked Questions about Australia Together** or read the latest draft of **Australia Together** at austcfp.com.au

National IP&R

creates an organised way for Australians to communicate with each other and with political leaders about what we really want for our future.
It opens up a space where communities can converse and select their preferred pathways to that future and the paths they want to avoid.

What does the IP&R process involve?

There are eight main elements to IP&R:

1. open, genuine **community engagement**;
2. an overarching **Vision** of what we want Australia to be by 2050;
3. an agreement on what success should look like in relation to each element of the Vision – what **Directions** we are prepared to take *en route* to the Vision, and what directions we are not prepared to take;
4. development of **Targets, Indicators** and **Strategies** which are most likely to lead to the identified “successes” in the Vision;
5. community opinion surveys to check support for the Plan and seek suggestions;
6. a process for developing a **funding plan**;
7. a tracking system, based on a “QBL” **Wellbeing Index – the [Australia Together National Wellbeing Index](#)**, to tell us if the Strategies (if implemented) are working according to the original elements of the Vision and whether changes to Strategies might be required; and
8. an open transparent reporting and review system – an **[End of Term Report](#)** which:
 - a. provides results on progress about whether we have moved closer to the Vision or further away from it during a federal government’s term of office,
 - b. isolates areas of failure and suggests areas where policy adjustment may help get the plan back on track, and
 - c. provides an opportunity to consider changes to the plan itself if the community thinks that is advisable.

Eight elements of IP&R

Community Engagement

A long term **Vision**

Directions we are prepared to take and wish to avoid

Targets, Indicators & Strategies

Community opinion surveys & suggestions

A funding plan

An organised system for tracking specific progress on the plan –
a **QBL Wellbeing Index**

A transparent independent
End of Term Report

What is the benefit of National IP&R?

- In Australia today, two out of our three levels of government do **not** steer their way to a better future for the nation by means of any agreed plan. We are trusting our future to good luck rather than good planning.
- Despite what politicians might claim, in 2020 (and this remains the case in 2026) Australia had:
 - no plans in place to smooth the peaks and troughs of economic development;
 - few if any plans that properly protect the environment and climate on which we and our economy depend;
 - no plans to protect or strengthen our democracy and rights; and
 - no plans to involve Australians in discussing the nation that we want to become.
- National IP&R provides a space and technique for addressing this **together** in our democracy. It is a gift we can give ourselves and future generations – the gift of joining together to secure a far better future than we can hope for if we do not imagine it and plan for it.

Just some of the benefits of National IP&R

National IP&R allows us to stretch our imaginations, to think of *what can be* and the better future we can give our children.

It allows us to meet in a space where we can have a coherent & productive dialogue about what we want – *in all our diversity*.

It allows us to put all our good ideas in one place, compare them & pick the best, without excluding minority groups.

It allows us to see great things others are doing, connect with them & synchronise our efforts.



National IP&R can make transcendence of politics and ideology a common feature of our democracy instead of a rarity.

National IP&R re-balances our shares of power & influence over our own future.

We can avoid spending money on things that don't help us & specify our spending priorities.

A well-organised planning process where any Australian can take part will give us all a far better chance of making our preferred future a reality.

A failure to plan strategically will simply give us a far greater chance of stumbling into places we do not want to go, such as a heated planet, an autocracy, poverty, hunger, violence in the home and abroad, and an economy that cannot sustain us.

In a modern, educated nation this simply needn't be.

With National IP&R it doesn't need to be.

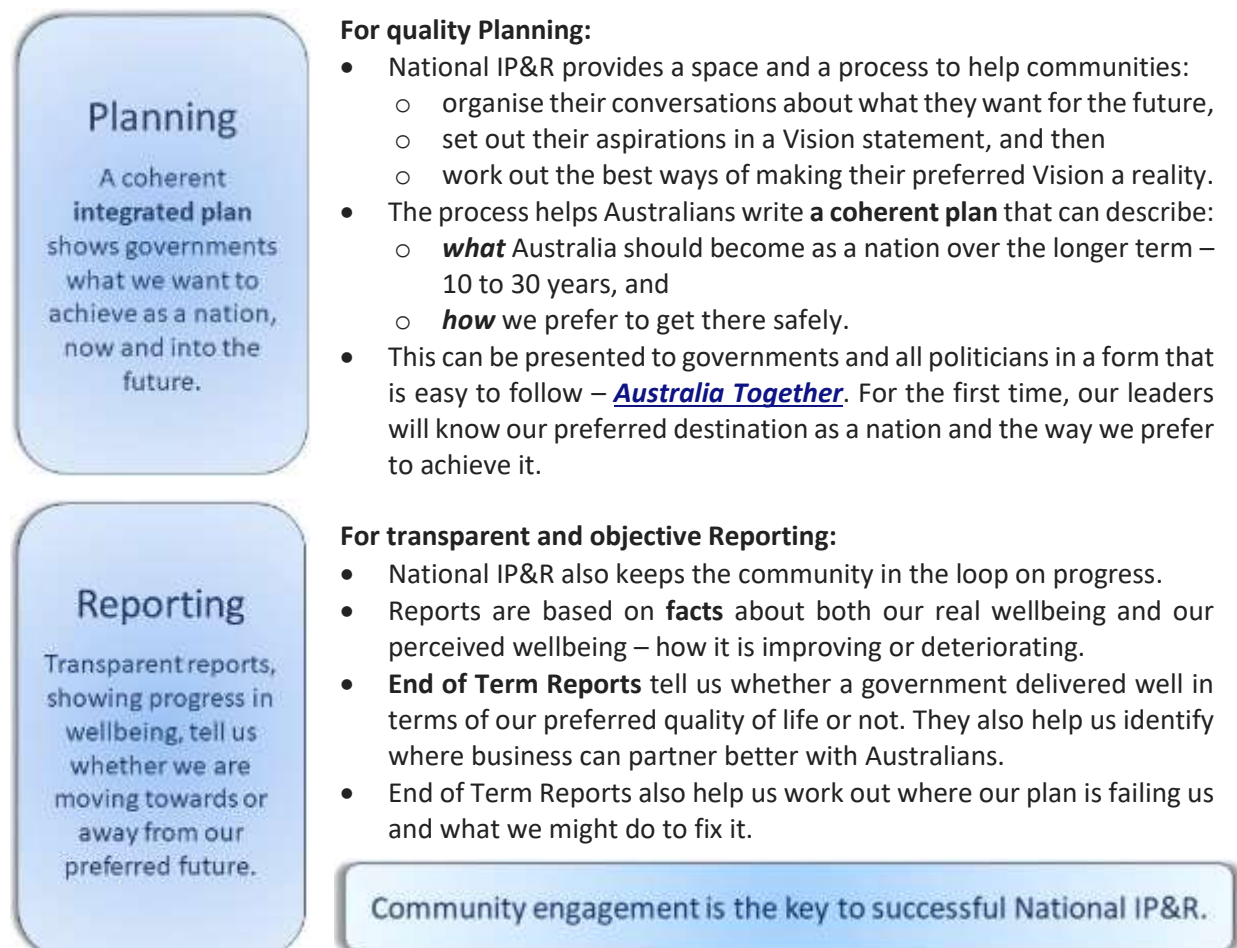
What are the disadvantages of National IP&R?

- **There are none.** Coming together to plan costs us nothing. National IP&R is free and open source. It will prevent many of the problems caused by our failure to plan for our nation in the past.
- Many politicians will insist that the disadvantage of planning is that it is inflexible and does not allow us to respond well to crises. But the fact is plans help prevent or reduce crises and significantly improve our preparedness for them when they come. They don't reduce our flexibility, they increase it – especially in a crisis.

How does IP&R work in practice?

IP&R is as simple as its name. It is **Planning** and it is **Reporting**.

But if National IP&R is to work well in practice, we must do the planning **together**. The more people who become involved, the better the plan we will produce.



To find out more about how National IP&R works in practice and how you can choose to become involved, see

<https://www.austcfp.com.au/become-involved>

How difficult is IP&R?

IP&R is not difficult at all. Australia is an educated nation and we are quite capable of describing what we want for the future, particularly for our children. We all want the next generation to be better off, and certainly better off than they might be if we always put short term considerations ahead of their longer term future. Any Australian can participate in National IP&R as long as they do so generously, respectfully and in good faith. **The key to successful participation in IP&R is respect for diversity.**

How does National IP&R work within Australia's democracy?

- National IP&R facilitates an orderly transition from mere representative democracy to proactive participatory democracy.
- In facilitating this transition National IP&R re-balances the shares of power that everyday Australians have in their system of democracy.
 - It increases their influence by providing a coherent, intelligent and intelligible messaging system to governments, politicians, business owners and all manner of leaders about what we really want for the future.
 - That coherent massaging system is **Australia Together**, the plan produced by the Australian community through National IP&R.

**Current order of our democracy
Without National IP&R**

- We elect a government and hope that they will plan in our best interests.
- Generally, national governments do *not* plan and certainly do not ask us about our preferences for the future.
- They run a legislative and policy program that governs well for some, not well for all.

**New order of our democracy
With National IP&R**

- We develop a plan first.
- We pre-agree the "what" and the "how".
- Then we elect a government based on their credentials and ethics and commitment to our plan.
- They then run a legislative and policy program that governs better for all, not just for some.

Production of
Australia Together
by the joint effort of an engaged community does not dismantle our democracy.

It simply injects an extra step into the sequence of how we use the instruments of democracy.

And by injecting this extra step, it significantly increases the efficiency of our democracy and its capacity to deliver the quality of life and standard of living that we all want.

National IP&R

is effectively democracy's modern agora. It is a space in which we can work together to develop the plans most likely to deliver the future we want.

This shift in the order our democratic processes has been made possible for the first time in history by the rise of access to both education and the internet for all, a change which has transformed our access to intelligence and our ability to engage with each other.

For more information on how this shift in democracy is possible through National IP&R, read
By 2050: Planning a better future for our children in 21st century democratic Australia
by ACFP's founder, Bronwyn Kelly.
Available on [Amazon Kindle](#) and in paperback.



How are the elements of National IP&R organised?

- National IP&R works on a cycle aligned to the federal election cycle.
- All Australians can become involved at any time in the cycle.
- The cycle is organised to:
 - promote progressive development and refinement of a long term integrated plan for the whole nation; and
 - facilitate reporting on progress towards the Targets of the plan prior to an election.
- The cycle begins immediately after a federal election with ongoing revisions of the plan from the previous cycle.



- Throughout the cycles, and subject to resources and funding, consultation occurs freely as Australians are encouraged to:
 - [comment on the Vision and draft plans](#) (the plans themselves are effectively always in draft); and
 - [suggest Targets and Strategies](#);
- Throughout the cycles the following activities are also ongoing, subject to resources:
 - Development of **Targets** and **Indicators** for measuring progress in the plan – the nation's movement towards or away from the Vision and Directions.
 - **Assembly of baseline data** for each of the Targets and Indicators – this is what is known as a “quadruple bottom line” or QBL wellbeing index or the [Australia Together National Wellbeing Index](#). This is an assembly of all the data about where we are starting from in terms of our **Society, Environment, Economy, and Governance**.
 - Development, assessment and assembly of **Strategies** that are consistent with the Vision and Directions.
- **Towards the end of each cycle**, before a federal election – an [End of Term Report](#) is produced.
 - Based on performance against the Targets and Indicators of the plan, the End of Term Report provides a factual assessment of whether during the federal parliament's term of office Australia moved closer to its preferred future or further away.
 - The End of Term Report can also provide insights for development of revisions of [Australia Together](#) in its subsequent cycle. See the End of Term Reports here: [The State of Australia 2022](#) and [The State of Australia 2025](#).
- The cycle allows Australians to drive their democracy in an organised, efficient and intelligent way, to maximise the chances of equitable progress towards the Vision and build national cohesion and resilience.

What is ACFP's role in relation to National IP&R?

- Australian Community Futures Planning – ACFP – has been founded for the purpose of encouraging greater participation by Australians in planning their own future as a nation within a 21st century democracy.
- ACFP operates as a centre of excellence by fostering the effective use of National Integrated Planning & Reporting. Its main role in National IP&R is:
 - **Coordination of drafting of Australia Together**, incorporating the comments of Australians.
 - **Integration of Strategies and Targets with Directions** to maximise capacity and efficiency of Australia Together as a plan to make the Vision for Australia Together a reality.
 - **Establishing and maintaining the QBL Wellbeing Index** for factual reporting and measurement of progress towards and away from the Vision.
 - **Preparation of the End of Term Reports**.



The **Integration** role is perhaps the most important part of ACFP's contribution. Integration of Directions, Targets and Strategies – via use of a simple “signpost” structure and a system of Targets and Indicators for monitoring ongoing wellbeing – is key to success in delivering the Vision for Australia Together. The more we integrate our diverse efforts, the less we will suffer by working at cross-purposes to each other and the faster we will move towards our Vision.

To facilitate Integration of Strategies and Targets with Directions, ACFP has developed a multi-pronged research program, the results of which are always open to public scrutiny. This program includes research to:

- develop the National IP&R process;
- establish a structure for the long term national integrated plan itself;
- assemble a draft Vision and Directions based on the stated values of Australians and their preferences for a better future;
- develop a comprehensive national wellbeing index.

In 2022 a **fifth research component** was added to reform Australia's Constitution and in 2026 a **sixth research component** was added to reform the national economy in the public interest.

Find out more about ACFP's research programs at www.austcfp.com.au



Can National IP&R help us build a plan for a whole nation?

- Yes.
- ACFP has undertaken considerable research and development to adapt and optimise IP&R so that it can be used to build a plan for a whole nation, rather than just a local community. The research and findings are set out in [By 2050](#).
- **By 2050** shows that if we plan for the future in such a way as **to cater to both our common and our diverse needs** we can work very effectively together in a structured and well organised process to do some things we have never done before but which are vital to our strength as a 21st century democratic nation:
 - We **can**:
 - define our values as a nation – what we stand for and what we want to preserve in terms of human rights, shared prosperity, fairness and integrity;
 - define what it means to be Australian and specify what we want to become as a society, an environmental custodian, an economy and as a democracy;
 - design [a new Constitution for Australia](#) – one which fits our 21st century needs, rather than those of the 19th century;
 - resolve our oldest problem of the inequality for our country's Indigenous that arose from their dispossession;
 - specify and strengthen our relationship with our governments – re-balancing power in our relationships and setting out the terms of trust especially for fair decisions about our economy in a [National Accord on Wealth, Welfare and Wellbeing](#);
 - establish a new social contract for sharing our national wealth and providing for our welfare and wellbeing – [a social new deal to be developed by collaboration](#);
 - specify roles for businesses, workers, institutions, governments and a free press as partners in future growth and equity;
 - develop [reforms for economic and macroeconomic management](#);
 - protect and share all our resources – human, environmental, intellectual and technological;
 - turn away from:
 - growing inequality,
 - climate change,
 - growth in racial and religious conflict,
 - unethical governments and corporations,
 - loss of openness and transparency in government, and
 - our own disengagement in our democracy.

These are just some of the things we can do if we plan them together. National IP&R makes it possible. It is able to do this because it acknowledges not just a need to cater for both our diverse and common interests but because **success depends on diversity**. It depends on us being able to draw in ideas from diverse intelligence and integrate them efficiently to protect the things we commonly and diversely value. A plan which is narrower than this – one that is ideologically driven – has far less capacity to help us realise a better future for all.

National IP&R brings democracy alive, efficiently. It allows Australians in all their diversity to connect and build a coherent plan for safe arrival in a truly preferred future – a future which has not yet been recognised as a realistic possibility but which is out there waiting to be seized.

Can National IP&R build a plan for our entire economy?

- Yes.
- While most politicians and even many economists will claim that economic plans are bound to fail because they are not flexible, this is merely a failure of insight and a resistance to any rise in discussion among Australians about what their economy is for.

As **By 2050** has shown,
once we ask and answer the
fundamental question of:
***For whom and to what ends should our
economy be working?***
there is no longer any point in resisting
development of a plan to create the
economy we want.

- Australians **do** have the capacity to imagine the sort of economic future we might want. We might not all have the answers on the mechanics of achieving that economy, but:
 - we *can* set objectives for it,
 - we *can* determine which strategies we prefer, which ones we want to avoid, and which ones will defeat our diverse aspirations,
 - we *can* develop performance measures for it,
 - we *can* check if it is delivering us a better lifestyle or not,
 - we *can* develop our understanding of why and where it might not be working according to our objectives and what we might adjust to fix it as the need arises, and
 - we *can* hold our leaders to account for any problems of inequality or environmental degradation aggravated by their failure to implement our preferred economic approach.
- By using National IP&R we can develop a holistic plan for our economy and in that we can choose to do all manner of things if we decide that they fit with our ultimate aims. We can also choose to start earlier – for instance, we can choose to switch earlier to a decarbonised economy – and prevent problems rather than take the usual government approach of fixing things when it is already too late.
- We can also choose, if we wish, to:
 - reverse neoliberalism;
 - build our health, welfare and education sectors;
 - generate more employment in the public sector and in value-adding manufacturing; and
 - create interconnected cities and regional hubs.
- There is no reason why we should not have the opportunity to choose and pursue these options and any others to secure our future.
- By working together, using National IP&R, we can build the economy we want.



Can National IP&R help us mitigate climate change?

- Yes, but only if we act swiftly to follow the Strategies in *Australia Together*.
- It is likely that National IP&R is the *only* mechanism that can help us mitigate climate change in a way that will ensure Australia has a sustainable economy.
- This is because National IP&R organises us efficiently to focus on:
 - prevention, not just cure,
 - mitigation not just adaptation, and
 - most importantly, **integration** (not fragmentation) of our efforts in social, environmental, economic and democratic policies and activism.
- **National IP&R helps us address not just *symptoms* of climate change but the full array of its *causes*** including:
 - various forms of inequality, especially political inequality,
 - the pervasiveness of neoliberalism:
 - its environmental exploitations,
 - its deregulation of markets and encouragement of unsustainable investments through inappropriate subsidies from taxpayers,
 - its attacks on public services and sales of assets that are vital for our health and wellbeing,
 - fractious international relations, and
 - our own disengagement from our democracy.
- Unless we address both the causes and symptoms of climate change we cannot hope to mitigate global heating or its impacts. But **with** National IP&R we can make sure that more of us can make the transition safely and equitably to a decarbonised economy.

National IP&R
puts all our efforts and
intelligence together to head
off climate change faster.



By 2050 Chapter 10

National IP&R can turbo charge our remaining potential for preventing the worst effects of climate change. ... It takes account of the multiple causes of our various breakdowns, and we can synchronise preventative efforts with curative efforts, the former making the latter cheaper and cheaper as time passes. Humans have caused climate change not just by emitting too much carbon through industrialisation, but by failing to address a whole range of other problems in our society which are exacerbating the seriousness of climate change and speeding it up.

...

*Our approach to organising and running ourselves is the real cause of climate change because as our democracy is currently organised it is a barrier to early detection of the need for change and a barrier to finding the best way to change before it is too late. If we can reorganise that, by integrated planning, we can head off some of the worst effects of climate change. In fact, this is the only way we can ameliorate climate change, so late in the day. Thinking and acting only on climate change will not fix it and certainly not before climate change gets worse. We need to integrate action on inequality, democracy, industry development, international relations and multiple other QBL policy areas, **alongside** action on climate change. National IP&R is necessary for that integration.*

National IP&R can help us mitigate climate change and its impacts more effectively and affordably than fragmented approaches to a decarbonised future.

Want to know more about National IP&R?

For more detailed information on National IP&R, view ACFP's three-part lecture series on YouTube [here](#).

[What is National Integrated Planning & Reporting](#)

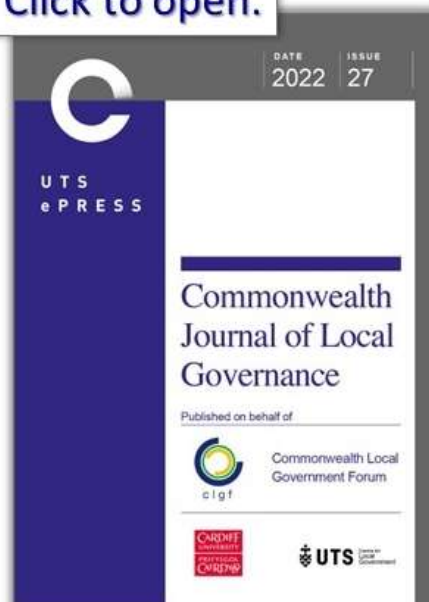
[Or](#)

[How Australians can rise above politics and set the agenda for the nation's future.](#)

Find out more about the genesis and development of National IP&R in this scholarly article in a peer reviewed international journal,

[Local governments can show national governments how to plan better: Integrated planning and reporting reforms in Australia.](#)

Click to open.



What is

National Integrated Planning & Reporting?

Or ...

How Australians can rise above politics and set the agenda for the nation's future

Episode Guide

Episode 1- Introducing National Integrated Planning & Reporting

Part 1 What's the purpose of National IP&R? And why now?

Part 2 How National IP&R can give Australians a more powerful voice in their democracy.

Episode 2 – How does National IP&R work?

Part 1 Where does National IP&R come from? The eight elements of National IP&R.
Element 1 – Community engagement in an orderly public open space
Element 2 – the Vision for *Australia Together*
Element 3 – Safe Directions
Element 4 – Targets and Strategies

Part 2 **Element 5** – Long term national financial planning

Part 3 **Element 6** – Open and transparent comment channels
Element 7 – *Australia Together* National Wellbeing Index
Element 8 – The End of Term Report

Episode 3 – Opportunities & efficiencies from National IP&R and *Australia Together*

Note: ACFP will be updating its video lectures series on National Integrated Planning & Reporting in 2026.