



Media release

5 August 2025



MoAD's innovative *Democracy in a Box* education program launches in Townsville

A groundbreaking Civics and Citizenship education outreach program developed by the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (MoAD), *Democracy in a Box* was officially launched today (5 August) at Hermit Park State School in Townsville.

This event marks the launch of a pilot program that will reach 40 regional and remote schools across Queensland and the Northern Territory between July and October 2025.

Democracy in a Box brings Australia's democratic story directly into classrooms, offering Years 5 and 6 students and their teachers a hands-on learning experience that fosters civic engagement and builds understanding of democratic values.

The program provides:

- interactive workshops developed and delivered by MoAD educators
- professional development and lesson plans for teachers
- a curated selection of books and classroom resources
- inquiry-led games and activities that build awareness of democratic processes
- ongoing access to MoAD staff for support and guidance

In February 2025 the Joint Standing Committee, *From Classroom to Community: Civics education and political participation in Australia*, reported ‘a critical need for engaging, relevant and practical curriculum aligned Civics and Citizenship content for Australian classrooms’. *Democracy in a Box* is the latest resource developed by MoAD in its ongoing work to support teachers with practical tools to deliver engaging and accessible civics education.

“*Democracy in a Box* puts the student at the centre of civics and citizenship learning – it encourages them to be engaged and active citizens in their local and school communities, ultimately broadening and strengthening Australia’s democracy,” said Barrie Cassidy, Chair of the Board at Old Parliament House. “This program is a reminder of the vital role MoAD plays in encouraging Australians to engage with their democracy – to understand it, to question it, and to be part of it.”

The initiative is made possible through the generous support of philanthropists Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax AC, whose enduring commitment to regional education and civic engagement has helped bring this project to life.

Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax AC said, “We are delighted to support the Museum of Australian Democracy and its *Democracy in a Box* pilot program. The program provides students and teachers in regional and remote Queensland and the Northern Territory with a new and engaging way to learn about and interact with our democracy.”

The program was launched by former Governor-General Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, along with speeches by The Hon Milton Dick MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Samara Koidis, Acting Principal of Hermit Park State School. Other notable attendees included Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax AC and Phillip Thompson MP OAM, Member for Herbert and Stephanie Bull, Director MoAD.

“We’re so excited to be one of the first schools in Queensland to take part in *Democracy in a Box*,” said Samara Koidis, Acting Principal of Hermit Park State School. “This program gives our students a hands-on way to understand how democracy works, why their voices matter, and how they can make a difference in their own communities as active citizens.”

“Every student in Australia deserves access to high-quality civics and citizenship education resources,” said Dr Stephanie Smith, Acting Head of Learning and Museum Experience at MoAD. “This program is a key part of our mission, especially for students in regional and remote areas who may not have easy access to these kinds of resources.”

Democracy in a Box provides high-quality resources for students and teachers across Australia, helping to empower their civic engagement in local community and understanding of how they can contribute to meaningful change. By encouraging students to ask questions, participate in discussions, and explore the values that underpin our democracy, the program aims to inspire the next generation of informed and active citizens.

To learn more about *Democracy in a Box* or to register interest in future programs, visit moadoph.gov.au/learn/democracy-in-a-box or email democracyinabox@moadoph.gov.au.

Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (MoAD)

The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (MoAD) is a modern museum located inside a heritage-listed building that was once home to Australia's national parliament.

MoAD protects, conserves and interprets this national icon to highlight the crucial role the building and its collections have played in shaping today's Australia. The museum strives to share the story of Australia's democracy through exhibitions, educational programs, publications and digital content to increase understanding of the nation's social and political history.

By actively exploring how Australia's democratic systems work, audiences of all ages are inspired and equipped to participate as engaged citizens in our democracy.

About Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax AC

Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax AC are passionate philanthropists dedicated to enriching the lives of Australians, particularly those living in regional and remote areas.

Through their charitable efforts, they have supported education, the arts, and rural communities for over two decades. Their commitment to making a lasting difference in society continues to inspire others to invest in Australia's future.

Images available on request.

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Caption: Students at Hermit Park State School in Townsville explore MoAD's *Democracy in a Box* program with Dr Stephanie Smith.