

# **The newDemocracy Foundation Chairman's Report 2018**

## **Summary**

The year saw a number of milestones achieved, not least the agreement with UNDEF signed this week. The local projects – Byron, ACT Planning, Victoria Gender Equality – can be regarded as successful both operationally and for the primary research findings they yielded which have now be published and widely disseminated.

The GSC and NSW Planning continued to prove elusive, even after much effort, with the GSC in particular. Planning is a key area requiring innovation to achieve public trust, but where there is greater demand for project scoping rather than project delivery – leaving an ongoing hole in our published designs and Research Notes in this field.

The Symposium's first outworking appeared positive. Evidence Based Policy has been a great success both in substance and media exposure and will make a practical difference to how governments in Australia make decisions as its findings are championed.

A new website has just launched, heralding a fresh new look. Its not enough to do the work: making it easily accessible to practitioners and professionals in governments has to remain our equal priority.

## **Locally**

Kyle has been a real standout, having managed many of the projects on the ground directly and behind the scenes.

The Fairfax project fizzled, but there is still hope that The Guardian's one might continue. With the news media playing a cornerstone role in our democracy, exploring whether and how this aspect can be more deliberative will remain an area of interest.

At the Federal level, any traction achieved with Minister Porter et al seems to have disappeared, along with any appetite for reform before the next election. Having said this, Glenn Barnes continues to advocate for a Constitutional Convention (another outworking of the Symposium) and we are with him. The CIS will host an evening in November with Glenn and myself, and Janet Albrechtsen, on a panel.

## **Internationally**

UNDEF is the real highlight, followed by Eupen and Madrid. The UK is promising with Miriam Levin's CJ's and Graham Allan's constitutional convention. The R&D Network continues to thrive. The Athens Democracy Forum proved a disappointment again. The New Shape Prize in Stockholm gave Iain and I some networking opportunities into the broader global governance regime, but not much else – there is little appetite for a Global

Citizens' Assembly – understandably so – as all the players seem very invested in the current framework of career ambassadors and bureaucrats.

### **More Generally**

The Strategy day (paper attached) clarified our direction and provides a path to our long term ongoing financial wellbeing. The Symposium is helping build a national network of like-minded actors - required for a national Constitutional Convention and the spreading of innovative ideas.

Our small executive team – Iain and Kyle are all we have, so they need support. Geoff has been a tireless advocate, along with Kathy and Carson – as usual, and David Schecter, who is building our international network.

Luca Belgiorno-Nettis  
Chair