

Towards 2050 Community Panel FAQs

What is a Community Panel?

A community panel brings people together to discuss important issues. It is a process that has been used all over the world to help inform the work of governments and other organisations.

This process brings together a randomly selected group of people who broadly represent the entire community. Participants learn about issues, discuss them with one another, and then make recommendations about what they think should happen and how things should change.

Why is Cairns Regional Council forming the Towards 2050 community panel?

Cairns is a popular place to live and work. In the past 30 years, our population has nearly doubled – growing from 89,000 residents in 1992, to more than 165,000 today – and it's predicted to reach up to 265,000 by 2050.

We need to plan for this growth now, to make sure that everyone can live here and enjoy what we love about Cairns today.

Cairns Regional Council is forming the Towards 2050 Community Panel to:

- provide a forum for Council to share information about the project
- test ideas, approaches and material prepared as part of the delivery of the project
- help Council explore project issues that affect future growth within the Cairns community.

Who can be on the panel?

To be part of the panel, you must be a Cairns resident, aged over 16, and be an Australian citizen or permanent resident. Elected members of Cairns Regional Council and Council staff are not eligible to join the community panel.

We want to capture broad community views, so we need people from all walks of life and all cultural backgrounds. We are looking for diverse views and experience to help us discuss and understand the issues associated with future growth.

Panel members will be selected to represent a wide variety of interests, ages, abilities, lived experience, skills and knowledge.

You don't need any special skills or knowledge, just an interest in shaping our city and a willingness to listen to the information presented and share your opinions. All the information you need will be provided during your participation.

What will panel members do?

As a Towards 2050 community panel member, you will play an active role in helping Council to understand the wants and needs of our whole community as we plan for the next phase of growth. You will help us consider what's important to our current and future residents, so that we can shape our growth in a positive way.

Panel members will learn about the present and future growth challenges facing Cairns, as well as different ways these challenges might be met. Members will explore ideas through a small number of activities including surveys, online polls and workshops or meetings.

What level of commitment is expected from members?

Panel members will be asked to:

- prepare for, attend and actively participate in meetings, workshops and engagement events
- actively and respectfully engage with each other during meetings, workshops and engagement events
- share their opinions and observations while remaining committed to open and shared dialogue about the project
- not record meetings, workshops and engagement events
- share information and generate understanding about the project amongst their personal and community networks.

Members will be expected to take part in at least one engagement activity during the Towards 2050 project (July 2023 to end 2024). Exact timings of these activities are not set, but we will give Panel members plenty of notice about upcoming projects and issues.

Members will be emailed invitations to complete surveys or take part in other engagement activities. Typically, we will give members anywhere from a few days to one week to complete the task. We'll give you plenty of notice before each activity, and we understand that you might not be able to take part in everything.

Who chooses the panel members?

Council is not involved in the selection of panel members.

We are using an independent non-profit organisation that specialises in recruiting and selecting people to take part in these kinds of panels. This is to make sure that the selection process is unbiased and results in a panel that is as representative of the Cairns community as possible.

This approach gives people from all walks of life, with diverse views and perspectives, an equal opportunity to participate in the process. Due to the open invitation process, everyone in the community has the opportunity to register their interest and an equal chance (within their demographic) of being selected to be a panel member.

This type of selection approach helps people that might not normally get involved, but who are affected by or interested in the topic, to participate.

The final panel will have a similar demographic profile to the broader Cairns community, based on census data. While the panel may not be perfectly 'statistically' representative, it will be much more representative of the wider community than a group that has self-selected.

What reward is available for being a member of the Community Panel?

As a thank you for their time, eligible members who participate in activities will be entered into regular prize draws for e-gift cards (up to \$250 each) during the project.

Members who complete more complex and time-consuming engagement tasks will be reimbursed with e-gift cards. The value of these cards will vary depending on the type of task.

After I register my interest, what happens next?

If you are selected, we will contact you by phone and email around July/August to let you know, and explain what happens next.

What if I'm not selected? How can I be involved?

If you're not selected for the community panel, you can still take part in the Towards 2050 engagement process.

There will be lots of ways for everyone to have a say through surveys, online discussions and face-to-face activities.

Keep up-to-date with the project at haveyoursay.cairns.qld.gov.au/towards2050

What if I need support to participate?

If you do not have a suitable device or internet connection at home, you can access any of the eight Cairns Libraries that offer free computer access and wifi.

We will ensure any in-person activities will be held at an accessible venue, and we will work with you to support your individual needs.

What browser do I need to complete community activities?

The Towards 2050 Have your Say engagement website features a responsive design solution to ensure the content will scale to lower screen resolutions and be optimised for mobile devices.

It is not compatible with Internet Explorer (which is no longer supported by Microsoft). To get the best experience from this site, we recommend using the current or previous major version of the following web browsers:

- Chrome
- Firefox
- Microsoft Edge
- Safari
- IOS
- Android

How do members receive information and understand how Council is using the results of the research they take part in?

Council will advise members of findings of activities they have participated in via email and updates on the Towards 2050 project website.

All data collected from Panel activities will be summarised and de-identified, before being published on the Towards 2050 project website.

How is my personal information used and stored?

Cairns Regional Council will collect personal information from Panel members, including information about your name, email address, address, telephone number, commentary or opinion. We collect this information for the purposes of developing the Towards 2050 Growth Management Strategy.

We will only use your information for this purpose. It will otherwise not be used or disclosed unless authorised or required by law. Your personal information will be handled in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Will anyone look at my individual responses?

Yes, raw data and responses will be used by Cairns Regional Council and our authorised contractors solely for the purposes of the Towards 2050 project. Identified individual responses will not be made publicly available.

The main use of your answers will be in aggregate form for statistical purposes.

What if I don't want to be a member of the Community Panel anymore?

If your circumstances change and you no longer wish to be on the Panel, simply contact us and we will update our membership register. You will not receive future invitations to participate in engagement activities.

Even if you're no longer on the Panel, you may want to continue receiving project updates.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like to talk to someone about the Towards 2050 Community Panel before registering, please freecall 1800 979 787.

Select your language

For more information visit sortitionfoundation.org/cairns and select your language from the menu in the top right hand corner.