

Asset-Based Community Development

8 Session Online Course

with Cormac Russell

March, April, May 2025



Victorian
Residents
only

“ You might think you've signed up for a training and in many respects you have, but you are also very much a part of a growing movement that believes in the importance of community building and the idea that its good to start with **what's strong** not with **what's wrong**. ”

Cormac Russell



Places are limited to 24 participants
Complete an expression of interest by
10 February 2025

Why is this course important?

Many of us are living increasingly disconnected lives, even when there are opportunities for connection close at hand. This is especially so for people with disabilities and others who are at higher risk of loneliness and isolation. Our disconnection from people and place diminishes our quality of life and can leave people with disabilities vulnerable.

Many services and systems tend to focus on what's wrong, missing or broken and can displace naturally occurring relationships with overly commercialised responses. Rather than focusing on deficits, this Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) course, reveals how anyone can uncover the untapped talents, assets and strengths that can be found within their neighbourhoods and connect with others to create healthier, safer and more prosperous communities.

The course offers a wealth of illustrative examples from around the world that will inspire you to explore your own community and discover its hidden treasures!

“

This event flipped things for me! Often we put all of our efforts into one person joining the community rather than focusing on community and its connectors!

Brilliant course - real paradigm and lens shift that makes something I would never have attempted seem possible and beneficial. ”

Feedback from course participants

What is this course about?

In 2022, Cormac Russell gave an inspiring presentation at the Belonging Matters, Purpose Matters Conference. He focused on the potential neighbourhoods have in creating genuine and lasting connection and belonging. In 2023, Belonging Matters hosted an 8 session, online ABCD course with Cormac. Due to the excellent feedback and demand, we are offering this course again in 2025 to a limited number of participants.

In this interactive course, you will learn to take action on what you already deeply know - that neighbourliness is not just a nice-to-have personal characteristic, but essential to living a fruitful life and a powerful amplifier of community change and renewal. Upon completion of this course, you will have reliably demonstrated the ability to use the basic principles and practices of ABCD in your community. You will also have long term access to a collection of learning resources.

Who will lead the course?

Cormac Russell is a veteran practitioner of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). For more than thirty years he has been fascinated by how people and places weave together to find common purpose. Like a three-legged stool, the themes of people, place, and purpose have grounded and defined his life and work.



Cormac was raised in County Limerick, Ireland. Through his work in the early 1990s, Cormac realised the limits of institutional and care interventions, especially well-intended ones. In 1996, Cormac established Nurture Development, dedicated to discovering meaningful ways to build communities from the inside out, with a real welcome for the stranger at the edge.

He has authored several books including Asset-Based Community Development: Looking Back to Look Forward and has recently authored a book with John McKnight titled The Connected Community.

“ Captivating. Seeing the community as a major source of "wealth" with an ability to solve problems in a way that services and other external sources can't.

Thank you Cormac for leading this course and sharing your wisdom. It was one of the best learning experiences I have had for years. ”

Feedback from course participants

How will the course be delivered?

Interactive Online Sessions

The course will be conducted through 8 interactive Zoom coaching sessions.

All sessions need to be attended.

Participants will have the opportunity to meet with other participants who are also interested in community and neighbourhood.

Module Assignments and Reflections

The assignments and reflections at the end of each session are completed either during or after the Zoom interactive session.

The assignments contribute to the group's shared learning, and the group's responses can be viewed.

Course participants will also be requested to read and watch material in-between each session.

Cormac will reference the videos, e-books and PDFs during the session.

Assessment

Participants can obtain a Certificate of Completion by answering the 6 multiple choice and true/false questions at the end of each module.

You can then print off your Certificate of Completion.

Accessibility

We aim to ensure that people have equal access to our events. If you need alternative formats or other reasonable adjustments at this event, please provide details when you register your booking online.

For further information, please phone 03 9739 8333 or email info@belongingmatters.org

Topics and Dates

Session 1

Wednesday, 19 March 2025 | 7pm to 8.30pm AEST

I am available

This history, heritage and principles of ABCD and the relationship between the capacities of individuals, associations and power.

Session 2

Wednesday, 26 March 2025 | 7pm to 8.30pm AEST

I am available

The building blocks of ABCD and the relationship between community assets and community functions.

Session 3

Wednesday, 2 April 2025 | 7pm to 8.30pm AEST

I am available

One's role in Citizen Space, common ways that community helpers show up, power sharing and the difference between receiving help from institutions and building community at a neighbourhood level.

Session 4

Wednesday, 9 April 2025 | 7pm to 8.30pm AEST

I am available

Asking the Right Questions, the features of powerful questions and the Good Life Conversation.

Session 5

Wednesday, 30 April 2025 | 7pm to 8.30pm AEST

I am available

Getting Practical, the principles and dynamics of Community Building and how small grants can be used to assist community building.

Session 6

Wednesday, 7 May 2025 7pm to 8.30pm AEDT

I am available

Characteristics of a community animator and a community connector.

Session 7

Wednesday, 14 May 2025 | 7pm to 8.30pm AEDT

I am available

The 8 Touchstones of Community Building, the difference between touchstones and stepping stones (fixed models) and how you could apply ABCD in your community.

Session 8

Wednesday, 21 May 2025 | 7pm to 8.30pm AEDT

I am available

A continuation of the 8 Touchstones of Community Building, the difference between touchstones and stepping stones (fixed models) and how you could apply ABCD in your community.



It is important to note that no recordings will be available for any missed sessions. Use the boxes to tick your availability when checking your calendar to ensure you can attend all sessions prior to completing the Expression of Interest Form.

Ticket Information

Ticket price includes 8 online learning sessions

NDIS Plan

\$90 (ex GST)

This rate is for people with a disability and families/carers paying out of their NDIS Plan.

General Concession

\$99 (incl GST)

This rate is for people with a disability, families, students and Health Care Card holders who are paying as an individual (not from their NDIS Plan). This rate is also for interested community members (who do not have a paid role in disability services).

Standard

\$250 (incl GST)

This rate is for professionals or people with a disability and families who are attending who are employed by or represent a service, support or advocacy organisation, company or corporation.

Bursary

If cost is a barrier to attending, please let us know.

Email: info@belongingmatters.org

The ticket price includes 8 online learning sessions and long term access to the content and learning resources. Registrations are only available online. Multiple people cannot attend on 1 ticket or screen. Please read our [ticket terms and conditions and refund policy](#).

Apply to attend by Expression of Interest

As the course only accommodates 24 participants, entry to the course will be through an expression of interest. The course is only available to people who live in **Victoria, Australia**. Those who will be given preference include:

- People who have a high interest in community and neighbourhood and are likely to implement principles and practices of ABCD
- People with a disability and their families
- Interested community members (who do not have a paid role in disability services)
- Professionals who are in a position to create and influence change
- People who can make a commitment to attending all 8 sessions and have their camera switched on during the entire course.

We will be considering a mixture of participants which will include people from rural and remote areas, diverse backgrounds and in those in various roles. Interstate participants will be considered if there are course vacancies.



If you feel you meet the above criteria, please complete the expression of interest form by 10 February 2025.



[Complete Expression of Interest Form](https://forms.gle/VB95ees89Q5V3jK58)

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Applicants will be notified by 15 February 2025.

Like further information?

Contact Belonging Matters



info@belongingmatters.org



(03) 9739 8333



belongingmatters.org