

# Innovation and inclusiveness priorities as Tasmanians eye future

The lessons learned from the Covid pandemic could help pave the way for a prosperous future, writes **Rikki Mawad**

When a few of us discussed the idea of hosting an online conversation with Tasmanians about what a shared future could be as we emerged from Covid-19, we set out to invite our friends, colleagues, children, neighbours and networks to be part of that process.

Hosting the Thriving Tasmania conversation series, we were able to engage close to 150 Tasmanians in a virtual conversation about what this situation had shown us and co-create shared priorities for a stronger, thriving Tasmania.

With our youngest participant at 12 years of age and our oldest in their 70s, Tasmanians of all different backgrounds, positions and perspectives were part of this conversation series. What Tasmanians said was important to them was:

For Tasmania to be inclusive – a place where all needs are valued and respected, particularly those of people who are vulnerable.

For Tasmania to become a low emissions leader – operating as a carbon sink for Australia by spearheading a

genuine low-carbon economy and being prepared for the impacts of climate change and other shocks and disasters.

For Tasmania to be focused on community – where Tasmanians from around the state are proud, empowered and able to be part of finding solutions to local problems.

For Tasmania to embrace and lead using a Circular Economy- where businesses, government and research is focused on reducing waste and pollution, regenerating natural

systems and adding value to local production to meet our combined societal and economic needs.

For Tasmanians to be well – to live in a place where wellbeing at an individual and community level is important.

To create equal opportunities for accessing education and improving educational outcomes across generations – ensuring that all Tasmanians have the opportunity to connect to employment and engage in entrepreneurship and the future of work.

That Tasmania be a world leader in restoring natural systems – protecting wild places and finding ways to live that value and respect the natural environment.

For Tasmania to nurture and develop a thriving creative sector – valuing the arts, enabling innovation, celebrating our history and embracing our future.

For government to be bold and courageous – for our

leaders to work together to move forward brave actions that are connected to long term outcomes based on science, integrity and aligned with the values and the voices of all Tasmanians.

We heard that Tasmanians wanted a greater emphasis on technology, sustainability, inclusion and innovation as part of the state's recovery – and that they wanted to be part of that conversation.

Participants equally named up the need to practice respect,

kindness and gratitude in conversations like this and in the way work towards our shared future. Participants shared how we should use our island advantage – our connectedness – to think big, be courageous and build high ambition coalitions of local leaders working to achieve local and global goals.

There was strong consensus that we have a unique opportunity as an island to be a global leader in showing the world what a

thriving, sustainable future looks like. Tasmanians said we should be committed to achieving the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (Global Goals) as a key part of our thriving future. Tasmanians also told us and each other that they wanted to be part of a place-based response to confronting current and emerging challenges.

For us in the facilitation team, the Thriving Tasmania series showed us how we can

use technology in new ways to engage our community in a collaborative, strengths-based discussion about our future.

From here we look forward to harnessing the responsibility we have to work together to shape Tasmania's future.

**The Thriving Tasmania conversation series was co-hosted by Jessica Robbins and Rikki Mawad of the Tasmanian Way, Katy Cooper and Georgia Current from Disruptive Co. and Anna Tayler from the Wellbeing Hub**

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