



Citizenship: Building a Shared Future



A Voice for All: Strengthening Democracy

Western Australian Citizenship Strategy
2004-2009

Making Western Australia an Even Better Place to Live

"Citizenship becomes meaningful to the individual and the community when it leads to empowerment."

"Citizenship is a banner for the civic values that unite all Australians within the framework of our democratic society."

"I believe that if all citizens are given the opportunity to participate equally in the decision-making process of their communities, the perception of citizenship will shift from bureaucracy to ...democracy."

Responses to *WA Citizenship Discussion Paper*, 2000/2001

"Trust is essential for our social wellbeing. Without trusting the goodwill of others we retreat into bureaucracy, rules and demands for more law and order. Trust is based on positive experiences with other people and it grows with use. We need to trust that others are going to be basically reasonable beings."

Eva Cox, *ABC Boyer Lecture*, 1995

"Public deliberation is about weighing – together – the costs and consequences of various approaches to solving problems. Making choices together in deliberation promotes civic responsibility. Human beings take more responsibility for what they have participated in choosing than for what someone has chosen for them. Making decisions as a public is claiming responsibility for the future."

Adapted from Kettering Foundation's *Making Choices Together: The Power of Public Deliberation*, 2002

Foreword



This Government was elected with a commitment to developing a strategic vision that will ensure an even better future for all Western Australians.

Such a vision recognises that it is individuals who are at the heart of democracy and it requires that they play a key role in shaping the nature and priorities of our community. Leadership is also an essential ingredient of this vision.

As any truly good leader will tell you, leadership is not about style - it is about substance. It is about being able to articulate and maintain a clear vision for the State while remaining open and responsive to the concerns and priorities of its citizens both collectively and individually.

Your Government appreciates that quality of life cannot be determined only by the conditions of our material environment. Our lives are also shaped by a number of intangible factors such as the health and fairness of our democratic processes and the extent to which citizens participate actively in their communities. Involved communities are healthy communities.

It is essential to a healthy and strong democracy that all the people who care deeply about their community and environment have equal opportunity to participate effectively in the policy making process. It is this appreciation that makes transparency and openness key issues for this Government and which underpins the development of this Citizenship Strategy. At its core, this Strategy is about strengthening and renewing trust in our democracy and building people's confidence in public processes.

This Strategy puts us on the road to ensuring that all Western Australians are able to participate equally, fully and effectively in all aspects and levels of society. Its aim is to ensure a voice for all regardless of age, gender, culture, or situation and in doing so contribute to a greater sense of connection and belonging, wellbeing, and security.

Public participation is about making choices together and I am proud to be part of a Government that consults its citizens widely and listens closely.

This Government is committed to continuing a dialogue with all the people of Western Australia about issues that are important to us.

Working together we can continue to make real progress. Working together we can make Western Australia an even better place to live.

DR GEOFF GALLOP MLA

PREMIER

Message From the Director



One of the major challenges for governments in today's fast moving world is the changing needs, expectations and influence of citizens. Good citizenship principles transform not only the relationship between citizens and their governments, but also the effective functioning of government itself.

The principles that form part of this Strategy are based on the ideal of democratic citizenship: the full and equal participation of citizens as partners in all aspects of the political, social and economic life of our society. This partnership is a dialogue between the people and their government and is the essence of a truly inclusive and dynamic society. It is this dialogue that helps clarify and communicate a longer-term view of what is being sought for our social, environmental and economic wellbeing, strengthening the foundations for a sustainable future.

Citizens are now more capable than ever to engage in policymaking. They are well placed 'to put more public in policy analysis,' better able to identify policy priorities, reconcile conflicting values, and work out what choices are more consistent with their community's values. This has underpinned the development of this Strategy.

When we asked people about what it means to be an active citizen, they told us they need to know and understand not only how the government system works for them but also how to 'navigate' this system.

People told us that they need to be able to participate and that the system should facilitate their effective engagement with the government about issues and decisions that affect us all. All of these lead to a healthy democracy where civil society, business and industry, and all levels of government can work together for the benefit of all.

This Strategy has benefited from both community and public sector input. It is, therefore, a whole-of-government and a whole-of-community strategy, creating an environment in which the community can work with government as partners, building and shaping the future together.

The Strategy is not the end of the process of strengthening democracy in Western Australia; rather it is part of a dynamic process. That is why we want your ongoing feedback and input to support us in carrying this Strategy further. Details of how this feedback can be provided are included on the back cover. Your contributions will mean that as the vehicle for identifying innovative, grounded, proactive approaches to democratic citizenship and governance the WA Citizenship Strategy will truly be, as its title suggests, A Voice for All.

DR CHRISTINA GILLGREN

**DIRECTOR
CITIZENS & CIVICS UNIT**

Table of Contents

The Need For A State Citizenship Strategy	1
Citizenship and Governance	3
Vision, Values and Guiding Principles	5
Key Objectives	6
Key Objective: Knowledge and Understanding	7
• Recent Initiatives	7
• Strategies and Actions	8
Key Objective: Inclusion	9
• Recent Initiatives	9
• Strategies and Actions	10
Key Objective: Participation	11
• Recent Initiatives	11
• Strategies and Actions	12
Key Objective: Democratic Governance	13
• Recent Initiatives	13
• Strategies and Actions	14
Where To From Here:	15
• Making it Happen: A Living Strategy	16
Background to the Strategy	17
Resources	19

The need for a State Citizenship Strategy

This commitment to creative and civic values most often does not come with the expectation of material reward; nor does it necessarily result in fame or fortune. But it is the inner core of communities that can sustain themselves into the future and provide satisfying and rewarding lives for the generations to come.

His Excellency, Lt. General, John Sanderson
AC, Governor of Western Australia
Australia Day, 2003

Participation means creating an environment in which people want to engage.

Tom Bentley, DEMOS, UK

Being able to express a view on the world around us is one of the basic rights of people in a democracy. The most fundamental expression of this is a citizen's right to vote in elections. Yet people have concerns, hopes and aspirations that extend well beyond the ballot box. It is important that people are heard by government and that their views are reflected in day-to-day decision-making.

This Citizenship Strategy aims to ensure that all Western Australians have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making that shapes their everyday lives and that there are mechanisms available for their positive and meaningful contribution to the public policy making process.

Citizenship in Western Australia is an ongoing and dynamic participative process. It assumes the equal worth of all people and requires that every single person has the opportunity to participate actively in public life.

Active citizenship means working together to build a better Western Australia for everyone. This involves taking into account the diversity of views, weighing the costs and consequences of various approaches, and working out solutions that are consistent with community values. This process requires active public participation in the decision-making that shape our every day lives, our communities, and our future.

In today's complex and changing world, governments do not have a monopoly on solutions and the public has an important role to play in shaping public policy. People are well informed about what is going on around them and are prepared to engage actively on issues that are of interest to them. They are often uniquely well positioned to identify policy priorities, reconcile conflicting values, and help formulate the types of policies that will be the most effective within their communities.

Public participation at all levels of community and government decision-making is effective because it is about making choices together. It involves:

- Developing strong and healthy connections between people and their governments, and across all sectors.
- Tapping into the ideas, experience, information and resources of people to identify policies and actions likely to work effectively in the community.

- Addressing high levels of cynicism, lack of trust, and disengagement through open and accountable practices and broad public participation.
- Cultivating a community of citizens with a stronger sense of belonging, greater connections across peoples, and a deeper sense of wellbeing, safety, and security.
- Strengthening civil society through ongoing dialogue and effective partnerships across all sectors and building community confidence in the democratic process.

Democracy is not just an idea, an involvement. It is a community involvement, a constant daily process of communication and of making space for the usually silent.

Prof. Marilyn Waring, *Late Night Live*, Radio National, 12 February 2001

Public participation is an inclusive and self-reinforcing process that helps cultivate new types of behaviour across government, the community and the private sector. The experience of public participation gradually chips away at the systemic barriers that discourage wider community involvement in the public policy making process. Active citizenship and broader public participation often turns a group of, sometimes isolated, individuals into a strong and vibrant community working towards the achievement of a shared vision for the future.

Direction

The Citizenship Strategy is underpinned by a number of key Government policy commitments and goals. The Government made a commitment to develop the Strategy as part of its effort to create better opportunities for the community to participate in, and make creative and effective contributions to, ongoing government processes. The aim is to realise the vision of a society that recognises the valuable contributions of its diverse population, and is able to respond effectively to a diversity of needs. The Strategy is underpinned by the Government endorsed principles of inclusiveness, engagement, capacity building, collaboration and coordination.

An active citizen is someone who not only believes in the concept of a democratic society but who is willing and able to translate that belief into action.

Active citizenship is a compound of knowledge, skills and attitudes; knowledge about how society works, the skills needed to participate effectively, and a conviction that active participation is the right of all citizens.

Australian Senate in Education for Active Citizenship

A commitment to delivering better government also serves as a lynchpin for the Citizenship Strategy. Building the capacity of all members of the community to become more actively engaged in all levels of decision-making is another way of both encouraging and demonstrating honest, accountable, and inclusive government.

Developing strategies that encourage communities to work together to achieve shared outcomes also goes a long way to ensuring that these communities are safe, healthy and supportive places to live.

A healthy democracy requires that all citizens are equally valued and consulted, regardless of their location. This is key to fulfilling the Government's goal of creating strong and vibrant communities in regional Western Australia. Equally important, is the goal of promoting life long learning and the promise of an educated and skilled future for all Western Australians.

Citizenship and Governance

Governance is the way in which we make decisions regarding the future of society. Good governance creates an environment in which trust in the systems and processes of democratic government can be strengthened. This trust in turn promotes and fosters the confidence of citizens to engage and participate in public life more fully. Active community participation at all levels of society contributes to better governance.

Elements essential to good governance include openness and transparency; social, financial and environmental accountability; responsiveness; and the rule of law. The equitable treatment of all citizens and the full and equal participation by citizens in shaping the future are also fundamental features.

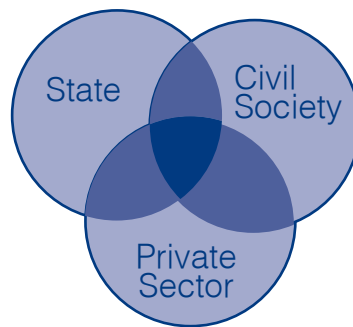
A Voice for All: Strengthening Democracy sets out the Western Australian Government's commitment to active citizenship. Its primary objective is an active citizenship that will enrich our democracy through building the capacity of all citizens to participate effectively at all levels of the governance process.

This Strategy is premised on the core belief that people have the right to know what decision makers are doing on their behalf and to play a meaningful role in shaping both the present and the future of our society.

Governance includes the state, but transcends it by taking in the private sector and civil society. All three are critical for sustaining human development. The state creates a conducive political and legal environment. The private sector generates jobs and income. And civil society facilitates political and social interaction – mobilising groups to participate in economic, social, and political activities. Because each has weaknesses and strengths, a major objective of our support for good governance is to promote constructive interaction among all three.

Governance for Sustainable Human Development, United Nations Development Programme

Changing Nature of Governance



At the beginning of the 21st Century, the changing nature of society and the increasing influence of actors other than government, is changing the way in which decisions are made. Power is now much more widely dispersed throughout society and a myriad of non-government and corporate actors can and do play a meaningful role in the governance process.

In this changing environment, it is becoming increasingly clear that effective policy outcomes are more likely when the government works in partnership with other organisations in both the civil and corporate sectors. This does not mean reducing the role of representative government. What it means is developing more inclusive interactive democratic processes that complement and strengthen existing forms of representative government.

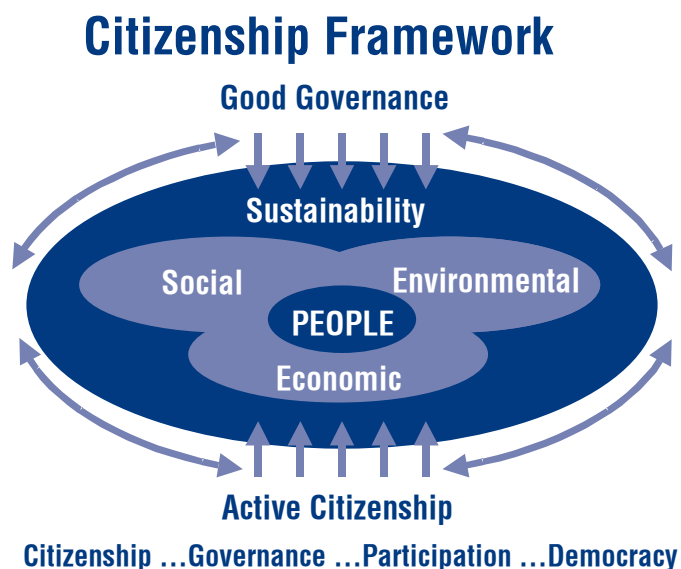
Business people should get together with the community
and have a mutually beneficial outcome.
We need to promote better use of the resources we have. People need to be
informed about what is out there and how to access it.
If I make an investment now, the rewards will come for all of us in the future.

Responses to the WA Citizenship Discussion Paper 2000/2001

This Citizenship Strategy identifies the need to develop strong partnerships and linkages between and across all three sectors: government, civil, and private, for the benefit of the broader community. It recognises that growing fragmentation is one of the key challenges of modern society and explores ways to deliver an integrated approach to government and also the much broader and more inclusive process of governance.

The Western Australian Government has adopted an integrated approach to governance and sustainability that takes into account the interdependence of social, environmental and economic concerns and priorities. This triple bottom-line approach, together with the principles of inclusiveness, equity, engagement, capacity building and partnership, are the foundations of this Citizenship Strategy.

The practice of democratic citizenship is essential to a sustainable future for Western Australia.



Active citizenship provides an effective and dynamic framework for good governance leading to a sustainable future.

Vision, Values and Guiding Principles

Vision

A community where all Western Australians are valued as citizens, where they play a more significant role in setting policy priorities, and where they help shape the nature of the society in which they live.

Values

All citizens have the potential to contribute to the democratic process and the right to shape the nature of the community in which they live.

People have the right to know what is happening in their community and how they can engage meaningfully in public life.

Everyone is entitled to full and equal participation.

All citizens have equal rights and responsibilities.

Guiding Principles

A healthy democracy requires the participation of informed and active citizens.

Public deliberation and participation are essential parts of policy and decision making, and implementation.

Positive experiences build trust and inspire confidence.

Government and Institutions are responsible for ensuring appropriate mechanisms exist for stakeholders and the wider community to be able to participate effectively.

Genuine engagement requires partnerships between government and citizens and across all sectors in civil society.

A healthy democracy applies the principles of good governance within the public sector and across all sectors.

Key Objectives

Knowledge and Understanding

Knowing how to make a difference so that you can make a difference

- Ensure Government information is objective, complete, relevant, easy to find and understand, and accessible to all;
- Provide practical information on how to navigate WA government systems;
- Raise public awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, human rights and the meaning of citizenship;
- Strengthen understanding of the benefits of increased participation and active citizenship;
- Provide information regarding topical issues and key life events; and
- Foster a 'learning society' where citizens play an active role in generating knowledge and understanding.

Inclusion

The opportunity for all to participate effectively as active citizens

- Identify and address barriers to participation such as discrimination, violence, and structural and institutional barriers;
- Advance reconciliation;
- Embrace diversity in all its forms;
- Address cynicism and build confidence and trust;
- Unleash the potential of all citizens by working to develop the capacity and skills necessary for effective public participation; and
- Address individual and community isolation and fragmentation by working to reconnect citizens.

Participation

Creating the partnerships that put the public back into public policy

- Encourage active citizen participation at all levels and aspects of society;
- Ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place so that all people and all sectors are able to participate effectively throughout the policy process;
- Build and foster co-operation, alliances and partnerships across all sectors;
- Take into account the interdependent role of governments, civil society and the private sector;
- Promote and facilitate integrated approaches to government; and
- Seek out and acknowledge civic achievement.

Democratic Governance

Public trust and confidence in democratic processes

- Ensure honest, open and accountable governance across all sectors;
- Work towards appropriate electoral, legislative and constitutional reform based on the full and equal participation of all;
- Partner with the community to develop best practice benchmark indicators of citizenship practice, democracy and governance; and
- Work together to build a strong civil society characterised by dialogue between people and governments, human rights and choice, public trust and confidence.

Key Objective: Knowledge and Understanding

Citizenship in a democratic society is about meaningful participation. A core objective of this Strategy is to ensure that people have the knowledge and understanding necessary to participate effectively in the decision-making processes that shape their communities and their lives. This involves more than just a basic understanding of the system of government. It includes a workable knowledge of how certain decisions are made and who is responsible for them. It is also about knowing what information is available and where it can be found. People also need high quality information about key life issues so that they can participate effectively.

Actively working to strengthen knowledge and understanding helps build the capacity of people to participate actively in their communities and in the public policy making process. In building this capacity we can create a learning environment where the generation of information, knowledge and understanding is not a one-way, passive process but rather a dynamic interaction in which citizens play an active part.

Recent Initiatives Include:

- An Office of E-Government has been established to assist Government agencies to work together and use technology to better provide the community with services and information.
- The State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities has been devised to help ensure that government information, services and facilities are accessible to all citizens including people with disabilities.
- The Department of Consumer and Employment Protection has launched a campaign to ensure young people know how to access information regarding their rights in employment and if necessary how to enforce those rights.
- The Department of Environment has established a public database providing information on its compliance and enforcement actions that is located on its website.
- The Fire and Emergency Services Authority WA has redesigned its website to display information in the same way that a citizen is likely to look for it rather than as a reflection of its own organisational structure.
- The Western Australian Museum has a new website which takes visitors on a virtual tour of the State's history. This opens up the museum to previously untapped audiences such as people from remote and regional areas and people with disabilities.
- As part of a proactive and preventative strategy, the Health Department's Meals on Wheels service uses its service delivery to disseminate information on health and nutritional issues.
- The Department of Justice, the Legal Aid Commission, and a group of third-year law students from Notre Dame University have collaborated to produce a series of fact sheets designed to make the court process easier to understand for court customers, and to make access to justice easier for all members of the community.
- The Citizenscape (www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au) web portal has been created to assist citizens in developing a better understanding of democratic institutions and processes, build citizenship capacity, to assist in best practice in consultation and connect people across generations, cultures and locations. It also provides a comprehensive list of, and link to, government consultations under way.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Ensure that information from government is objective, complete, relevant, easy to find and understand, and accessible to all:

- Maximise use of traditional means and electronic technologies to ensure that all people have equal access to government information and services; and
- Develop best practice criteria to ensure that information provided in government publications is both appropriate and accessible to all people regardless of their background, location or situation.

2. Actively provide and promote practical information about how to navigate Western Australian government systems:

- Develop a clear, user friendly, Citizens Handbook in both electronic and paper form;
- Provide information about systems and processes of government, electoral systems and mechanisms for public redress and appeal; and
- Seek to identify and fill gaps in information provision.

3. Work to raise awareness regarding the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, human rights, and the meaning of citizenship:

- Foster education on civics and citizenship via education curriculum and public education;
- Develop and implement an information and awareness raising program to enhance knowledge and understanding of citizenship in Western Australia; and
- Communicate the value of public deliberation in policy and decision-making and develop mechanisms for engagement that include deliberative practice.

4. Strengthen public understanding of the benefits of increased participation and active citizenship:

- Support community leadership development programs;
- Promote citizenship initiatives across civil society and corporate sectors; and
- Promote positive citizenship stories across all sectors and in the media.

5. Provide information regarding topical issues and key life events:

- Encourage agencies to provide a wide range of information on issues to ensure more informed debate and decision-making.

6. Foster a 'learning society' where citizens play an active role in generating knowledge and understanding:

- Provide continuing education opportunities such as public seminars, workshops, travelling exhibitions and displays;
- Promote life-long learning and dialogue on issues of significance to the Western Australian community; and
- Identify and promote opportunities for people to gain experience, build skills and develop expertise as active citizens.

Key Objective: Inclusion

Citizenship is the common ground that unites us all regardless of age, gender, culture, lifestyle, ability or location. Everyone should have equal access of opportunity to participate in public life. This is critical to creating a more equitable society where everyone can stake a claim to shaping not only our present but also our future. To achieve this goal it is essential that the barriers to active and effective community participation be correctly identified and speedily addressed. These barriers include a diversity of social and economic factors, institutional and structural barriers, racism and all forms of discrimination and violence, lack of skills and confidence, lack of trust and cynicism.

Inclusion involves ensuring that all people have the opportunity to actively participate in all aspects of community life. Its aim is to identify and address the factors that prevent some Western Australians from fully exercising and enjoying their rights not only as citizens but also as valuable members of the community. It also aims to ensure that the formal mechanisms of citizen redress and appeal, that have been established specifically to guarantee equality and fair treatment for everyone, are freely and clearly accessible to those who feel most in their need.

Recent Initiatives Include:

- The Government is developing and implementing strategies to promote equal rights, participation, and responsibilities for all Western Australians within an inclusive society. Specific initiatives include:
 - o An Equity and Diversity Plan 2001-2005 for the public sector workforce;
 - o A State-wide Anti-Racism Strategy that seeks to eliminate racism in all its forms;
 - o The WA Charter of Multiculturalism;
 - o Development of an early years strategy for young children, their families and carers;
 - o An 11-person Indigenous Women's Congress that gives WA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women a greater say over government policy; and
 - o A regional development policy to provide a fairer deal for regional Western Australians.
- Development of "Consulting Citizens: Engaging with Aboriginal Western Australians" to provide guidance to government agencies consulting with Indigenous communities.
- Implementation of the Active Ageing Taskforce report to ensure that older Western Australians are healthier, more physically active and are valued community participants.
- Establishment of a Domestic Violence Advocacy Support Central, a one-stop shop in central Perth where women and children can access a range of resources designed to stop domestic violence.
- Implementation of the Gordon Inquiry recommendations addressing family violence and child abuse in Aboriginal communities.
- Adoption of the "W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines" as the common best practice standard for all Australian Government web sites.
- Providing specialised telecommunication services to ensure computers and constant Internet access for the State's 510 home-based remote students.
- Introducing part-time magistrates in the State's largest court jurisdiction to help address chronic under-representation of women in the judiciary.
- The WA Police Service has introduced a "Text Messaging Service" to enable people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired, to contact the police and request assistance in emergencies.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Identify and address barriers to effective participation in our democracy:

- Identify and address barriers to participation such as socio-economic and cultural factors, violence, geographical isolation, and other forms of exclusion;
- Resolutely challenge discrimination and racism and address it in all forms;
- Review and strengthen Equal Opportunity measures, institutions and processes;
- Identify opportunities for improving equality and human rights compliance;
- Develop protocols and guidelines for engaging with seniors, people with disabilities, women, Indigenous people, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, young people and children to ensure their effective participation in policy and decision-making ; and
- Convene an inter-agency working party to identify common issues when engaging with seniors, people with disabilities, women, Indigenous people, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, young people and children.

2. Advance reconciliation:

- Identify and address issues of concern to Indigenous communities; and
- Identify means for promoting reconciliation.

3. Embrace diversity in all its forms, connecting across background, cultures, gender, generations, lifestyle and location:

- Recognise the diversity of needs and aspirations of all Western Australians and ensure that they are appropriately addressed;
- Develop new civic initiatives and build on existing programs to address specific community needs;
- Acknowledge the valuable contribution of bicultural and bilingual workers;
- Recognise, embrace and cater for difference and diversity within the public sector; and
- Expand programs to assist civil and corporate sector to embrace diversity at all levels.

4. Unleash the potential of all citizens by further working to develop the capacity and skills necessary for effective public participation:

- Promote self-respect, recognising the rights, dignity and cultural worth of all;
- Promote the sharing of active citizenship and public participation skills;
- Identify, promote and engage civic champions and role models across the State; and
- Undertake a campaign to promote active citizenship among particular groups within society, such as young people and Indigenous people.

5. Address individual and community isolation and fragmentation by working to reconnect citizens:

- Connect citizens to address isolation and fragmentation;
- Develop fair, accessible, and equitable mechanisms to link citizens to relevant practical information;
- Encourage and foster opportunities for interaction between citizens and between various sectors of the community, the sharing of skills and collective knowledge;
- Encourage multipurpose facilities that can be used by specific sectors of the community and as intergenerational and intercultural venues; and
- Promote public access to current and emerging technologies and provide opportunities for people to improve their skills to find information.

6. Support citizens and civics activities in the community:

- Promote citizenship at all levels through specifically targeted funding and resourcing; and
- Develop and implement a Citizens and Civics grants program.

Key Objective: Participation

In an increasingly interconnected, fast moving and volatile world, governments alone cannot provide all the answers to the complex challenges that shape our every day lives. One of these challenges is identifying ways to address the social, environmental and economic priorities for Western Australia in a coherent and sustainable manner. This requires that we identify ways to strengthen the capacity of governments, in partnership with civil society and the private sector, to develop and articulate a clear sense of purpose that reflects the needs and aspirations of all citizens. It is only through citizen engagement that true sustainability can be achieved.

This third key objective, participation, involves acknowledging the interdependent roles of government, civil society, private sector organisations and the market. It aims to develop and strengthen practical tools and mechanisms through which the Government, the people, and the various actors in between, can work in partnership to make better decisions that are more relevant to the needs of all Western Australians. It focuses on promoting active citizenship so that communities can work together with government, industry and relevant non-government organisations to address pressing issues of concern such as sustainability and the environment, safety and security, reconciliation, and health and education needs.

Recent Initiatives Include:

- A whole of Government catalogue of public consultations www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au
- A review of the Interested Persons Register to ensure greater diversity of Western Australians on Government boards and committees nominations.
- State-wide public consultations for input into policy and decision making includes: the Drug Summit, Water Symposium, Freight Transport Network and the Carnarvon-Ningaloo Coast Regional Strategy (Ningaloo Coast consultation).
- Major initiatives and partnerships to promote integrated policy development, planning, and service delivery across the different levels of government and sectors, such as:
 - o The Western Australian State Government/Local Government Partnership Agreement;
 - o Industry Plan for the Non-Government Human Services Sector;
 - o Strategic use of technology to improve internal efficiency, service delivery to citizens, and community participation (Office of E-Government); and
 - o The Functional Review Taskforce to identify ways in which Government service delivery could be better integrated and made more efficient and effective.
- Support for public participation in community through:
 - o 'Value Volunteering: A Shared Vision' strategy to improve support for volunteers;
 - o The Volunteer (Protection from Liability) Act 2002 and the Community Insurance Fund to provide affordable insurance for volunteers and non-profit groups;
 - o WA Community Leadership Plan;
 - o A pilot Indigenous leadership program for Indigenous communities in the Gascoyne; and
 - o A weekly radio program, broadcast on World Radio 6EBA, to enable people from different cultural backgrounds to engage in discussions in the public arena.
- The Citizens and Civics Unit has launched a series of Consulting Citizens guides to promote best practice community engagement. (To order copies of the guides see back cover.)
- The Office of E-Government and Citizens and Civics Unit are developing a concise set of guidelines that will assist government agencies to engage the public online.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Encourage active citizen participation at all levels and aspects of society:

- Encourage involvement and voting at all levels, including the workplace, and encourage civic responsibility such as jury duty; and
- Foster engagement with issues of community concern, ensuring that appropriate strategies are adopted that recognise diversity and encourage participation by all.

2. Build and foster cooperation, alliances and partnerships across all sectors taking into account the interdependent role of governments, civil society and the private sector:

- Develop and promote partnerships and alliances among all levels of Government and across all sectors including business and industry, NGOs and civil society groups;
- Encourage and promote corporate citizenship and triple bottom line reporting (social, environmental, economic); and
- Identify opportunities for sharing knowledge, skills, facilities and other resources across sectors.

3. Ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure all people and all sectors are able to participate effectively throughout the policy process, from decision-making right through to implementation:

- Encourage confidence and trust in citizens as competent participants in decision making across all sectors;
- Provide, and disseminate widely, up-to-date information on the actions of government and public consultation initiatives;
- Ensure that the mechanisms developed to facilitate public participation in the policy process are easily accessible, fair and equitable;
- Identify and address gaps in the community's ability to engage effectively, for example, explore expanding the role of community resource centres to provide consultation support;
- Conduct or commission research to explore successful, innovative models for citizen participation;
- Maximise the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to facilitate access and participation and develop protocols for online consultation; and
- Develop guidelines for appointment processes, functions and roles of boards and committees to ensure greater representation and effectiveness.

4. Promote and facilitate integrated approaches to government:

- Encourage integrated approaches to the delivery of government services and to addressing community needs;
- Build relevant capacity within organisations; and
- Maximise the potential of ICTs to contribute to coherent "joined-up" service delivery.

5. Seek out and acknowledge civic achievement:

- Support volunteer and community programs which contribute to active citizenship; and
- Support recognition of programs and awards for people, community groups and corporate sector representatives involved in pro-active citizenship.

Key Objective: Democratic Governance

A healthy and robust democracy is about more than simply voting at election time; it requires the active participation of all its citizens. It requires an emphasis on the engagement of all stakeholders, thinking and acting collaboratively for the good of the whole community. Trust and confidence in the political process depend upon good governance incorporating the democratic principles of transparency, open and accountable government, responsiveness, citizen involvement in policy and decision-making, and leadership on significant issues.

This key objective addresses issues of good governance and democracy across all sectors. Its aim is to increase the confidence of citizens in governments and major institutions, including business and the non-government sector. Building upon strengthened knowledge and understanding, inclusion, and the development of participatory mechanisms, the objective is to strengthen our democratic capacity and deliver a truly civil society and a fair and sustainable future for Western Australia.

Recent Initiatives Include:

- A Ministerial Code of Conduct to ensure that Ministers of the Crown maintain the highest standards of probity, accountability, honesty, integrity and diligence.
- A Members of Parliament Code of Conduct to ensure that Members perform their duties with honesty and integrity, respecting the law and institution of the Parliament, using their influence to advance the common good of the people of Western Australia.
- Legislative reform which builds citizenship, democracy and governance, such as:
 - o Whistleblowers legislation, which provides full immunity from civil, criminal, or disciplinary action to those who expose improper or corrupt behaviour;
 - o The Corruption and Crime Commission which has all the powers of a Royal Commission to investigate alleged corruption by police and public offices, as well as organised crime;
 - o The Lesbian and Gay Law Reform Bill 2001 takes Western Australia to the forefront of gay and lesbian human rights;
 - o The State Administrative Tribunal provides a 'one-stop-shop' that covers everything from appeals against multi-million dollar tax judgements and land valuations through to firearms licensing decisions, dog destruction orders, property disputes and town planning appeals; and
 - o A mechanism through which de facto partners may resolve property and maintenance disputes in the event of a breakdown of their relationship has been introduced into Western Australian law.
- The current system of Ministerial planning appeals has been replaced with a more transparent and accountable tribunal system.
- The State Sustainability Strategy provides a comprehensive framework and actions, to meet the needs of current and future generations through an integration of environmental protection, social advancement and economic prosperity.
- In the biggest ever community consultation of this type in the Southern Hemisphere, Dialogue with the City provided an opportunity for thousands of Western Australians to be involved in planning what Perth will look like in 2030.
- The Citizens and Civics Unit has been established and a Citizenship Strategy has been formulated in community partnership to reinvigorate the democratic process in WA and ensure the civic education and proactive public participation of all.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Ensure honest, open and accountable governance across all sectors:

- Maintain and promote the highest ethical standards in the exercise of government;
- Maintain and promote the highest standards of transparency and accountability (democratic, social, financial and environmental) in the exercise of government;
- Encourage corporate and civil society sectors to maintain and promote the highest ethical standards, transparency and accountability, in the exercise of their activities;
- Encourage and promote good governance, including equity, fairness and respect for human rights across all sectors;
- Promote and support greater understanding of, and maximise access to, bodies such as the Auditor General, Equal Opportunity Commission, Public Sector Standards Commission, Office of Freedom of Information Commission and the Ombudsman; and
- Foster understanding and further develop the Western Australian citizenship policy and associated initiatives.

2. Work towards appropriate electoral, legislative and constitutional reform based on the full and equal participation of all:

- Promote debate on constitutional issues such as, consolidating the WA Constitution, the process for appointing the Governor, and a State based Human Rights Act;
- Replace the term 'subjects' with 'citizens' in past and future acts and statutes;
- Draft appropriate racial vilification legislation; and
- Continue to work towards the adoption of the democratic principle of one vote, one value in the State's electoral laws.

3. Partner with the community to identify and develop best practice benchmark indicators of citizenship practice, democracy and governance:

- Ensure citizens are co-owners of best practice benchmark indicators of citizenship practice, democracy and governance;
- In conjunction with relevant stakeholders and organisations, develop indicators and benchmarks (True Measures of Progress) that move beyond the narrow economic indicators that are traditionally used to measure government, community and social progress; and
- Develop and promote practical self-evaluation models that enable all stakeholders to progress towards benchmarks.

4. Continue to promote a civil society that is characterised by dialogue between people and their governments, human rights and choice, and public trust and confidence:

- Encourage and promote debate and dialogue on Western Australia's priorities and a vision for the future.

Where to From Here

Working together, we can all help to make Western Australia an even better place to live. Our challenge is to create the conditions where all citizens who wish to are able to become actively involved in the decision-making that shapes the future of our society. It is this challenge that has underpinned the development of the State Citizenship Strategy.

Our next key goal is to get all sectors of the community working together to make sure that the Citizenship Strategy is implemented in a timely, effective and meaningful manner.

Citizenship is a dynamic concept that only finds meaning in each individual situation. If they are to remain relevant, therefore, the strategies and actions outlined in the Strategy must be subject to constant renewal through genuine dialogue between all citizens and all sectors of the community. Successful implementation of the Strategy requires that our political, corporate and community leaders be responsive to community needs and priorities.

Getting the Message Across

A comprehensive communication strategy is key to making the Strategy actually happen. Its aim is to raise awareness of the Strategy across all sectors and levels of the community, and to engage as many groups and individuals as possible in the development and implementation of actions and activities.

The communication strategy will include targeted education and training programs, seminars and workshops, media exposure, and the exploration of potential awareness raising opportunities.

The State Citizenship Strategy is a whole-of-government, whole-of-community endeavour. Whether or not its message truly gets across is not just up to the Government; it also depends on the community. It depends on all the active citizens who are willing to take the lead in communicating the substance of the Strategy within their own networks. It is the people of Western Australia who are at the heart of the Citizenship Strategy and it is they who hold the real key to its success.

With this in mind, implementation of the Strategy is targeted at societal systems as a whole, the institutions of governance, the community, and also individuals. The Citizens and Civics Unit, within the Department of Premier and Cabinet, will work in partnership with key stakeholders from State and Local Government and the corporate and civil society sectors, to identify steps that can be taken to translate key strategies into actions for implementation.

So in thinking about ethics and politics we would do better to begin by thinking what ought to be done and who ought to do it, rather than about what we ought to get. Passive citizens, who wait for others to accord their rights and mistakenly suppose that states alone can secure them, are doomed to disappointment. Active citizens who meet their duties thereby secure one another's rights.

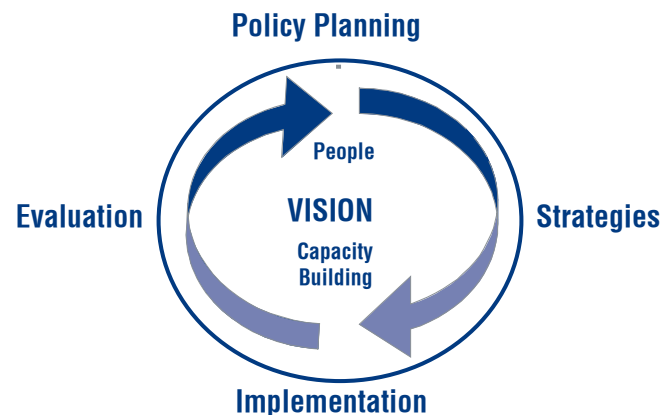
Onora O'Neill, *A Question of Trust* 2002

Making it Happen - A Living Strategy

A critical element of effective implementation is the participatory action planning cycle, which aims to bring about a change in action while at the same time developing a better understanding of current practice. It is a dynamic, flexible and participatory process that brings together all key governance partners in a public policy cycle that alternates between action and critical reflection. Partners in this process systematically critique what they are doing and continually refine both the questions they are asking and the methods they are using to implement specific policies and achieve certain outcomes.

Participatory Action Planning Cycle

Through this process, the knowledge gained from both policy planning and practice converge toward a much deeper understanding of what has already taken place and how the different governance partners can work together to achieve what is still needed. In this respect, the participatory action planning cycle itself is a key element within the democratic capacity building process both inside Government and in the community.



The process continually builds upon itself, making it possible to focus more on the actions that are the most effective while helping to identify gaps or weaknesses in overall implementation. It also allows for the development of short-term actions with a fixed goal while at the same time ensuring the long-term flexibility needed to respond to changing developments and shifting community priorities.

A lot of work is already being undertaken by Government, and within the community and corporate sectors, to promote proactive citizenship and greater public participation. Much still remains to be done and the Government, working with its partners and through the Citizens and Civics Unit, will continue to work towards these goals.

In the individuals and organisations working in our community today we see evidence of great energy, a capacity to dream and a willingness to embrace change to help build a better community.

Lotterywest, Response to WA Citizenship Discussion Paper 2000/2001

Background to the Strategy

Australian Citizenship enables full participation in our society, irrespective of whether or not a person is born here. It reflects an underlying commitment to our democratic traditions, a sense of "fair go" ... It is symbolic of both the inclusive nature of our society and our unity as a nation. It is at the very heart of being Australian.

Australian Citizenship Council, (2000)

For a Citizenship Strategy to succeed, Western Australians, in all their diversity and across all sectors, need to be actively involved in both its formulation and implementation. To this end, consultation at all levels has been the cornerstone of every phase in the development of this Strategy.

This inclusive consultation process has helped to build community confidence to participate in public decision-making processes and has strengthened the capacity within government to engage the community in meaningful dialogue.

Phase One: Identifying Community Priorities

The first phase in the development of the Strategy began with a workshop in the City of Gosnells and a Citizenship Symposium held in November 1999, which aimed to prioritise key community objectives and concerns with regard to citizenship. This provided the foundations for a Citizenship Discussion Paper that was released for public comment in April 2000.

Phase Two: Broad Community Engagement

Following the release of the Discussion Paper a series of workshops and forums were held to generate awareness of citizenship and related issues and to facilitate civic debate about what it means to be a citizen of Western Australia. The workshops continued throughout 2000 and 2001 and included metropolitan Perth and regional Western Australia, local government and business/industry, and groups such as women, young people, seniors, Indigenous and ethnic communities, and people with disabilities.

Public response to the Discussion Paper surpassed all expectations. Submissions reflecting a diversity of views were received from over five hundred individuals and organisations. The Western Australian Citizenship and Multicultural Advisory Council presented these to the Government in September 2000 in *The Way Forward – Citizenship: Building a Shared Future*. All of the recommendations outlined in this report received bipartisan support and they provided the general framework for the development of a Citizenship Strategy.

Phase Three: Development of a State Citizenship Strategy

In February 2001, the newly elected Premier, Dr Geoff Gallop, assumed portfolio responsibility for Citizenship. In July the same year, the Citizens and Civics Unit (CCU) was established within the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Policy Office, with the objective of developing State Citizenship Strategies, policies and initiatives.

Based on the community feedback received, a draft framework for the Citizenship Strategy was prepared and presented to the Premier in August 2002. Six months later, representatives from 71 Government agencies came together in series of workshops aimed at taking stock of what they were already doing to further the objectives outlined in the Strategy and to identify additional steps that could be taken to breathe life into the Citizenship Strategy at a whole of government level. The Strategy was revised in the latter half of 2003 based on feedback received from Government agencies and a final draft was then sent to key community stakeholders in early 2004 for final comments.

The Citizenship portfolio was introduced in late 1998 to promote civic involvement and foster public participation in all levels and aspects of community life. The portfolio was established in response to growing citizen cynicism, disengagement and decreasing confidence in the ability of governments and major institutions to deliver the type of society that we want for our selves and for the future.

Raising Awareness and Identifying Needs

When the CCU first began operating one of its first major challenges was to address the strong commitment by the Government to consult and involve the public in policy and decision-making. To achieve this objective CCU, again consulted widely within government and across the community. This extensive consultation process, which included the *Searching Our Futures: Consulting Citizens Forum* held in November 2001, revealed a number of Government led initiatives that could contribute to best practice, credibility and integrity in consultative practice.

Some of the key initiatives that have been undertaken as a result of this consultation have included:

- Development of a number of consultation guides to assist government agencies to plan and implement effective engagement initiatives;
- Launch of a community centric web portal Citizenscape that provides a wealth of information on how to be an active citizen and how communities can engage in decision-making, along with background on citizenship, governance, democracy, human rights and other important issues. This site also includes a comprehensive list of community consultations undertaken across all portfolio areas;
- Hosting of a series of workshops (2002-2003) aimed at building community consultation skills and promoting participatory best practice; and
- Establishing an intra-governmental Consultation Reference Group in May 2002 to provide information, planning advice and assistance to agencies undertaking consultation projects.

The guides, ongoing workshops, the identification of training needs, the Consultations Reference Group, and the support and assistance that CCU provides on a range of consultative initiatives represent its strong commitment to the development of a more robust consultative culture within the public sector.

The development of a State Citizenship Strategy has been an inclusive process involving feedback from several hundred individuals, organisations and sectors over a three-year period, but this does not end here. We need to continually work to create conditions that foster active citizenship and community engagement. This requires ongoing participation from the community, the corporate sector, and from all three levels of government.

Resources

Australian Citizenship for a New Century (2000) Report. Australian Citizenship Council. Canberra, Australia.

Better Planning: Better Services (A Strategic Planning Framework for the Western Australian Public Sector) (2003) Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Perth, Western Australia.

Bohman, J. and W. Rehg (1999) *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*. London: MIT Press.

Burstein, P. (1998) "Bringing the Public Back In: Should Sociologists Consider the Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy", *Social Forces*, 77(1), pp26-73.

Carson, L. and K. Gelber (2001) *Ideas for Community Consultation: A Discussion on Principles and Procedures for Making Consultation Work*. Report. Department of Urban Affairs. Victoria, New South Wales.

Citizenship: Building a Shared Future (2000) Discussion Paper. Office of Citizenship and Multicultural Interests with the Western Australian Citizenship and Multicultural Advisory Council. Perth, Western Australia.

Coleman, S. and J. Gotze. (2001) *Bowling Together: Online Public Engagement in Policy Deliberation*. London: Hansard Society.

Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide (2002) Citizens and Civics Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Perth, Western Australia.

Consulting Citizens: Planning for Success (2003) Citizens and Civics Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Perth, Western Australia.

Consulting Citizens: Engaging With Indigenous Western Australians (2004) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service, Department of Indigenous Affairs, Citizens and Civics Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Perth, Western Australia.

Cox, C. "A Truly Civil Society." *The 1995 Boyer Lectures*. Radio National: Australian Broadcasting Commission.

Dryzek, J. (2000) *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, Critics, Contestations*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Elster, J. (1998) *Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Government Structures for Better Results: The Report of the Taskforce Established to Review the Machinery of Western Australia's Government (2001) Machinery of Government Taskforce, Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Perth, Western Australia.

Jordens, A. (1995) *Redefining Australians: Immigration, Citizenship and National Identity*. Marrackville: Hale & Iremonger.

Mathers, D. and N. McAfee (2002) *Making Choices Together: The Power of Public Deliberation*. Dayton: Charles F. Kettering Foundation.

O'Neill, O. (2002) "A Question of Trust." *The BBC Reith Lectures 2002*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) (2000) *Trust in Government: Ethics Measures in OECD Countries*. Paris: OECD Publications.

OECD (2001) *Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation, and Public Participation in Policy Making*. Paris: OECD Publications.

Public Sector Reform: Delivering a Better Government (2001) Australian Labor Party Election Policy Commitment. Perth, Western Australia.

Rayner, M. (1997) *Rooting Democracy: Growing the Society We Want*. St Leonards: Allen and Unwin.

Sawer, M. and G. Zappala (2001) *Speaking for the People: Representation in Australian Politics*. Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Sarkissian, W. et al. (1997) *Community Participation in Practice: A Practical Guide*. Institute for Science and Technology Policy, Murdoch University. Perth, Western Australia.

Stewart, J. (1995) *Innovation in Democratic Practice*. The Institute of Local Government Studies. Birmingham, UK.

Stewart, J. (1996) *Further Innovation in Democratic Practice*. The Institute of Local Government Studies. Birmingham, UK.

Stewart, J. (1997) *More Innovation in Democratic Practice*. The Institute of Local Government Studies. Birmingham, UK.

The Way Forward, Citizenship: Building a Shared Future (2000) Office of Citizenship and Multicultural Interests. Perth, Western Australia.

Vigoda, A. (2000) "From Responsiveness to Collaboration: Governance, Citizens, and the Next Generation of Public Administration." *Public Administration Review*. 62. 5.

Walters, L. et al. (2000) "Putting More Public in Policy Analysis." *Public Administration Review*. 60. 4.

Have your say

The Western Australian Government would like to hear your views on citizenship and on the State Citizenship Strategy. The Strategy needs community input to develop initiatives and programs responsive to community needs and to be effective at achieving the desired outcomes. Your feedback is vital. There are several ways in which you can send us your feedback:

Write to:

Citizens and Civics Unit
Department of Premier and Cabinet
197 St Georges Terrace
Perth, 6000, WA

Leave your comments on the website:

<http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au>

Email: bacitizen@dpc.wa.gov.au

Telephone: 08 9222 9837

Or fill out the Postcard below and return it to the Citizens and Civics Unit:



Citizenship Strategy Feedback Form (Personal Details are Optional)

Name:

Organisation/Address:

Comments:

.....

.....

Please send me a copy of:

- Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide
- Consulting Citizens: Planning for Success
- Consulting Citizens: Engaging With Aboriginal Western Australians
- Western Australian Citizenship Strategy 2004-2009



Citizens and Civics Unit
Department of the Premier and Cabinet
197 St George's Terrace
Perth, 6000, WA

Affix
Stamp
Here