

# Annual Report 2023 - 2024



Next25™

## Acknowledgement of Country

Next25 acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Next25 may use the terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/s and First Nations people/s in our work and reports but does not intend to reduce or imply homogeneity among the distinct Nations, languages and cultures that make up our shared lands.

For more information see [next25.org.au](https://next25.org.au), and if you have any questions or comments, please email [chloe@next25.org.au](mailto:chloe@next25.org.au).

# Contents

The Year That Was	4
Letter from our Chair – Alexandra Burt	4
Letter from our CEO – Chloë Spackman	5
The Numbers	6
Our year on a page	6
Next 25 income and expenses	7
Improving How Australia Makes the Future	8
Think – Our Research	9
Our Research Strategy	9
Understanding Barriers and Enablers to Constructive Discussion on Contested National Issues	10
Webinar: Constructive Discussion and The Voice Referendum	11
Submission: Civics Education, Engagement, and Participation	13
Do – Our Initiatives	14
Trust in Government	14
Highlights from 2023-24	15
Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women	16
Constructive Discussion	18
The First Phase of Transdisciplinary Collaboration with UTS on Constructive Discussion: How can we get better at constructively discussing contested issues in Australia?	18
Constructive Discussion and the Housing Challenge: Webinar	18
Engagement	19
Constructive Conversations at the Social Impact Summit	20
Investing in Engagement	21
Future Engagements	21
Team	22
The Years Ahead	23
Our Supporters and Acknowledgements	24

# The Year That Was

## Letter from our Chair – Alexandra Burt

Navigating periods of change and transition is always uncertain, but I'm delighted to reflect on the 2023/24 year with great pride. During this year, we moved through one of the most significant changes since our founding: the leadership transition from our founder, Ralph Ashton, to our new CEO, Chloë Spackman. Next25 has historically been a strong, founder-led organisation, with purpose and personality sometimes intertwined. In enabling Ralph to step back from his day-to-day leadership, we wanted to ensure that Next25 had the maturity and resilience to stand apart from the personality, to stand more comfortably on its own two feet, and, from there, move into the next era.

In taking this step, we have arrived at the best of both worlds. One, Ralph remains deeply connected to Next25 and its purpose as a continuing board member, providing wisdom, intellect and a level of generous support that is typical of him. And two, the settling in of Chloë to the CEO position has been smooth, reassuring, and energising as she brings her own perspective to the leadership of Next25, where she has been a team member since 2017. Under her stewardship, there is renewed momentum, and we are firmly on the right track to make greater and more lasting progress on our mission to ensure that Australia has what it takes to create the future its people want.

It goes without saying that the ingenuity in establishing this unique “think and do” organisation that is Next25 has been groundbreaking, not just in Australia but the world. It is as selfless as it is aspirational. Along with my fellow board members and the team, my own mission is to ensure that our ambition for a better Australia continues to be realised through Next25's efforts and doesn't stop until it isn't needed any more. Such a time may never come, but let's hope that, as the baton gets passed on and on, the needs and abilities of our country evolve and improve such that Australia is envied and emulated around the world for its balance and stability, equality and equity, and, perhaps most importantly, its care and respect for one and all.

It is an honour to be able to pay tribute to Ralph and to thank him for his twelve years of leadership of Next25. And, with both feet now firmly in the new era, it is an equal honour to be working with such a solid team under the very secure leadership of Chloë. I would also like to thank my fellow directors, steadfast as ever, and thank outgoing directors Professor Attila Brungs and Professor Merlin Crossley (alternate) for their service. I also thank UNSW for their special partnership during the period.

Finally, thank you to our tremendous supporters of all kinds. I am delighted to show you the progress that follows in this report and the taste of future impact that it presents. Please reach out to us with questions and suggestions so that we can continue to strengthen Next25 and deliver the outcomes that are as necessary as ever in Australia



**Alexandra Burt**  
Chair of the Board

## Board of Directors

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**Nigel Andrade**  
Partner and Member of  
the Board of Directors,  
Kearney



**Ralph Ashton**  
Founder and Non-Executive  
Director, Next25



**Attila Brungs**  
Vice-Chancellor and  
President, UNSW Sydney



**Merlin Crossley**  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
(Academic Quality), UNSW  
Sydney and Professor of  
Molecular Biology



**Rachel Peck**  
Principal, Peck Von Hartel  
Architects



**Taryn Williams**  
Tech Entrepreneur, Founder  
and Board Member

# Letter from our CEO – Chloë Spackman



Chloë Spackman  
CEO

The following pages offer an inspiring reflection of Next25’s achievements for the 23-24 financial year. The focus was on our research and the positive future-making opportunities we uncovered and designed initiatives to help address: restoring trust in government and enabling constructive discussion on contested national issues.

In this letter, my first as the inaugural Next25 CEO, I want to highlight one element of our systems transformation work bearing fruit and my wish for Australia in the coming year(s).

Our program to restore trust in government and improve our democracy by transforming women’s experience and participation in politics has its roots in nearly a decade of work through **Leadership**: our values-based leadership work with politicians, supporting them to transform themselves and their system(s).

Today, 1 in 4 women in NSW Parliament are alumna of **Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women** and are working collectively to ensure parliament is a place where everyone can thrive. It is undeniable that this program has shifted the experience for women in parliament in an unprecedented way. NSW women MPs have reported positive cultural shifts, including access to support, social rituals, mentors, and recourse in the face of a barrage of information, expectations and responsibilities. They have reported feeling safer at work and more confident about showing up authentically in Parliament.

Now, with the wishes of the NSW alumnae and the strong interest in this offering from women politicians across Australia at all levels of government, we have launched our inaugural nationwide program to commence in January 2025. We will bring together women from all three levels of government and multiple jurisdictions to tackle this work to transform self and system nationally.

This has taken time, as we know systems transformation does. Systems transformation is not linear or orderly. The future Australia wants is possible, but it requires intention, curiosity and humility amidst the mess and complexity. Intention to keep us focused when the winds of change buffet us such as challenges to democratic resilience, to our global environmental ecosystem, to our social cohesion. Curiosity to power our interactions with those we disagree with so that we can make space for constructive discussions “**where people have the space and opportunity to share perspectives and explore differences in a reflexive, productive manner**”. And humility to stay vigilant in considering how our own assumptions, biases and blind spots may be standing in the way of the future we, and others want.

When I think about what I most want from our work in 2025, imagination immediately comes to mind. Despite all the challenges we are grappling with, our greatest weapon against despondency is our imagination.

Thank you to the Next25 team, who bring diverse skills, experiences, and perspectives to our ambitious work agenda. We have created a space for genuinely challenging, inspiring, and constructive conversations. Thank you to all our generous Directors who provoke, support and embolden me and the team. And particular thanks to our Chair, Alexandra Burt, and our Founder, Ralph Ashton, for their dedication and care during the leadership transition. Thank you to UNSW and UTS for your partnership and collaborative spirit. Thanks to the thousands of people who engage with us through our research, initiatives, and engagement. And a final thanks to our visionary donors, who connect with Next25’s ambition, mission and methodology with intellectual curiosity and trust in what might be possible.

Here’s to 2025, deploying our collective, transformative imagination!

# The Numbers

36

newsletters sent

6,953

newsletter subscribers

86

alumni of our programs for parliamentarians

2

public webinars to share Next25's research and initiatives

20

parliamentarians took part in our programs in 2023/4

6

online workshops were run for alumnae of Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women to develop their prototypes

11

parliamentarians engaged in ongoing coaching

100%

of participants would recommend Leadership and Improving Democracy: Transforming NSW Parliament for Women programs to colleagues

3

research reports launched

1

submission to Government

8%

of all sitting parliamentarians are Leadership program alumni

1 in 4

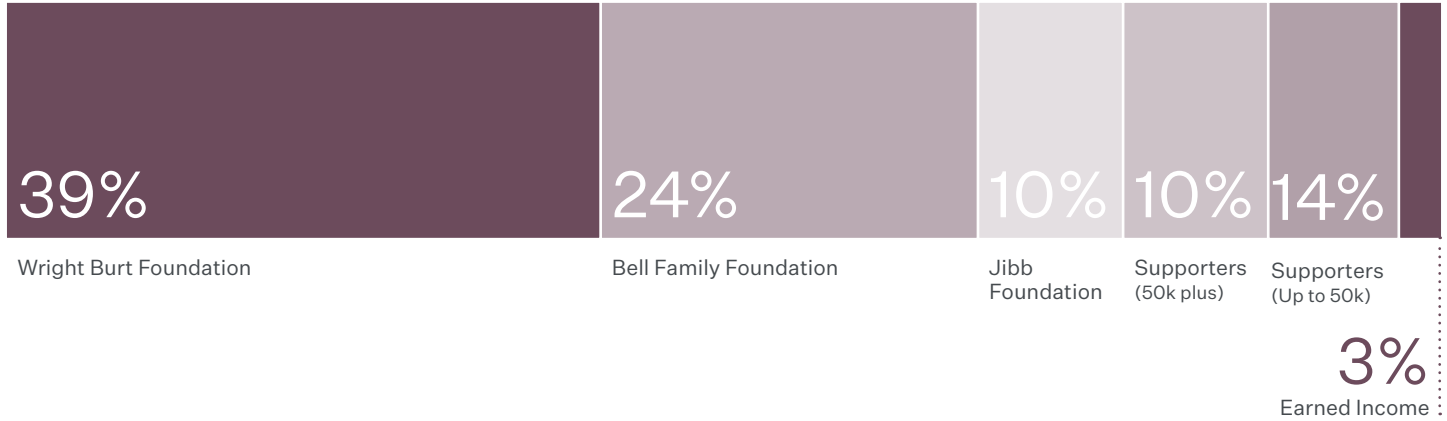
NSW women parliamentarians has participated in Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women

1

launch of the inaugural nationwide Transforming Parliament for Women program

In the 2023/24 financial year Next25 received income of \$1.03m broken down as follows:

**Income By Type**



In the 2023/24 financial year Next25 incurred expenses of \$810k broken down as follows:

**Expenses By Type**



**Expenses By Program**



# Improving How Australia Makes Its Future

Next25 is an independent think-and-do tank. Our mission is to ensure Australia has what it takes to make the future its people want. With rigorous research, trusted engagement, and ground-breaking initiatives, we uncover and address levers to shift deep contributing factors of Australia's biggest issues.

We continue to test, learn, and adapt to ensure we are contributing to Australia having what it takes to make a strong future. This is our think-and-do tank model:

## THINK: Our Research

**We engage the public and experts to answer three big questions:**

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**Q1.** What's the future Australia wants?

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**Q2.** Are we on track?

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**Q3.** If not, what are the deep contributing factors of Australia's underperformance and levers to shift them?

## DO: Our Initiatives

**We work with others to improve how Australia makes the future:**

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– We build game-changing initiatives around levers that address the deep contributing factors of Australia's underperformance

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– We engage leaders and the public so they understand what's at stake, see that better is possible, want to contribute to the solution, and know where to start

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– We support leaders to build their own initiatives



# THINK: Our Research

## Our Research Strategy

Our research strategy builds on the strong foundations established with our Navigator and Recoded research programs and consists of three parts: research objectives, the research paradigm, and the research program.

Ensuring that Next25's research is fit for purpose requires a considered answer to a fundamental provocation – why do we do research? In response, Next25 conducts research to achieve one, or a combination, of six objectives:

1. **Validate the Problem** - that Australia does not have what it takes to make the future its people want
2. **Understand the Problem and Galvanise Key Actors** - to determine what is most urgent, relevant, and who has the most at stake
3. **Identify Levers and Assemble Key Systems Actors** - to identify potential actors and levers for change through our research into deep contributing factors
4. **Support Action** - to inform Next25's engagement and initiatives
5. **Evaluate Progress** - to consider our effects in the wider future-making system
6. **Contribute to Theory and Practice of Future-Making** - give back to the system

Next25's research paradigm is pragmatic, and our knowledge contributions use a range of practical strategies to effect change. These strategies underpin a hybrid, mixed methods research model and include the use of surveys, semi-structured interviews, case studies, and transdisciplinary methods.

Next25 is also challenge-led and responds to current problem spaces and challenges across society, where possible, co-creating knowledge with relevant partners. Next25's research is integrated through its think-and-do model.

## Our suite of research programs

Collectively, Next25's Research answers our three think tank questions, supports action in our do tank, and contributes to our wider impact and engagement. Under our refined strategy, our research programs include:

1. **Navigator:** Next25 collects and analyses data to know if we're on track to the future Australia wants and where the gaps are.
2. **Recoded:** Next25 engages experts and decision-makers to identify and understand opportunities to improve how Australia makes its future, and then guide the development of initiatives to address them.
3. **Praxis:** Next25 documents its method, impact, and lessons so we can improve our approach and so others can draw on our experience.
4. **Impact and Engagement:** Next25 contextualises its research and initiatives through case studies, extends our insights through comparative analysis, and makes our research widely available and digestible through an interactive dashboard.

## What are the levers to shift deep contributing factors of Australia's biggest issues?

Building on a decade of work to restore Australians' trust in government, Next25's research identified four additional levers to shift deep contributing factors of Australia's underperformance.

- 1. Galvanising National Identity:** Articulate an honest, inclusive, and inspiring national identity that everyone can subscribe to despite our differences
- 2. Benchmarks Beyond GDP:** Define national success on not only economic but also social and environmental factors
- 3. Constructive Discussion:** Become better at constructively discussing complex and contested issues despite our varied experience and perspectives
- 4. Engaged Decision-Making:** Enable Australians to contribute to, and feel represented by, the decisions made on their behalf
- 5. Trust in Government:** Restore Australians' trust in politics and the public service

Whilst we engage across all five levers, we are currently concentrating on Constructive Discussion and Trust in Government in our Do Tank.

## Understanding barriers and enablers to constructive discussion on contested national issues

### Report: "Contested Spaces: Australia, the Referendum and Constructive Discussion"

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In October 2023, Next25 published a report exploring Australians' experiences discussing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice and what this means for our nation's future.

We were curious to find out the barriers and enablers that people in Australia encounter when discussing the Voice Referendum. In short, how well are we talking about national issues?

Our research report, "**Contested Spaces: Australia, the Referendum, and Constructive Discussion**", offers insights into those key barriers and enabling factors. It is based on interviews with 15 people who have professional experience with productive and unproductive conversations and have worked across a diverse range of industries.

This report is one in a series about constructive discussion in Australia, and its findings and key concepts will be expanded in **future research** and activities, eventually feeding into the design of an intervention that will improve Australia's ability to make the future its people want.

## Webinar: Constructive Discussion and The Voice Referendum

To share our findings more broadly, CEO Chloë Spackman and Senior Research Analyst Dr Clare Reddan hosted a free, **public webinar** summarising the key factors affecting Australians' ability to have constructive discussions and suggested strategies for practising more constructive conversations. Over 100 people registered for the Webinar.

“Next25’s mission is to shift the focus from short-term band-aid solutions or knee-jerk reactions and consider how we can work at a systemic level to transform Australia’s future in the long term. This can be so challenging when we’re grappling with complex systemic polarising issues that are often years in the making. Therefore, we invite you to join us in our efforts to, as a first step, deeply understand the challenge that we face.”

— **Chloë Spackman, CEO**

“What do we even mean by constructive discussion?... Constructive discussion involves the process of being heard and affording others time and safe spaces to express themselves. People have the space and opportunity to share perspectives and explore difference.”

— **Dr Clare Reddan, Senior Research Analyst**

“Public discussion surrounding the voice in the referendum has...contained bias and disinformation... this idea that we have compromised information obviously misdirects people, but it also lowers people’s trust in the democratic process and heightens our issue fatigue.”

— **Dr Clare Reddan, Senior Research Analyst**

## Feedback from Webinar Attendees

86% of respondents rated the webinar 7/10 or above for its engagement with and insight into Next25’s work.

“It was very helpful and relevant! I was feeling at a bit of a loss as to how I could make a difference in such a contested space - it has helped steel my resolve to know that every conversation matters. I also know I welcome this research to help guide my communication in other areas. Thank you”

“Great bite-sized introduction to your work on this important topic - am off to download the full report now!”

“Great format to get quick insight into research. Very holistic approach.”

## Transdisciplinary Collaboration: Theory to Practice

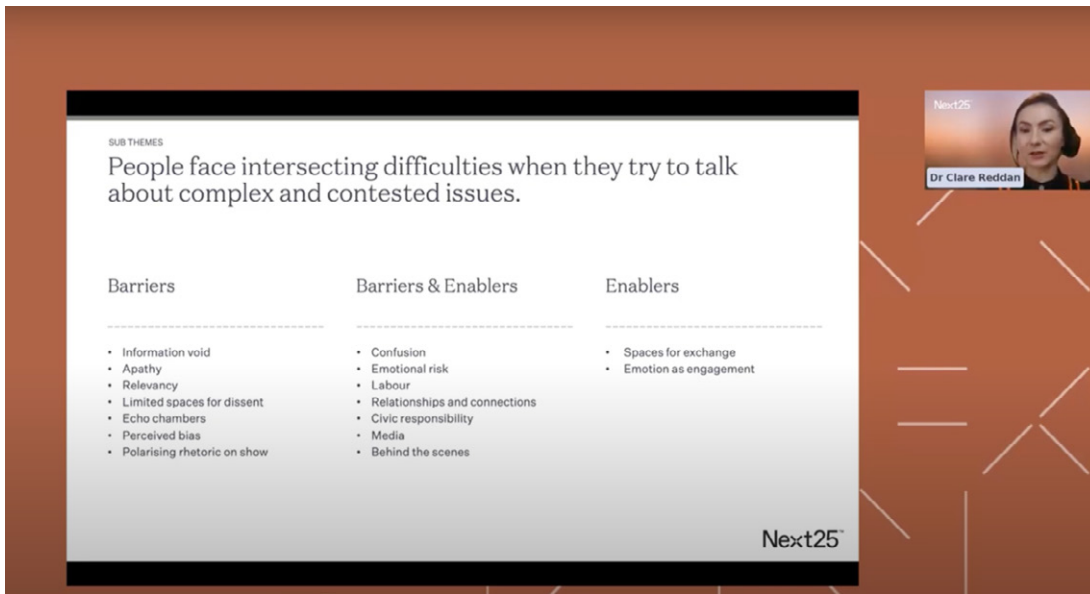
See page 18 for details on our collaboration with the UTS Transdisciplinary (TD) School which aims to find and test interventions to enable more constructive discussion on contested issues.

## Key Findings

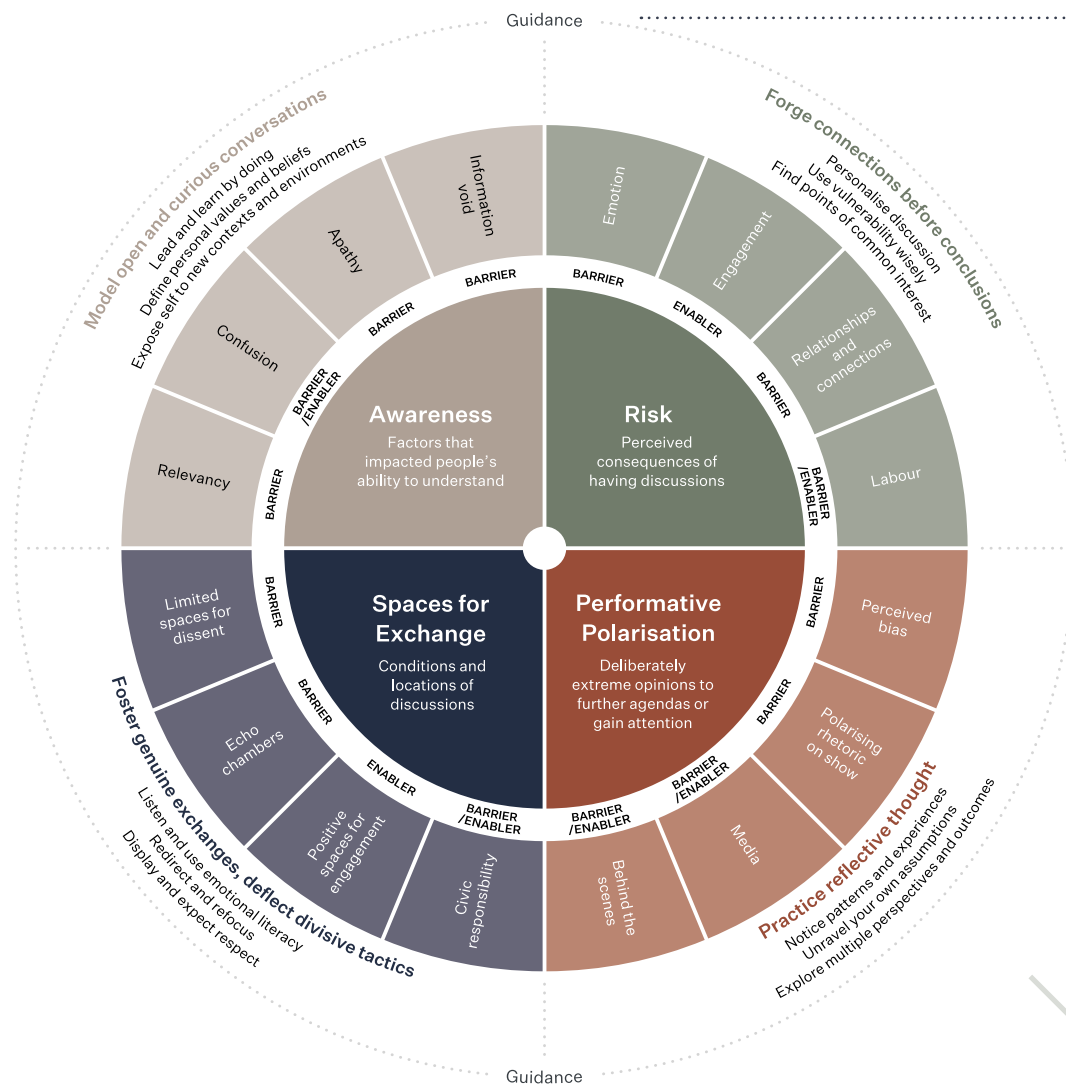
1. Information accessibility impacts engagement
2. Confusion leads to the exclusion of difference
3. Social and emotional risk is powerful and contextual
4. Safe spaces require trust
5. Perceived effort is a limiting factor
6. Constructive discussion requires time, ability, and resources
7. Conversations feature low trust, bias, and disinformation
8. The media fuels and reflects
9. Discomfort and confrontation is necessary
10. Perceptions of conversation gatekeeping mean some people feel excluded from the ‘real’ conversations.

## How to spark more constructive discussions

- Model open and curious conversations
- Forge connections before conclusions
- Practice reflexive thought
- Foster genuine exchanges, deflect divisive tactics



**Figure 1:**  
 A screenshot from our free public webinar on Constructive Discussion and the Voice Referendum



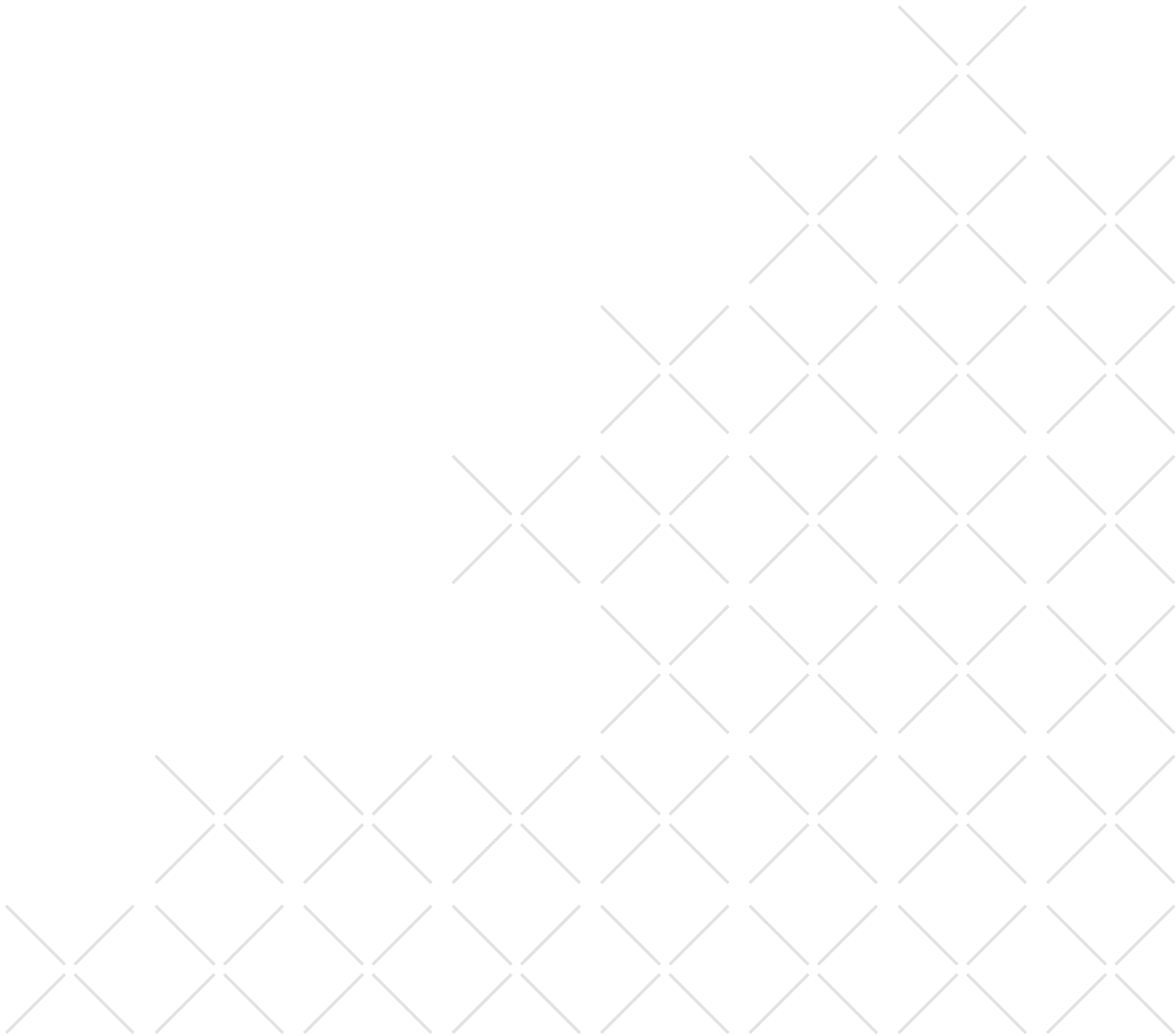
**Figure 2:**  
 Constructive Discussion, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Voice, and 2023 Australian Referendum: guidance, sub-themes, sub-theme status, and themes

**Submission: Civics Education, Engagement, and Participation**

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In May 2024, Next25 provided a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters' Inquiry into Civics Education, Engagement, and Participation in Australia. **Our submission** emphasised the critical role of civics education in shaping Australia's democratic future. We highlighted the need for authentic, inspiring, and empowering civics education that not only informs but also engages citizens in the democratic process. Our recommendations included developing comprehensive media literacy programs, creating varied public engagement opportunities, and enhancing transparency and accountability in government and media. Next25 is interested in civics education because we believe it is an important element in creating the future Australia wants. Our research has identified that engaged decision-making and trust in government are critical factors influencing Australia's democratic health. As our submission outlines, civics education impacts these factors by equipping citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate effectively in democracy and hold their leaders accountable.

Our submission on enhancing civics education, engagement, and participation is not just about addressing current gaps but also about building a robust foundation for a more vibrant and inclusive democracy.



# DO: Our Initiatives

01	Restore Trust in Government: Leadership	Parliamentarians have an outsized influence on our future but operate in an intense and complex environment with little support. Next25 supports parliamentarians to reconnect to their values and harness their power, not only as individuals in the political system, but also as individuals who can improve the system..
02	Restore Trust in Government: Transforming Parliament for Women	Australia's parliaments do not reflect the diversity of the community. In particular, the culture of politics limits the full and flourishing participation of women. Next25 backs women parliamentarians by empowering them as agents of change and inspiring all parliamentarians to improve politics and the parliamentary system for women.
03	Enable Constructive Discussion	There are many possible reasons why it's hard to constructively discuss contested issues in Australia - and there are many possible solutions. Through a partnership with a leading Australian university, Next25 is drawing on experts in a dozen disciplines to better understand the problem, test potential solutions, and choose one to implement at scale.

## Trust in Government

### Leadership

Our Leadership course for parliamentarians continues as Next25's longest-standing initiative working towards restoring Australians' trust in government. Leadership is designed to support parliamentarians to reconnect to their values, build their leadership capability, and improve the political system more broadly.

Across nine years of running Leadership:

- **100% of respondents** say Leadership improved their ability to lead as an elected official
- **96% rate the course** 8 out of 10 or above
- **100% would recommend** Leadership to their colleagues
- **100% say** the program improved:
  - Understanding of their leadership and influence in order to improve their effectiveness
  - Their power to drive change
  - Understanding of their role and agency in changing or influencing the political system
  - Empathy and understanding of their own biases and preferences
  - Their ability to address complex challenges from a new perspective

Interestingly, “mandatory induction training” and “more constructive conversation between journalists and parliamentarians” remain our alumni's top picks for “the most effective way to improve how parliaments (both federal and state) make decisions in the long-term interest of society”, further validating the importance of Next25's work in these areas.





# Highlights from 2023-24

## Leadership – September 2023 in Perth, WA

Our Leadership program is designed to equip parliamentarians with the skills and insights needed to drive meaningful change. Drawing on Theory U and values-based leadership principles, participants enhance their ability to address complex challenges, understand their biases, and foster a more collaborative political environment.

Hosted by the Forrest Research Foundation, our 2023 Leadership program comprised ten participants from three states and four parties. All participants reported they would recommend the program to colleagues and that the program made a medium to large improvement in their:

- Power to drive change
- Empathy and understanding of their own biases
- Ability to address complex challenges from a new perspective

“I would encourage all Parliamentarians to undertake this course to develop and grow as a leader.”

– Joan Pease MP, Queensland Labor

Next25, in partnership with the Forrest Research Foundation, hosted an event to which our Chair, program alumni, current participants, and Forrest Research Foundation scholars were invited. Guests heard from Professor James Arvanitakis, Director of the Forrest Research Foundation, and Next25’s Founder and Director, Ralph Ashton, on Next25’s think-and-do model.

In addition, Next25 hosted a one-day, alumni-exclusive Masterclass program to build on the course foundations and work on complex challenges.

Next25 is grateful to the Forrest Research Foundation for hosting the program at the Forrest Hall precinct on the Swan River in Perth.

“Other development programs examine an MP’s relationship with others around them, whereas this course looks at how MPs can improve themselves to make them better at their jobs. I found it extremely useful and would recommend it to any MP.”

– Gurmesh Singh MP, NSW Nationals



Figure 3 From left to right:

Malcolm Doig, Stephanie Mason, James Arvanitakis, Ralph Ashton, Alexandra Burt



Figure 4 Back row:

Ralph Ashton, Gurmesh Singh, Sam Farraway, Dr Brian Walker, Tanya Thompson, Malcolm Doig

Front row: Eleni Petinos, Sophia Moermond, Dugald Saunders, Joan Pease, Corrine McMillan, The Hon Sarah Mitchell

### Launch of a mixed Federal, State, and Territory Leadership program

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In 2024 we launched our inaugural mixed Leadership program, inviting Federal, State, and Territory Parliamentarians to come together in one program. We recognise this as an opportunity for MPs to build relationships with politicians from across the country, and we look forward to sharing the outcomes of this program which will run in the next financial year.

### Programmatic innovations

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Conversations with alumni and senior MPs have progressed the potential for Next25 to deliver customised, innovative solutions to address context-specific issues impacting parliamentary leadership. In addition to the Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women program, the proposed programs demonstrate the potential of Next25's Leadership model to catalyse systemic change, and we look forward to sharing the outcomes of these programs which will develop across the next financial year.

## Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women

### Transforming the political system from the inside: establishing a nationwide initiative catalysed by Leadership alumnae

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In 2023-24, Next25 successfully conducted two iterations of our galvanising initiative, Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women. This program emerged in 2021 when four alumnae of Next25's Leadership program approached us with a shared mission to transform the experience and participation of women in parliament. The initiative we've co-created, now in its fourth iteration, aims to inspire and unify women MPs across the country, focusing on collaborative values, shared purpose, and meaningful progress.

Over the past year, 10 female MPs participated in our NSW-based program, engaging in a two-day intensive workshop, stakeholder interviews, and personal values assessments. Feedback indicated measurable improvements in leadership, collaboration, and cultural shifts, reinforcing our commitment to creating a more equitable and effective parliamentary system.

The initiative's success exemplifies the potential for transformative change within Australian parliaments.

- **100% of respondents** would recommend the program to others
- **100% of participants** reported that the program improved their ability to lead as an elected official
- **100% of participants** report a medium or large improvement in:
  - Their relationships with parliamentarians from other parties
  - Understanding their role and agency in changing or influencing the political system
- **100% of participants** report an improvement in:
  - Understanding their leadership and influence in order to improve their effectiveness
  - Empathy and understanding of their own biases and preferences (added 2022)
- **90% of participants** report an improvement in:
  - Their power to drive change
  - Their confidence and capacity to try new things

We have continued to support the progression of the cohorts' systems-changing initiatives and collaborative work through ongoing, bi-monthly check-in workshops.

1 in 4

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NSW Women are alumna of Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women

1 in 2

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NSW Women are alumna of one or more of our programs

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**Research** has shown that large-scale social change requires just 25% to 'tip' culture change



## Coming soon:

### Launch of the inaugural national program

This year also marked the launch of our nationwide program, expanding the initiative beyond NSW to include women parliamentarians from across Australia. This expansion is significant as it will seek to foster a more inclusive and representative political environment, addressing systemic biases and empowering women to take on leadership roles, while also creating a national platform for the treatment of women in politics. By equipping female MPs with the tools and support needed to navigate and transform the parliamentary system, the national expansion seeks to be a contributing factor to the restoration of public trust in government.

### Transforming Parliament for Women in the News

Over the past three years, we've witnessed significant cultural shifts, with over 25% of women MPs in NSW Parliament now being part of the collective of women transforming parliament from the inside. We are thankful to [Women's Agenda](#) for sharing the news of the program's launch, highlighting its importance for democracy and its impacts on participants: for sharing the news of the program's launch, highlighting its importance for democracy and its impacts on participants:

“Not only did I delve deeply into my own values and possibilities as a leader, I also developed profound relationships with women from across the parliament and we now work closely together in various aspects of our parliamentary roles,”

– Liesl Tesch MP, program alumna

“When women feel more connected and confident in their workplaces, they are more likely to call out bad behaviour and demand a higher standard. This has a positive impact on all MPs, all parliamentary staff and the public alike.”

– Chloë Spackman, CEO

! [Read the article here](#)

## Coaching

Recognising the continuous nature of personal and professional development, Next25 offers individualised coaching programs for alumni of our programs. These programs provide ongoing support and guidance, helping participants apply their learning in real-world contexts and navigate the evolving challenges of their roles.

Many participants from previous programs took part in our coaching program throughout the year. Twenty-two coaching sessions were held, with five MPs in 1:1 sessions and six MPs in two coaching groups.

Coachees commonly note positive improvements in their:

- Sense of their vision and values
- Understanding of their strengths and limitations
- Sense of personal empowerment and ability to thrive



Click on the image above to see our 2-minute promotional video

“I have really benefitted from the alumni course, as it has enabled me to apply what I am learning to real and current scenarios that I am experiencing as a Member of Parliament. It has helped me to improve how I carry out my parliamentary duties and developed my leadership skills even further.”

– The Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC, NSW Nationals

## Constructive Discussion

### **The First Phase of Transdisciplinary Collaboration with UTS on Constructive Discussion: How can we get better at constructively discussing contested issues in Australia?**

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Next25 and members of a transdisciplinary UTS research team are collaborating to uncover barriers and enablers of constructive discussion with the view to testing and implementing an intervention(s) to improve the way we talk about contested issues.

In 2023 and 2024, we've been exploring whether we can use constructive discussion to make the Sydney housing crisis solvable. And if so, what does that tell us about constructive discussion that could be useful in other contexts?

As part of this collaboration, we have worked on the design and production of two research papers:

**“Constructive Discussion: Conceptualising a Framework of Productive Communication”** explores a range of relevant concepts that can be drawn upon to enable constructive discussion across four spheres: personal, conversational, institutional, and cultural.

**“Constructive Discussion and City-Making”** delves into the opportunities to influence housing outcomes in Sydney based on interviews with a cross-section of stakeholders in the Sydney housing ecosystem.

### **Constructive Discussion and the Housing Challenge: Webinar**

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In August, we delivered a free, public **1-hour webinar** with Next25 CEO Chloë Spackman, and UTS researchers Fanny Salignac, Alex Baumber, and Sam Wearne, who shared insights and key takeaways from this first phase of our collaboration:

- The four spheres of constructive discussion, co-created as a model to make sense of existing methods and frameworks to support constructive discussion in different contexts, and which may support the design of discursive interventions for the following phases of our work and for others interested in using constructive discussion as a lens to intervene in complex challenges
- The five factors our diverse group of research participants from across the Sydney housing system identified as impacting people's ability to have constructive discussions about housing
- The interventions that could hold the potential to influence long-term decision-making and which will provide the basis for the next phase of our collaboration



Click on the image above to watch this webinar

“At the Transdisciplinary School, we believe that the complex problems the world is facing require solutions that transdisciplinary thinking can provide.” We “provide a conduit between UTS and industry to address complex challenges and create impactful and meaningful change. Our work with Next25 is a stellar example of this. We value our partnership immensely.”

– Dr Fanny Salignac, UTS Transdisciplinary School

### **Feedback from Webinar Participants**

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“Constructive discussion provides a great opportunity for making progress on difficult issues.”

“It was really useful and we as a community are lucky to have people doing this great work.”



# Engagement

Engaging with leaders and the public runs across all aspects of what we do at Next25 – research, initiatives, and beyond. We engage others so they understand what’s at stake, see that better is possible, want to contribute, and know where to start.

Over the past year, Next25 has shared our research and insights with diverse individuals, groups, organisations, and institutions across Australia:

## Webinars

- Constructive Discussion and the Voice Referendum: Webinar (see page 11)
- Constructive Discussion and the Sydney Housing Challenge: Webinar (see page 18)

## Chloë Spackman Interviewed by OnImpact

In an [interview with OnImpact](#), Next25 CEO Chloë Spackman shares a vision where the complexities and urgency of the interconnected challenges we face are an opportunity to catalyse transformation.

“[My vision is] that we create the conditions for the new, whilst providing hospice to those systems which no longer serve us. That we create the conditions for compassion for ourselves and compassion for others, rather than razing it all to the ground in anger or bitterness.”

Chloë’s interview emphasises the power of working on deep contributing factors at a systemic level to enable conditions for change, explaining how investing in organisations working on systems change like Next25 could amplify the impacts investors seek to make.

[Read the Interview](#)

8,053

Followers and subscribers

411

Social media engagements

6.6k

Unique website visitors

# Constructive Conversations at the Social Impact Summit

Our CEO Chloë Spackman and Senior Facilitator Dr Renu Burr demonstrated our think-to-do model, through our “Constructive Conversations” keynote and engagement exercise in their presentation at the **Social Impact Summit**.

This word cloud below reflects how participants will approach constructive conversations in future, reflecting their commitment to pause and adopt more curious, mindful, empathetic, and open approaches to dialogue.



## Feedback

“Transforming self to transform systems. What a great opening keynote this morning at the Social Impact Summit. Chloë Spackman from Next25 talked us through research that explored the barriers and challenges to constructive discussion. And how we can all step into creating space and opportunity for the sorts of conversations that will support connection and progress across increasingly polarised social issues and public debate... It’s always great to step out of the every-day of work and attend a conference or summit to listen to ideas afresh and to again remind us of the importance of thinking broadly.” - **Karina Davis, CEO Jobsbank**

“‘Conversation is not difficult. How we feel about it is difficult.’ - Renu Burr Opening keynote from Chloë Spackman from Next25 revealed barriers in the way of a cohesive society, and the power - echoed by Craig Foster AM yesterday - of sitting with the discomfort rather than running from it. Renu Burr led a whole-of-Summit workshop on constructive conversations, most of which spilled into the hallways and terraces post-session.”

- Impact Institute





## Investing in Engagement

Next25 is proud to announce their recruitment of experienced political and media professional Charlotte Mortlock.

Charlotte is a broadcast journalist with 12 years of experience working in New York, Sydney and rural Australia. In 2021, Charlotte moved into politics as an advisor and, in the same year, established The Clock, a podcast celebrating all the different paths women take in their 30s.

Charlotte combined her passion for politics and advocacy for women, launching Hilma's Network, which aims at getting more women to join the Liberal Party. More than 1,000 women have subscribed to Hilma's Network and as of this year, there are representatives and events in six states and territories.

Charlotte is passionate about democracy, social unity, freedom of speech, and women. Of her work with Next25, Charlotte says: "Every Australian should want our Parliament and Parliamentarians to be the absolute best they can be because when they thrive, Australia thrives. Empowering politicians with the right tools enables them to be true leaders, which enriches our democracy. Next25's unwavering commitment to democracy and open discussion is inspiring and why I am so excited to be part of the team."



**Charlotte Mortlock**  
Senior Engagement Lead

## Strategic Thinking: Systems Change Workshops

Engaging with current and emerging leaders in business, academia, and politics is a core part of Next25's do work, due to the outsized influence these leaders wield in our future-making system. Next25 ran two workshops on systems change for consulting firm KPMG's partners and directors in 2023, highlighting to participants the importance of long-term thinking and consideration of systemic factors influencing their work.

These workshops aimed to equip participants with new knowledge and tools for strategic thinking, exploring global megatrends, the country's biggest opportunities to improve its performance, and systems theory and mapping.

KPMG participants found value in taking time to reflect and map issues facing clients, in particular through the practical exercise translating systems mapping into real-world examples.

- **58 Partners and Directors** attended
- **89% of respondents** said the program had an impact on their understanding of systems
- **94% of respondents** said the program had an impact of their understanding of KPMG's strategic role in Australia's future

## Future Engagements

CEO Chloë Spackman has been engaged to speak on the Australian National Day of Compassion for the Charter for Compassion's Webinar on the topic of "Integrating Deep Wisdom and Deep Connection in Contested Spaces" in September 2024.

Program Manager Stephanie Mason has been engaged to speak at Locale Learning's Political Wellbeing Summit, exploring systemic factors impacting political wellbeing and how this impacts the proper functioning of democracy in early 2025.

# Team



**Chloë Spackman**  
CEO



**Paula Steyer**  
Director of Finance



**Charlotte Mortlock**  
Senior  
Engagement Lead



**Marcel Svatos**  
Philanthropy  
Manager



**Stephanie Mason**  
Program Manager



**Dr Clare Reddan**  
Senior Research  
Analyst



**Safia Rowland**  
Program Officer



**Ralph Ashton**  
Senior Facilitator  
and Coach



**Angie Bradbury**  
Senior  
Communications  
Advisor



**Dr Renu Burr**  
Senior Facilitator  
and Coach



**Malcolm Doig**  
Senior Facilitator  
and Coach

# The Years Ahead

Our work will bring Australia closer to a country where:

- **Politics serves the public interest**

Politics is delivering the public interest instead of focusing on the short-term and power for power's sake. Parliamentarians are serving society with increased clarity, conviction, and capability.

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- **Discussion is constructive**

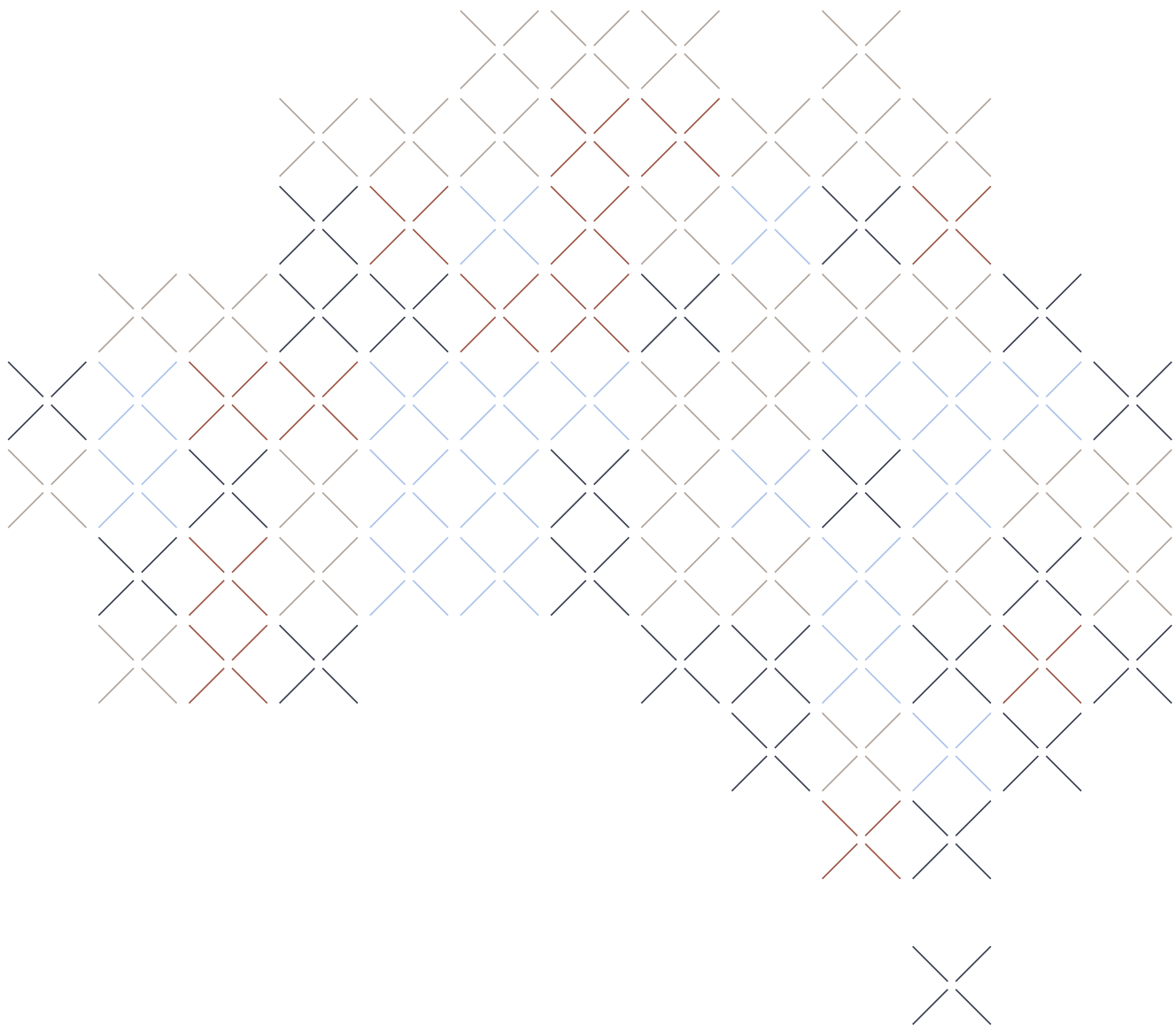
Discussion about the future of our country is more constructive and less polarised. Australians from all walks of life are drawing on a trusted understanding about the future Australia wants and on better ways to engage with people holding different points of view.

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- **Australia is optimistic and engaged**

Leaders and the public are more optimistic and engaged. Armed with capability and a sense of possibility, they are playing their roles, big and small, in ensuring our nation has what it takes to make the future Australia wants.

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# Our Supporters

Thank you. We couldn't do it without you!

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- Forrest Research Foundation

## Acknowledgements

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Think future.  
Act today.

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**Next25™**