

Australia 2050: Conversations about our future

Workshop Agenda Template

Duration – 3 half-days

Purpose: To provide a toolkit for running an Australia 2050 for a duration of 1.5 days

Background:

The Australian Academy of Science's ambitious Australia 2050 project is intended to help Australia chart its path in uncertain but shared futures by engaging scientists, business people, policy makers and members of the public in structured conversations about the challenges we face, and the kind of Australia we want. Australia 2050 was initiated by the Australian Academy of Science with funding from the Australian Research Council (ARC).

Australia 2050 sought to describe Living Scenarios that could be adapted and built on to provide deep provocations for futures thinking. The Living Scenarios are based on archetype scenarios of growth, restraint, catastrophe and transformation.

Running your own community or workplace workshop will deepen understanding about Australia's future and contribute to national conversations on how we can take action to enable an economically prosperous, environmentally stable and socially equitable future.

For more background on the Australia 2050 project, associated events and scenario descriptions, explore <https://futureconversations.net.au/>

Format:

Previous experience tells us that having productive conversations can be difficult, especially when the participants have diverse and even incompatible outlooks. To address this, the workshop is based on structured conversations and adopts the world café' style to keep discussion dynamic and fresh. This workshop includes an optional rapid prototyping step to articulate preferred futures.

Structured conversations

Participants should be encouraged to be as open and creative in their thinking around the archetypes, whilst keeping the living scenarios concepts of 'plausible', 'acceptable' and 'workable' in mind. Instead of viewing their own or others' perceptions as 'right' or 'wrong', or trying to solve problems, they should let ideas bubble to the surface independently of moral judgment. Participants should be encouraged to participate and to listen, making the process of the conversation the outcome.

World Café Format

The World Café format requires rotating conversations, in this case 25 mins for each round. Participants can either be seated in groups of 3-4 people cabaret style and supplied with butchers' paper and felt pens to take notes of the discussions so they can be shared with other participants when the rotation changes.

For each scenario, participants are given a brief introduction to the scenario, and then three rounds of conversations to discuss that scenario. These questions are useful to ask:

- At Round 1: What does Australia look like in 2050 under this scenario?

- At Round 3: How do you think we might get there?

Exploring Preferred Futures

To explore preferred future directions, this workshop has a final reflection step scheduled, where participants can reflect on the conversations they've had and the steps they may now need to take in order to achieve their preferred futures.

Links:

- Brochure: [Australia 2050 brochure](#)
- Living Scenarios descriptions: [Australia 2050: Future Conversations](#)
- Structured conversations (how to): [Australia 2050: Structuring conversations about our future](#)
- 2013 & 2016 Workshop report: [Australia 2050 Workshop Report 2013 & 2016](#)

Suggested Agenda:

Notes times are indicative only. The workshop can be run over 3 days with Growth and Restraint on Day 1, Catastrophe and Transformation on Day 2 and the reflection Step on Day 3, or as a full day with the reflection step on a following day as outlined here.

DAY 1 Full day session

Time	Topic
9:00am	Participants arrive, check in
9:10am	Welcome and acknowledgement of country
9:15am	Background and purpose of Foresight 2050, Introduction to futures thinking
9:20am	Introduction to structured conversations Process, world café methodology
9:35am	Introduction to the Growth Archetype
9:40am	First iteration
10:05am	Second iteration
10:30am	Third iteration
10:55am	Report back
11:10am	----- short break (15 mins) -----
11:25am	Introduction to the Restraint Archetype
11:30am	First iteration
11:55am	Second iteration
12:20pm	Third iteration
12:55pm	Report back
1:05pm	----- lunch break (15 mins) -----
1:35pm	Introduction to Catastrophe Archetype
1:40pm	First iteration
2:05pm	Second iteration
2:30pm	Third iteration
2:55pm	Report back
3:10pm	Introduction to Transformation Archetype
3:15pm	First iteration
3:40 pm	Second iteration
4:05pm	Third iteration
4:30pm	Report back
4:45pm	Summary of the day and homework for Day 2
5:00pm	----- Drinks & canapés -----

DAY 2 Morning session

Time	Topic
9:30am	Participants arrive, check in
9:35am	Welcome back
9:40am	Discuss how the conversation over the past day have provided understanding about possible futures and what elements could be shared as part of developing the Living Scenarios for others.
9:55am	Q&A on Living Scenarios
11:05am	What are the significant and important things that people have been musing on and must act on or adapt to for the future? Small group discussions to discuss top 10 list.
11:35am	Report back - Develop most important list that we as a community should be working towards.
11:55am	Group reflections - What are individuals committing to do or change as a result of the experience?
12:25pm	Thank you
12:30pm	Close