

## Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2021 Call for Abstracts

### Meeting in the middle: community voices and complex choices

The disaster risk and resilience landscape is constantly evolving, and so too are the approaches we take in policy and practice.

Recent times have brought the reality of intersecting crises and cascading societal impacts into sharp focus. As Australia moved from drought into a bushfire crisis and a pandemic, the systemic risk and vulnerability present in the systems that support our society to function was laid bare. What this also brought to the forefront was human behaviour that demonstrates what we truly value and choices made in consideration of the future we seek to protect.

It is widely acknowledged that meaningful community engagement and community-led approaches are essential to effectively supporting disaster resilience. So too are the systems, frameworks and enabling environments created through well-considered policy and coordination – most often formulated with community in mind. We have sought to make disaster risk reduction and resilience everybody's business, all with a role to play. And yet, an inherent tension in striking the right balance between top down approaches and bottom up approaches to resilience remains. What approaches and mindset do we need to meet in the middle?

As we move forward, important choices will continue to be made about how we reduce risk, prepare, respond and recover. How do we truly enable communities to be in the driver's seat to ensure the 'community' is in community-led? And how do we tackle systemic risks influencing communities that arise from public policy legacies and past decisions?

In 2021, the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference will provide an opportunity to have a national conversation about local impact, highlighting leading thinking and practice for community engagement in disaster resilience and collaborative decision making to reduce risk.

*How has the concept of shared responsibility for disaster resilience played out over the past ten years since the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience was released, and where are we headed now? If disaster resilience is everybody's business, how do we define our roles better? What advances and successes are we seeing in the way community engagement occurs? How effectively are we learning and applying the lessons from previous disaster events? How might local governments be better supported to deliver locally-led recovery? How might governments consider how best to integrate self-mobilised community responses in formal recovery arrangements? How is resilience being incentivised across sectors? What examples can we find of customer or community problems leading to private sector innovations?*

The program committee invites abstracts that focus on case studies, analysis, good practice models, research in practice, partnerships and collaboration, and stories of lived experience.

Presenters are invited to submit an abstract of no more than 300 words via the [abstract portal](#) by 8 February 2021.

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The Australian Disaster Resilience Conference will take place on 18 – 19 August 2021 at the International Convention Centre, Sydney. More information: [www.aidr.org.au/adrc](http://www.aidr.org.au/adrc)