

**Submission on Jobs and Skills Australia
to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
by Community Colleges Australia
10 February 2023**

1. Introduction

This submission from Community Colleges Australia (CCA) to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) on the establishment, roles and responsibilities of Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) responds to the Discussion Paper issued by the Department.¹ Following a statement of CCA priorities, this submission answers the eight specific discussion questions posed by the Discussion Paper.

1.1 Community Colleges Australia

Community Colleges Australia is the peak national body that represents community-owned, not-for-profit adult and community education (ACE) providers. Our vision is for dynamic and vibrant communities, informed and empowered through learning. To make our vision a reality, CCA works to empower Australia's community education sector by increasing the awareness of the sector and its place in the economic and social fabric of our nation. CCA advocates at all levels of government on the value of the community education sector, and for our members' activities and programs. For more detail go to Appendix A or our website.²

1.3 Australia's Adult and Community Education Sector

The number of Australian adult and community education (ACE) students rebounded by 15.2% in 2021 from a pandemic-impacted low in 2020, according to data from the NCVER. ACE "Total VET" student numbers increased from 390,185 in 2020 to 449,500 in 2021.³

In 2021, 4.3 million students were enrolled in nationally recognised vocational education and training (VET), [an increase of 9.0%](#) compared with 2020. In 2021, 3,186,795 students (74.1%) enrolled at private training providers, 778,300 (18.1%) at TAFE institutes, 449,500 (10.5%) at community education (ACE) providers, 114,100 (2.7%) at schools, 107,000 (2.5%) at enterprise providers and 75,600 (1.8%) at universities.⁴

For more detail, go to the CCA website.⁵

¹ Jobs and Skills Australia discussion paper, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 5 January 2023, accessed at <https://www.dewr.gov.au/jobs-and-skills-australia/resources/jobs-and-skills-australia-discussion-paper>.

² See <https://cca.edu.au/who-we-are/about-us/>.

³ See <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/total-vet-students-and-courses-2021>.

⁴ See <https://www.ncver.edu.au/news-and-events/media-releases/vet-participation-up-nine-percent>.

⁵ See <https://cca.edu.au/who-we-are/communityeducation/>.

2. The Big Issues for Jobs and Skills Australia as We See Them

CCA has identified a number of “big issues” that relate to the establishment and Terms of Reference of Jobs and Skills Australia, detailed below.

2.1 Recognition of Australian Adult and Community Education as an Important VET Sub-sector and the Need for an Updated ACE Ministerial Policy Declaration

Ministerial ACE policy declarations from [Victoria](#) and [South Australia](#) (New South Wales followed in 2020, with a full ACE Strategy to be published shortly⁶) acknowledge the importance and role of the adult and community education sector in Australian education, training for employment and participation in society. The [Victorian statement’s](#) first goal is, “To engage and support adult learners who need to develop their core foundation skills for work, further study, and to *participate in society as valued citizens.*” This reflects the last [Commonwealth statement](#) (2008) – now outdated but still relevant – in which the fourth principle stated, “Increased provision of vocationally focussed programs by ACE is supported while its community and *citizenship capacity building* agenda continues.” The [South Australian statement](#) (2017, PDF) speaks of “encouraging participation in social activities and ... developing socially and culturally informed citizens, our communities become better places to live.”

CCA strongly believes that a renewed national policy statement on ACE is a very high priority, with the 2008 statement an excellent model.⁷ Without a policy framework around what ACE providers do and why they do it, it is not possible to develop programs and understand their role in Australian society. This is a pretty need that will assist the JSA.

CCA is disappointed that many research projects, programs or policy developments undertaken or funded by DEWR’s predecessor DESE did not acknowledge the community education sector, despite clear NCVER data that shows the community education sector is a vital part of the Australian skills sector. An example: in the early analyses of the new VET Student Loans program, community providers were not separated from for-profit private providers on the basis that it was “too difficult” to work out. This was, in our view, a significant public policy absence. Similarly, the most recent JSA report on regional and rural VET - *Vocational education and training in regional, rural and remote Australia* (January 2023) – does not acknowledge in any way the special role that NFP community providers play in regional and rural training, where most for-profit providers cannot determine sufficient profit to operate there.⁸ While CCA acknowledges that this report was inherited from the previous National Skills Commission, it shows an insensitivity to the nature of how VET is delivered, by whom and where and why. How is it possible to produce a 55 page report and include no discussion about how different providers operate and no mention (other than a single definition) of community education providers? CCA has investigated the role of NFP community providers in regional and rural training and found tremendous amount of data; see our report *The Role of New South Wales Community Education Providers in Regional and Rural Economic Development*.⁹

⁶ See <https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/policies-procedures/ace-policy-statement>.

⁷ See https://cca.edu.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ministerial_Declaration_on_Adult_Community_Education_2008.pdf.

⁸ See <https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/reports/vocational-education-and-training-regional-and-remote-australia>. Also see the important work by Dr Don Zoellner that analyses why marketisation has disadvantaged outer regional and remote training across Australia; see <https://cca.edu.au/vet-marketisation-in-nsw-has-disadvantaged-lower-income-learners-and-outer-regional-areas/>.

⁹ See <https://cca.edu.au/home/nsw-regional-and-rural-economic-development-report-summary/>.

2.3 It's Not All About the Economy: Recognition of Community Development as a Valid and Important Part of Training and Skills

Following on from the point above, CCA requests the new JSA to examine the needs of the “community” and not just the needs of the “economy” and employers. Community development is an integral part of what our sector does, an aspect that the Commonwealth Government (although not NCVET) has not recognised for some time. Community cannot be separated from employment and economic activity, and our members are community-based and community-managed.

2.4 Skills Planning from 50,000 Feet Up: The Importance of JSA Taking the Lead in Regional and Local Skills Plans

There was an old adage in town planning that so much planning took place at 50,000 feet (about 16,000 metres) from earth – in other words, so high up, that people were not relevant (or seen). Unfortunately, in CCA’s view, much of the work undertaken by the (previous) National Skills Commission appeared to operate at that level, without much connection to local communities and regions.

CCA requests the new Jobs and Skills Australia to consider local and regional needs as a priority: employment, “markets”, social needs, networks, major employment perspectives all vary tremendously from region to region, and nobody appears to be bringing this together in the way it needs. JSA: here is a job for you, working with organisations like the Regional Australia Institute, Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA), Economic Development Australia, Regional Development Australia, regional organisations of councils – and, of course, peak organisations like Community Colleges Australia.

CCA strongly believes that skills and training have a crucial geographic perspective and is concerned that much Australian skills planning ignores the spatial aspect. So much of VET, in particular, is undertaken in person, frequently in traineeships and apprenticeships and in-person skills.

2.5 Role of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

CCA has worked closely and well with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), which has proven to be a reliable – and consistent source of data. See, for example, the types of reports that CCA produces based on NCVER data:

- *Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Students of NSW Adult and Community Education Providers: Analysis of 2021 Data*, 16 January 2023¹⁰
- *Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Students of Victorian Adult and Community Education Providers: Analysis of 2021 Data*, 18 November 2022¹¹

2.6 The Role of VET in Reducing Australian Inequality

CCA CEO, Dr Don Perlmutt, has given a number of presentations in the last year about how VET has an important role in reducing inequality in Australia – and, by extension – improving social and economic participation. Dr Perlmutt has identified six ways to enable VET to make Australia a more equal and just society:

¹⁰ See <https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Vulnerable-and-Disadvantaged-NSW-ACE-Students-2021-by-Provider-16January2023.pdf>.

¹¹ See <https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Victorian-Vulnerable-and-Disadvantaged-Students-by-Provider-Analysis-of-2021-Data.pdf>.

1. **Create proper pathways**, from ACE to TAFE, and from VET to universities.
2. **Develop regional skills plans**, in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, which prioritise social justice goals and consider the needs of disadvantaged learners.
3. **Fund foundation skills (FS)** – language, literacy, numeracy, digital and employability skills – properly, recognising the importance of skilled FS trainers and the special needs of adult basic education students, who may not fit into traditional VET teaching models: this includes national recruitment campaigns utilising the Reading Writing Hotline.
4. **Ensure VET is properly funded** – with [5.1% inflation in Australia](#) to 31 March 2022, chances are VET funding is heading backwards – fund proper physical facilities and digital connectivity for ACE.
5. **Implement a [national outreach program](#)** to re-engage disadvantaged and vulnerable VET learners who have left training because of COVID-19 concerns, based on the Victorian Reconnect Program and the earlier TAFE NSW Outreach program, with a focus on student support and mentoring.
6. **Renew the national-state-territory policy statement** on the value and place of ACE and its place in Australian skills and training, to update the [2008 Ministerial statement](#).

More detail about Dr Perlgut’s presentations are available on the CCA website.¹²

2.7 The Role of VET in Sustaining Australian Democracy

All Australian education has an important role in sustaining Australian democracy. Events over recent years (including the “storming” of the US Capital) have shown how fragile democracy can be at times. In early 2020, CCA undertook a major research project that examined the role of Australian adult and community education providers in sustaining Australian democracy. See Appendix B for a summary and the CCA website.¹³ CCA firmly believes that this topic – the role of VET in Australian democracy – needs to be on the workplan. Institutions such as the Museum of Australian Democracy (MOAD) are ready-made partners.

3. JSA Discussion Paper Questions

In this section of the submission, CCA responds to the specific questions asked by the JSA Discussion Paper.

3.1 Structure and Governance

Are there other design considerations that could further strengthen Jobs and Skills Australia’s ability to provide advice to government?

CCA would like to see:

- Greater linkage to industry policy and better-defined directions.
- The work of JSA can underpin the sort of society and economy do we want. This relates to our points about “community” above.

¹² See <https://cca.edu.au/inequality-in-australia-what-can-vocational-education-and-training-do-about-it/>; <https://youtu.be/Lc-T3Lidm7k> - video of his presentation (25’39”); and <https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Engagement-Australia-Conference-Don-Perlqut-22November2022-web.pdf> (slide presentation at a recent conference). Also see <https://cca.edu.au/is-australian-vet-up-for-addressing-the-challenges-of-inequality/>.

¹³ See <https://cca.edu.au/what-we-do/democracy-and-citizenship/>.

- What are the social contracts that underpin the economic/industry connections and how are these built. Labour market policy levers are very important in creating conditions for systemic support and improved social contracts; this needs to be embedded in the thinking behind JSA.
- What is the society we want? Low environmental impact, thriving economy, meaningful work, respected workers.
- The focus on energy/green skills and foundation skills – these are crucial areas which, if designed well, can help us build a better Australia. Further consideration of an incorporating checks re ecological sustainability of process, might be climate risk, supply chain, greenwashing - if you are working with industries that aren't engaging - ask them how they will get better at it, and what can be improved, and don't fund it unless engaged.
- Incorporate listening to the not-for-profit NFP sector in a nuanced way. NFPs are not all exemplary – but they focus on wellbeing and fundamentals and are mostly 'on the ground' providing invaluable intelligence that can shape better policy. NFPs have many different needs and perspectives on skills and training and their roles – including the basic mission of the organisations, and representatives of the for-profit sector cannot properly represent their full needs.
- Unpack the systems underpinning the current priorities: where are the choke points mapping
- First Nations access to skills and training
- Foundation skills access to all
- Skills transfer
- Youth – the most under-employed part of our society: see the Brotherhood of St Laurence youth unemployment studies¹⁴

3.2 Jobs and Skills Australia Functions

3.2.1 What principles could be used to guide Jobs and Skills Australia's priorities, and the development of its workplan?

- Holistic and specific lens where necessary, flexible
- Fair, equitable and inclusive
- Ecological impact and transformation lens – does it have a positive/neutral impact on economy and environment, can it be improved?
- Strength-based and interested in development of all segments in skills chain
- Considers all the elements of the skills ecosystem including community - not just industry or learner needs. Systemic where possible.
- Human-centred skills development
- Foundational skills always considered and prioritised
- 'Decent' work underpins the skills work developed
- Open and clear: transparency of information and decision making:
- Best outcomes Don't assume broad coverage/ large, proclaimed reach = quality: whether that's industry or provider or government

3.2.2 How could Jobs and Skills Australia seek broader input into the development and refinement of its workplan?

- Consult more broadly - utilise systems thinking approaches, see below
- Ensure the models of consultation used are broad and include implementation and coalface realities

¹⁴ See <https://www.bsl.org.au/about/advocacy/youth-employment/>.

3.2.3 How could Jobs and Skills Australia engage tripartite partners, experts, and other interested parties in its major studies?

- Value proposition for all stakeholders. Create a vision for the work you are doing
- Outline the social and economic society scenarios: shaping agendas, climate change, migration, demographic shift, nature of work
- Help people to see horizons as well as medium- and short-term goals – aim big and chunk down to engage partners
- Ensure consultation is linked up with all the players so a full picture of what is needed or how the levers impact delivery and effect: cross sections of stakeholders
- illustrate that you are across the work that has been done or are interested in linking what partners think
- Clean energy and foundation skills are two priorities you have identified
Technical capacity – regional collaborative piece that incorporates work across JSCs ideal opportunity to demonstrate joined up thinking
- Explore linkages pathways
- Help industries/encourage JSCs to work their industries to value training/ mentoring roles within their businesses – invest in the training perspective and value it can bring
- Foundation skills piece can accompany that

3.2.4 What new information should Jobs and Skills Australia be collecting through its engagement to build a stronger evidence base?

- Ensuring a clear picture of how the VET system is developing
- Make use of alternative views and research options. Don't just use consultancy firms
- Exploration of linkages and pathways between tertiary sectors, consider also how VET is being undermined by efforts within the university sector. Exclusionary rather than Collaboratory intent e.g. (development of short courses - AQF 4 & 5 equivalent) programs, rapid turn- around, do not have the constraints of VET - self accrediting. Gives them speed to market but can also undermine local options. This can cannibalise thin markets.
- Learners and decision makers able to transform, be resilient - how is the system doing that?
- Invest in capability: what does a capable system look like? the VET system has been underinvested in for so long that outcomes are highly variable. Building the systems integrity and valuing what it does is crucial. An important part of that is investing in and recognising its trainers and leaders.
- Keep focus on lifelong learning
- LLND - putting the pieces together well - paucity of good information.
- Look to building a high impact low ecological impact system how are we building skills industries and communities
- Value of local players and solutions. So many of the issues local, regional, state, and national are compounded by not connecting intelligence. Great work being done but it doesn't seem to go into a whole picture. Mini systems involve community players as well as large entities. Service procurement is large contributing factor.

Discussion questions on functions and ways of working:

6. How can Jobs and Skills Australia expand its engagement to include a broader range of skills and industry stakeholders in its work?

- Make it simple to engage

- Fund peak organisations – especially NFPs so that they can properly engage, especially through ability to travel to Canberra to meet with JSA staff and attend other major events
- Try to connect with the broad range of work that is being done across the sectors and don't try to reinvent the wheel. Use this to inform
- Be open, generous with information, must create trust
- Make use of key advocacy and relevant scaffolding organisations to spread information about what JSA is about and wants to do. That includes youth and schools. Run forums or ask questions of specific bodies and they can feed this back to you
- Link better with state based activity
- Also ensure cross government/ discipline initiatives are incorporated where possible - synergies

7. What types of outreach could Jobs and Skills Australia use to increase visibility and use of its products and advice?

Re-imagine culture of ongoing development and collaboration between VET and higher education.

8. How can Jobs and Skills Australia present data and analysis to best inform your work?

- Ensure an ongoing focus on identifying foundation skills need
- Support evidence based interventions - careful with foundation skills
- Evaluation of educational/ skills programs required to determine efficacy - important that evaluation support for providers

Appendix A: About Community Colleges Australia

Community Colleges Australia (abbreviation: “CCA”) is the peak national body that represents community-owned, not-for-profit adult and community education (ACE) providers. Our vision is for dynamic and vibrant communities, informed and empowered through learning. To make our vision a reality, CCA works to empower Australia’s community education sector by increasing the awareness of the sector and its place in the economic and social fabric of our nation. CCA advocates at all levels of government on the value of the community education sector, and for our members’ activities and programs.

CCA assists its members to sustain and grow, promoting learning innovation, focussing especially on vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. They focus on student welfare and are strongly committed to employment outcomes for their learners.¹⁵

Our members have been providing flexible and dynamic education and training opportunities to individuals, groups and businesses for a long time – in some instances more than 110 years. As well as operating in accredited VET, CCA members offer a range of other learning opportunities, including non-accredited training, lifestyle and lifelong and cultural learning courses – education for which they are historically well-known, and independent special assistance secondary schools.¹⁶ These educational activities help build self-esteem, re-engage “missing” learners and create and sustain social and community networks, all of which help to reinforce and sustain the communities in which our members operate.

Our members have an historic commitment to invest in their communities and respond to the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians, including a commitment to foundation skills. They do this through small class sizes, focussing on personal support, and creating connections to and collaborations with local non-government organisations, government agencies, social services and employers.

¹⁵ See <https://cca.edu.au/who-we-are/about-us/>.

¹⁶ See <https://cca.edu.au/special-assistance-secondary-schools-end-2020-on-a-high-note/>.

Appendix B: The Role of Australian Adult and Community Education Providers in Sustaining Australian Democracy

The following summary is taken from the CCA report, available on the CCA website.¹⁷

B.1 Background

Community Colleges Australia (CCA) has released a discussion paper on the role that Australian adult and community education (ACE) providers can play in sustaining Australian democracy and supporting civil society. You can view a [full copy of the paper here](#) (PDF, 423kb).

CCA prepared the paper as a submission to the Australian Senate's Legal and Constitutional Affairs References [Committee Inquiry](#) into Nationhood, Identity and Democracy, and to stimulate discussion on how ACE sector can contribute to the maintenance of Australian democracy. CCA's submission has been [published by the Committee as submission](#) number 179.



B.2 The Value the Australian ACE Sector Brings to Australian Democracy

The Australian ACE sector provides a great deal of value to support Australian democracy. Given the importance of education to democratic functioning, the sector's expertise in education and training of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups – particularly through foundation skills of language, literacy and numeracy – means that we have a unique role in ensuring that Australian democracy thrives.

Our sector also provides sustainable not-for-profit community-based institutions – some of which have [operated continuously since 1913](#) – and these institutions provide the “glue” keeps communities functioning, ensuring the maintenance of [community social capital](#). Confidence in society's institutions is essential [to maintain civic trust](#).

Although universities are traditionally thought of as places of civics education, Australian vocational education and training (VET) probably has a much greater role, because of the VET sector's engagement

¹⁷ Go to <https://cca.edu.au/what-we-do/democracy-and-citizenship/>.

with lower socio-economic status (SES) students. Low SES students are particularly clustered in VET Certificates I and II, with higher SES students most prominent studying at Diploma level; see Table 1 below.

B.3 Community Education Providers Reach Many of Australia’s Most Disadvantaged Post-Secondary Students

Table 1 below compares 2018 Australian enrolment percentages for specific vulnerable and disadvantaged groups across three profiles: the university sector, all VET students and the sub-set of not-for-profit community education provider VET students.

The results show a distinct pattern of how the most VET students are, on balance, a much more disadvantaged group than university students. Of VET students, community education students are further more disadvantaged. In comparison to university students, twice as many community education students are “low SES” (in the bottom quarter – 25%); have a disability; or live in regional, rural and remote areas. In addition, community education providers enrol four times as many Indigenous people and more than seven times as many people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Table 1: Australian University, VET and Community Education Student Cohorts: Equity Group Percentages Compared, 2018

Student Group	University student enrolment proportions (%)	Total VET students program enrolments (%)	Community Education provider students program enrolments (%)
Low SES (bottom 25%)	17.0	28.2	34.6
Students with a disability	7.3	8.0	16.0
Indigenous	1.9	5.9	7.6
Regional and rural	19.8	31.2	36.6
Remote and very remote	0.8	2.6	2.1
Non-English speaking background	3.4	24.1	25.3

(For notes on the Table, see CCA’s full Discussion Paper, pp. 7 & 18.)

B.4 The Worldwide Challenge of Democracy

Since the Brexit vote in June 2016 and the election of President Donald J Trump in November of that year, increasing numbers of commentators [have attempted to analyse](#) and develop solutions to the challenges and crisis facing democracy in Western countries. In [How Democracies Die: What History Reveals About Our Future](#), Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt warn that, “the guardrails of American democracy are weakening,” an erosion “of democratic norms that began in the 1980s and 1990s and accelerated in the 2000s.”

Political scientist [Lee Drutman says](#) that the causes of the challenges facing democracy include “the backlash to the financial crisis and increasing globalization, immigration, changing demographics, and urban/rural polarization.”

Other titles now crowd bookshop shelves, such as [Democracy Divided](#), Yascha Mounk’s [The People vs Democracy: Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and How to Save It](#), David Runciman’s [How Democracy Ends](#), Jason Brennan’s [Against Democracy](#), former Australian Race Discrimination Commissioner Tim Soutphommasane’s [On Hate](#), and books by recent Australian visitors Fintan O’Toole ([Heroic Failure: Brexit and the Politics of Pain](#)) and Ece Temelkuran ([How to Lose a Country: The Seven Steps from Democracy to Dictatorship](#)).

B.5 The Current Challenge of Australian Democracy

The Museum of Australian Democracy’s [Democracy 2025 project](#) warns that, “Across the world, trust in democracy is in retreat. Urgent action is needed.” The [2018 project report](#) notes that Australians with the lowest incomes are least satisfied with how democracy works, stating:

Satisfaction in democracy has more than halved in a decade [from 86% in 2007 to 41% in 2018] and trust in key institutions and social leaders is eroding. By 2025 if nothing is done and current trends continue, fewer than 10% of Australians will trust their politicians and political institutions – resulting in ineffective and illegitimate government, and declining social and economic wellbeing.

Why does this matter? Weakening political trust erodes civic engagement, reduces support for evidence based public policies, promotes risk aversion in government, and creates the space for the rise of authoritarian-populist forces. Trust is the glue that facilitates collective action for mutual benefit. Without trust we don’t have the ability to address complex, long-term challenges. Trust is also closely tied to democratic satisfaction.

Analysing the results of the May 2019 election, the ANU’s [Australian Election Study found](#), “Australians’ satisfaction with democracy is at its lowest since the constitutional crisis of the 1970s.” Faith in Australian political institutions is also suffering. [Sam Roggeveen](#) (The Lowy Institute) writes that “Australia is not exempt” from world influences due to a “hollowing out” of Australia’s political parties: “At the 2019 election the Coalition’s primary vote was 41.4%, its second-worst result since 1972. Labor was at 33.3%, its poorest result since 1934.” This resulted in the [highest-ever primary vote share](#) for independents and minor parties, at 25.2%.

Australian institutions are responding. The Australian Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee’s [inquiry into nationhood, national identity and democracy](#) has [published a discussion paper](#) and [received 168 submissions](#). The Democracy 2025 project based at the [Museum of Australian Democracy](#) at Old Parliament House in Canberra has developed [extensive resources](#) and recently [hosted a cross-party discussion](#) on how to reform Australian democracy.

Other high-quality education resources for Australian school students include [The Story of Our Rights and Freedoms](#), Australian Human Rights Commission and Cool Australia’s [Democracy Rules: An electoral education resource](#), Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), [ABC Education](#), [The Museum of Australian Democracy](#) and Education Services Australia’s [Civics and Citizenship website](#).

Australia has a history in democracy education: the [Discovering Democracy program](#) brought in during 1997 by then Minister Dr David Kemp (now Chair of the Museum of Australian Democracy Board) in 1997 included [an adult education component](#) through the establishment of a “Civics and Citizenship

Learning Circle Program” for the adult and community sector. More than 500 groups registered with Adult Learning Australia as civics and citizenship learning circles.



CCA believes that the role of Australian adult and community education providers in supporting Australian democracy needs be acknowledged by the [Commonwealth Government](#), with a [renewed national ACE policy statement](#) that supports [national VET goals](#) and stands near the centre of a national strategy for the maintenance of Australian democratic institutions and support for civil society.

B.6 Conclusion

At a moment of political change and loss of faith in many democratic institutions, both in Australia and world-wide, it’s time to return to the some of the historic and ideological roots of adult and community education. Australia’s active and vital ACE providers have maintained and sustained a collective infrastructure and developed a resilient capacity to adapt to change and to support the communities in which they operate. It’s time to re-acknowledge their strengths and the value that they bring to Australian society and our democratic functioning. CCA seeks active means to make this happen.

View a [copy of the full discussion paper here](#) (PDF, 423kb).