

A ROADMAP FOR DEMOCRACY IN INDI

"I call on the Indi community to stay engaged and continue to inspire the next generation of leaders" - Cathy McGowan MP

There are many ways that Australians can participate in our wonderful democracy. Indi is recognised nationally for engaging in the parliamentary process. It has shown the country that democracy is a 'top-down', 'bottom-up' and 'inside-outward' process. Indi is proof that, when a local MP encourages and supports participation of their electorate, people jump at the opportunity to work together to solve the issues directly affecting their communities. This is 'The Indi Way'.

This case study provides:

- An introduction to how democracy is working in Indi
- A list of ways to get involved and expand your participation in the parliamentary process
- Recognition of the thousands of Indi people who have participated



HOW CAN I BE INVOLVED?

1



Inform yourself

- Learn about the role of the Federal Parliament and the different tiers of government – ask yourself "is this a local, state or federal issue?"
- Get to know your elected representatives
- Talk to your friends and neighbours – how do they feel about your concern?
- Find out if there is an agency that can help you (e.g. Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman, Legal Aid)

www.aph.gov.au

- 🔍 **Parliamentary Education Office**
- **Senators and Members**
- **About Parliament**

2



Seek support from the Member for Indi's office

The Member for Indi and their office can:

- Advise you on which level of government is responsible for addressing your concern
- Direct you towards the relevant government department and suggest ways to effectively engage with them
- Send a letter to a Federal Minister on your behalf and relay their response
- Help facilitate advocacy visits to Parliament House
- Attend events upon invitation

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3



Write a letter or start a petition

- Writing a letter or email is a very effective way of raising an issue and offering a solution to your local MP or any Minister
- Ensure that your letter or email has greatest value by using respectful language, has a clear request and correctly addresses your intended audience
- A petition to Federal Parliament is a request for action on an issue that concerns you

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- **Senators and Members/Contacting Senators and Members**
- **Parliamentary Business/Petitions**

4



Connect with Parliament

- Participate in the Canberra Volunteer Program at the Member for Indi's office during Parliamentary sitting weeks
- Attend an event hosted by the Member for Indi
- Attend Question Time in Parliament
- Make an advocacy visit to meet with a Minister and their staff
- Invite a Minister to visit Indi to see first-hand your organisation's successes and challenges

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- 🔍 **Ministry List**
- **Visit Parliament**
- **Parliamentary Business**

IMAGE CREDITS:

Front cover (clockwise from top left): 1. St Joseph's Primary School of Benalla in Parliament in 2014 (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP), 2. Indi Summit in 2015 (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP), 3. Alpine Valley Community Leadership Program participants at Parliament House in 2018 (Penny Bradfield - Auspic, Department of Parliamentary Services) **Connecting Community to Canberra - How we do it in Indi** (clockwise from top left): 1. Ruby Holloway participating in the ANIP (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP), 2. Josh Frydenberg MP at an Indi renewable energy round-table in 2018 (courtesy of Mondo Energy), 3. The Social Enterprise in Schools program in 2017 involving St Joseph's Primary School of Beechworth (courtesy of ACRE), 4. Claudia Weatherall participating in the Canberra Volunteer Program (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP), 5. Tahlia Biggs - third from right - representing the Korin Gamadji Institute in 2018 at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York (courtesy of Tahlia Biggs), 6. Hon Karen Andrews visiting Wodonga Senior Secondary College in 2017 (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP), 7. Handover of a 'Stop Adani' petition (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP), 8. Alpine Valleys Dairy Pathways Project advocacy visit to Parliament House in 2017 (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP), 9. Victory Lutheran College of Wodonga visiting Parliament House in 2015 (courtesy of Cathy McGowan MP)

DATA SOURCES: Department of Parliamentary Services, Electorate Office records and local media.

FIND OUT MORE about how democracy works in Indi by visiting www.cathymcgowan.com.au

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Cathy McGowan
INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR INDI



CONNECTING COMMUNITY TO CANBERRA - THE INDI WAY

A case study in community action (June 2018)



Communities of Indi actively engaging in our democracy

Engagement that is:

- ✓ Unique
- ✓ Diverse
- ✓ Authentic
- ✓ Outcome focused
- ✓ Available to all

CONNECTING COMMUNITY TO CANBERRA - HOW WE DO IT IN INDI

Thousands of people from Indi have taken the opportunity to participate actively in the parliamentary process. The numbers are just part of the story...



100 SCHOOLS
from Indi have visited
Parliament House since 2015

3968 STUDENTS

from Indi have participated
in Parliament House school
visits since 2015



17 STUDENTS from
Indi have participated in the
Acknowledging Student
Leadership Program at
Parliament House since 2014

Primary and
secondary schools
have visited Canberra
from across Indi,
including:

Alexandra, Baranduda,
Bandiana, Beechworth,
Benalla, Bethanga, Bright,
Chiltern, Corryong, Dederang,
Eskdale, Everton, Falls Creek,
Harrietville, Huon, Jamieson,
Kinglake, Leneva, Londrigan,
Mansfield, Merrijig, Middle
Indigo, Milawa, Mitta Mitta,
Mount Beauty, Myrtleford,
Osbornes Flat, Oxley,
Porepunkah, Rutherglen,
Tallangatta, Tangambalanga,
Tawonga, Wahgunyah,
Wandiligong, Wangaratta,
Whorouly, Wodonga,
Yackandandah and Yea.



Students
participating in the
Acknowledging
Student Leadership
Program have come
from the following
Indi towns:

Beechworth, Benalla,
Mansfield, Wangaratta and
Wodonga.

4 STUDENTS

have participated in Australian
National University's Australian
National Internships Program
(ANIP) in Cathy McGowan MP's
Office since 2014

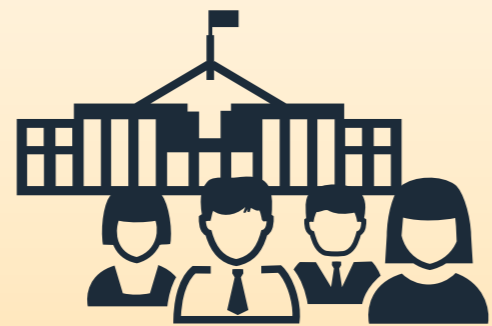


Interns of the ANIP from
Indi have included:

Jamon Shay (Wodonga), Jacqui
Hawkins (Wodonga), Max Phillis
(Wangaratta) and Ruby Holloway
(Wangaratta).

**13 ADVOCACY
GROUPS**

from Indi have been
supported at Parliament
House since 2013



Advocacy groups
visiting Canberra have
included:

Albury Wodonga Ethnic
Communities Council, Alpine
Valleys Dairy Pathways
Project, Australian Centre for Rural
Entrepreneurship, Central Hume
Primary Care Partnership, Mount
Hotham Alpine Resort
Management, Northern Victoria
Refugee Support Network,
North East Local Learning and
Employment Network, Ovens
Valley Victorian Farmers
Federation, Regional Development
Australia - Hume, Rural Australians
for Refugees, Tomorrow Today
Foundation, Upper Murray
Health and Community Service,
and Yackandandah Health.

186 VOLUNTEERS

from Indi have participated
in the Canberra Volunteer
Program since 2014

Volunteers have come from
across Indi to be involved in the
four-day program.

**8 MINISTERIAL
VISITS AND
HEARINGS**

have been hosted by
the Indi community
since 2013



**13 YOUTH
EVENTS**

have been hosted for
Indi residents since 2014



Youth events have included:
10 Budget Breakfasts (Benalla, Mansfield,
Wangaratta and Wodonga) and 3 Expat
Breakfasts at Parliament House.

15 PETITIONS

have been presented in
parliament on behalf of
Indi constituents since
2013



Ministerial visits
have included:

Senator Simon Birmingham
Minister for Education and
Training (Wodonga) Karen
Andrews, Assistant Minister
for Skills and Vocational
Training (Wodonga) Ken Wyatt
Minister for Indigenous Health
and Minister for Aged Care
(Wodonga / Wangaratta) and
Josh Frydenberg, Minister
for Environment and Energy
(Yackandandah / Winton).



Petitions have
included:

Infrastructure improvements
to Towong Shire, Defence Force
Benefits, Foreign Aid, Climate
Change and the reduction
of Australia's greenhouse
gas emissions, Lottoland,
Entitlements for former Bruck
Textile Technologies workers,
Telecommunications (mobile
phone coverage, NBN and
the upgrade of ADSL junction
boxes), time limits for children
in immigration detention, and
Federal Government funding for
infrastructure projects in Indi.



**The divide between Indi and
Canberra is less than an acre**

Matt Pfahlert is co-founder and CEO of the Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship (ACRE). In March 2018 Matt made his first advocacy trip to Parliament House to promote ACRE's work and seek support for a national fund incubator fostering youth and rural entrepreneurship.

"To be granted access to as many key Ministers and their advisors and to establish on-going dialogue with them has been an opportunity that I wouldn't have imagined possible."

Read more about these stories at
www.cathymcgowan.com.au



An invitation too good to refuse

In 2017, CEO Bev Hoffmann led a team from North East Local Learning and Employment Network (NELLEN) on the organisation's first advocacy trip to Parliament House. The aim of their visit was to meet the Hon Karen Andrews Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills, and to invite her to Indi to see NELLEN's impact first-hand.

"Minister Andrews' visit gave us the confidence and credibility to establish an all-female 'Community of Practice' for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). She started out as an engineer in a male dominated environment so she knows the value of women supporting each other within the STEM industry."



**A visit to Canberra inspired a
permanent move**

Wodonga resident Claudia Weatherall first participated in Indi's Canberra Volunteer Program in April 2017. Her experience prompted a move to Canberra to study Law at Australian National University. Claudia now supports other volunteers and advocacy groups visiting Parliament House from Indi.

"Few Australians get to see first-hand what their politicians are doing on their behalf at Parliament House. Indi residents are very fortunate to get the opportunity to do exactly that and I am incredibly grateful."



A rising star of community leadership

Tahlia Biggs is a proud Barkindji woman who grew up on the Wiradjuri and Dhudhuroa country of Albury/Wodonga. She is passionate about empowering young people through education about the diversity of Aboriginal culture, and breaking down misconceptions.

After participating in the Canberra Volunteer Program in 2017, Tahlia moved to Melbourne to take up a role with Richmond Football Club's Korin Gamadji Institute (KGI) as Programs Coordinator designing and delivering programs to indigenous youth.

"Young Aboriginal people have a voice and we need to use it. My experience in the Canberra Volunteer Program has given me greater confidence to use my own voice and has helped me to grow as a community leader."