

# Belonging FOR ALL

Bridging difference in divided times



## What do we mean by Belonging for All?

Belonging for All means creating systems, structures, places and cultures where everyone—regardless of background, age, identity, or perspective—can contribute. It's about building a society where diversity strengthens us, rather than divides us.

Our hypothesis is that when we build the conditions and structures to enable people, groups and communities to work together across differences we are creating a better future for all generations.



## Why do we need a strategy for Belonging for All?

Polarisation and division are growing in Australia and globally, but most solutions only treat the symptoms. Many responses struggle to address the deeper systemic problems creating separation and exclusion across cultures, politics, and identities.

Throughout history, nations with the most diversity thrive when they harness it well. In this significant period of global transition, Australia has an opportunity to draw on our diversity of cultures, identities, and political perspectives to demonstrate humanity at its best.

## Why now?

There is a growing recognition by many that our current systems and structures can no longer meet the challenges we face, and there is a demand for major change.

# Belonging FOR ALL

Bridging difference in divided times

## Purpose

Make Belonging and Bridging central to how we live and lead in Australia for all people and Country.

## Vision

Our vision is twofold:

Our systems and communities have embedded Belonging for All as part of Australia's identity and way of life.

Everyone in Australia trusts that our systems and institutions are working for them – creating choices together across generations and cultures.

## The context we are in

Australians seek a nation where everyone belongs - yet division, loneliness, and distrust are intensifying. Many decision-makers across politics, business, and media actively benefit from division.

Without change, decisions about who belongs and who doesn't will define us as a country.

## The opportunity right now

We now have a choice to make. We can either let the differences between us lead to further polarisation and division or we can enable our differences to make us stronger through Belonging for All.

Australians seek a nation where they belong — yet division and distrust are intensifying. Belonging is about creating the infrastructures, narratives, policies and ways of relating where everyone — regardless of values, culture, identity and wealth — can contribute to an active democracy that works for all.

## Our challenge questions

What does Belonging for All look like in different communities around Australia?

Over the next 25 years, how can we navigate disruption and change—in our communities, workplaces, and as a nation—in ways that build Belonging for All rather than division and exclusion?

What do we need locally and nationally to make Belonging for All the norm?



## What we will do together

- Grow evidence on how to address othering and division, drawing from local and global experience.
- Bring together theory with practice in ways that work for our Australian context.
- Bring together people and organisations across communities and nationally to learn how to address what drives growing polarisation and division.
- Amplify collective voices for belonging and bridging.
- Create innovations with communities and institutions that are fit for our times.

## How we will go about it

Working with community leaders and national decision makers to create new ways for people to bridge across difference – not just at the dinner table but in the systems, policies, and resource decisions that shape who belongs in Australia.



## Who is involved

We're creating opportunities for communities and institutions to do the work of creating bridging across difference. This includes those with different beliefs, values, political views, and life stories.

## The value we can bring

We bring a decade of experience building collective power with communities and key decision makers around them across differences – working with First Nations, settler, and migrant knowledges, and creating networks that enable long-term systemic change.

Three years of research exploring peace-building and active democracy for our times has led to our working hypothesis:

ACTIVE DEMOCRACY + PEACE-BUILDING = BELONGING FOR ALL

# Some more information about our Belonging for All strategy

## When we talk about bridging, peace-building and democracy what do we mean?

**Bridging:** Creating structures and practices that enable people to make new connections across difference, rather than to dominate, exclude or divide.

**Peace-building:** Creating a society of fairness, healing and justice for all people living on the lands of the oldest surviving culture in the world. This involves understanding our pasts, the strengths of diverse heritages, ways of living together, and harnessing our different cultures as a strength for the future.

**Active democracy:** Creating ways of making decisions in our communities and as a nation that embraces differences of perspective in healthy dialogue, deliberation and creating civic engagement across generations and cultures.

It means we can find new ways to be together that values multiple views – drawing strength from our differences in ways that we trust.

## Our principles or approach to building Belonging for All

### Autonomous regard

Each person's right to be seen, valued and respected on their own terms, while equally upholding the dignity and rights of others across cultures, identities and beliefs.

### Radical pluralism

Building a society where we can profoundly disagree — and still belong, through active engagement across difference and everyday democratic practices that uphold dignity and fairness.

### Local and national systems change

Working across scales to connect community-centred solutions with the wider structures, institutions and narratives that shape everyday life.

## More about how we plan to realise our strategy

We will work with all political spectrums, cultures, and identities to:



**Understand** what's working and not working across different communities and the systems around them

**Mobilise** diverse networks and alliances—locally and nationally—committed to changing policies, narratives, resources, and decision-making structures

**Innovate** by unearthing and backing the next generation of solutions that bridge across difference—from physical spaces to new governance models and business incentives



[www.cfi.org.au](http://www.cfi.org.au)

---

We acknowledge the resilience, knowledge, wisdom and teachings of the oldest living culture on our planet and pay our respects to all First Nations Elders past, and present.