

MEDIA RELEASE – under strict embargo until 12 November 2014

Free votes for MPs and protest votes for citizens – Australians call for a political system overhaul

Over half of older Australians think MPs should be allowed a free vote in parliament, while 1 in 4 Gen X and Gen Y Australians think that ‘none of the above’ should be an option on voting ballots, according to research launched today by the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House in Canberra.

The research, conducted by the Museum in conjunction with the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis at the University of Canberra, is being featured in a ground breaking new interactive exhibition, *Power of 1: Does your voice count?*, which is exploring different generational attitudes to our political system.

Power of 1: Does your voice count? features the results of a national baseline survey that canvasses the four generations: Builders, Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y for their views on democracy, including views on compulsory voting, the way they engage with political issues and their satisfaction with the current political system.

The research shows that Australians have strong views on changes that are needed to our political system, with 41 per cent calling for caps on political advertising and donations and over a third (38 per cent) of all Australians believing that an MP should have a free vote in parliament to represent the views of their constituency, not their party.

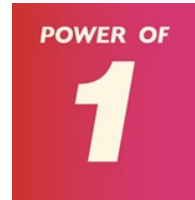
Almost 1 in 3 Australians (29 per cent) believe that our ballot papers should include a ‘none of the above’ option as a protest vote.

Daryl Karp, Director of the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, says the new exhibition is ground-breaking in that it has been curated by Australian people and will continue to change as people visit the exhibition both in person and online.

“Power of 1: Does your voice count? is new ground for museums in Australia. It is a truly interactive exhibition where we are encouraging all Australians to contribute their views, either online or at the exhibition,” she said.

The exhibition will be updated every quarter with results and stories from visitors adding to the current survey data.

Professor Mark Evans, Director and Professor of Governance at the Institute for Governance says the survey shows some remarkable similarities in some of the views on politics between generations but stark differences in the way they engage.



“The survey shows that younger generations are as engaged with democracy as our older generations, but they engage in entirely different ways. You are more likely to find young Australians engaging in crowd-sourced funding for a cause or joining an online advocacy group than marching in a protest.”

Power of 1: Does your voice count? is currently on display at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, and is open daily from 9am-5pm. The Power of 1 survey is also available online at www.sbs.com.au/powerof1

For more information visit: moadoph.gov.au

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Filming and interview opportunities

Filming opportunities are available at the *Power of 1* exhibition. The exhibition features four rooms with influencers from each generation and a tally room that visualises the results of the survey into a physical display.

Interview opportunities are also available:

- Daryl Karp, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House
- Professor Mark Evans, Director and Professor of Governance, Institute for Governance at the University of Canberra
- Rachael Coghlan, Manager – Community Engagement, Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House

About the survey

Ipsos on behalf of the Museum of Australian Democracy and the University of Canberra conducted the national baseline survey. The survey had a sample size of 826 participants representative of all states and territories (including regional) and four Australian generations:

- Builders – Born between 1925 and 1945
- Baby Boomers – Born between 1946 and 1964
- Generation X – Born between 1965 and 1979
- Generation Y – Born between 1980 and 1995

References to the survey should credit the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House and the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis at the University of Canberra.