



MEDIA RELEASE
30 October 2024

Revitalising Democracy: National Event Series to Kick Off in Toowoomba

A national series of deliberative events designed to start revitalising democracy will launch in Toowoomba on 31 October. This four-part event series by [AMPLIFY](#), a non-partisan community organisation, aims to foster open dialogue on Australia's critical issues, starting with focusing on rebuilding trust in government.

Led by AMPLIFY's Chief Policy and Research Officer, Dr Rory Gallagher, and featuring a Q&A session with Independent MP Helen Haines and Senator David Pocock, the Toowoomba event will gather local community members to explore why trust in government is falling, and ideas for addressing this.

A recent national survey of 4,000 Australians revealed only 29% trust the Federal Government, 33% trust their State or Territory Governments, and 65% believe society is becoming more divided¹. In response, AMPLIFY's event series will give everyday Australians a direct platform to voice their concerns and co-create solutions.

The survey results also further emphasised the need for these discussions, with 84% of Australians wanting more direct involvement in policy decisions². AMPLIFY hopes that engaging communities across the country can help bridge divides and promote collaborative dialogue that moves beyond partisan politics: "This series of deliberation events aims to give people the opportunity to engage with expert perspectives, share their own experiences, and develop tools that encourage collaborative and respectful debate on the issues that are crucial to the nation's future," Dr Rory Gallagher emphasised.

The Toowoomba event is the first in a broader series addressing themes of trust, polarisation, ambition, and the intergenerational divide. The next events will take place in Sydney and Melbourne through November and December.

AMPLIFY CEO Georgina Harrisson highlighted the significance of the series: "These conversations are urgently needed. Australians have told us they feel excluded from the decisions that impact their lives. This is about giving the community a voice and helping our leaders understand what the people need".

This event presents a timely opportunity to discuss trust in government and democracy, "We wanted to kick off in regional Australia as this is where trust in government is at its lowest, and Queensland has just been through an election. We're excited to be heading to Toowoomba, as it's a hub for the Darling Downs and is grappling with several challenges from housing to healthcare", explains Dr Rory Gallagher.

As part of AMPLIFY's national effort, the series will shape their work on revitalising democracy in 2025. At each stage, AMPLIFY will share back with the community how their efforts are contributing to reform.

"We believe Australians agree on much more than they disagree on," Dr Rory Gallagher added. "This series is about discovering unexpected solutions, which we call 'uncommon ground', and discovering these that can drive real change".

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¹Conducted by independent polling research organisation Resolve on behalf of AMPLIFY, 4,000 Australian representative sample, asked closed/open-ended questions on a range of policy & systemic issues Jul-Aug 2024 (AMPLIFY National Research)

² AMPLIFY National Research



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Available for Interview: Dr Rory Gallagher, Chief Policy and Research Officer, AMPLIFY

About AMPLIFY:

Australia is a great country, but we know things aren't working the way they should. AMPLIFY has been born as a response. AMPLIFY is the place where people get to have their say and make a difference on the most important issues facing Australia. It is a community of Australians from all walks of life, and together we will find 'uncommon ground' on the issues we care about most. AMPLIFY is non-partisan and completely independent of all political parties. It will make a difference by amplifying the voice of the community to spark change and help build the policy blueprint for Australia's future: amplifyaus.org

Event Details:

Name: Trust Event – Toowoomba

Date: 31 October 2024, 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Description: A discussion on rebuilding trust in government with local community members, led by Dr Rory Gallagher, with participation from Helen Haines MP and Senator David Pocock.

Further information on the Sydney, Melbourne and online events will be released soon.

Background for editors/producers:

AMPLIFY's Mission: AMPLIFY was founded to empower everyday Australians to have a meaningful say in the critical issues shaping the country. Through community-driven solutions, AMPLIFY aims to create a more connected and prosperous Australia by bringing diverse voices to the forefront of national policy debates.

Research Survey Highlights:

- Over 84% of Australians believe the community should be more directly involved in policy decisions
- 71% feel that discussions about politics are commonly combative or confrontational
- 66% think Australia is more divided than it used to be, while 52% believe constructive conversations are becoming harder to have than ever before
- 53% of Australians say they trust community-based decisions more than those made by government bodies

The nationally representative survey was conducted by an independent polling organisation, Resolve on behalf of AMPLIFY. The representative sample of 4,000 Australians were asked closed and open-ended questions on a range of policy and systemic issues in the period July – August 2024.

Deliberative Methods: AMPLIFY uses deliberative democracy tools, which involve structured conversations, expert input, and collaborative decision-making processes. These methods have been proven to foster greater understanding across diverse groups and result in more innovative, inclusive solutions.

Current State of Public Trust in Australia: Australia ranks 11th globally for citizen satisfaction with democratic processes, which has been declining steadily since 2010 according to the [Democracy Index](#).

Toowoomba's Growth and Challenges: The city of Toowoomba, part of the Darling Downs region, has seen steady population growth (1.4% per year from 2017-2022) and continues to serve as a vital regional hub for healthcare and education. However, the region also faces challenges, including housing shortages, economic pressures, and increasing demand for public services.
