

MCGUINNESS INSTITUTE MEDIA RELEASE 18 JUNE 2012

A Workshop on Drafting a Constitution for the 21st Century

The McGuinness Institute announces its workshop EmpowerNZ: Drafting a Constitution for the 21st Century, 28–29 August 2012

Wendy McGuinness, the chief executive of the McGuinness Institute, says that ‘the current constitutional review is the first time in our nation's history that the public have been invited to fully engage in a discussion about New Zealand's constitutional arrangements. New Zealanders will need to work hard to make the most of this opportunity.’

To this end, the Institute welcomes the recent release of the Constitutional Advisory Panel's *Engagement Strategy*, and wishes to advise the public of its upcoming workshop.

McGuinness says that during the StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future workshop, held in March 2011, ‘two strong themes from participants became obvious – a strong interest in revisiting our constitutional arrangements, and finding better ways to involve youth in shaping our nation. We have combined these two themes in our next workshop, EmpowerNZ: Drafting a Constitution for the 21st Century.’

The two-day workshop will take place on 28–29 August at Parliament's Banquet Hall in the Beehive, hosted by MP Paul Goldsmith. It will bring together 40 young New Zealanders, most of them in their twenties. The workshop is specifically aimed at law and history students and graduates, from all areas of New Zealand. They will explore New Zealand's current constitutional arrangements, look at whether changes need to be made for the 21st century, and if so, what these changes might look like.

The purpose of the workshop is to facilitate a prescription-free exploration, creating an opportunity to treat the constitution as a blank canvas. McGuinness says, ‘Guided by facilitators who are experts in constitutional law, the participants will draft their constitution for the 21st century and present it to Members of Parliament and other interested parties on the final day of the event.’

Keynote speakers at the workshop will include historian Dame Claudia Orange, High Court Judge Hon. Justice Joseph Williams, and leading constitutional scholar Professor Philip Joseph. To learn more about the workshop see www.empowernz.org

Event: Workshop – EmpowerNZ: Drafting a Constitution for the 21st Century

Date: Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 August 2012

Location: Parliament's Banquet Hall in the Beehive

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Links of interest:

EmpowerNZ: <http://empowernz.org/>

McGuinness Institute Blog: <http://mcguinnessinstituteblog.org/>

Constitutional Review Panel: <http://www2.justice.govt.nz/cap-interim/>