

# How would you imagine Australian fire-adaptive communities?



Natural  
Hazards  
Research  
Australia

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## A proposed model for fire-adaptive communities in the Australian landscape

Sixteen subject matter experts, working with Australian communities to improve their knowledge of fire, were asked to imagine what fire-adaptive communities in Australia might look like in 20 years' time. Their answers delved deep into how Australians live with each other, their landscapes, and with fire.

### Fire-adaptive communities

**There are highly complex factors at play – at national, regional as well as very localized levels – that affect how well people can survive and even thrive in the Australian landscape alongside fire.**

One interesting concept gaining traction internationally is that of 'co-existing with fire', or 'fire-adaptive communities'. The aim of communities becoming 'fire-adaptive' is to reduce the vulnerabilities of both people and ecosystems to wildfire, whilst allowing fires to burn on the landscape when and where they are needed.

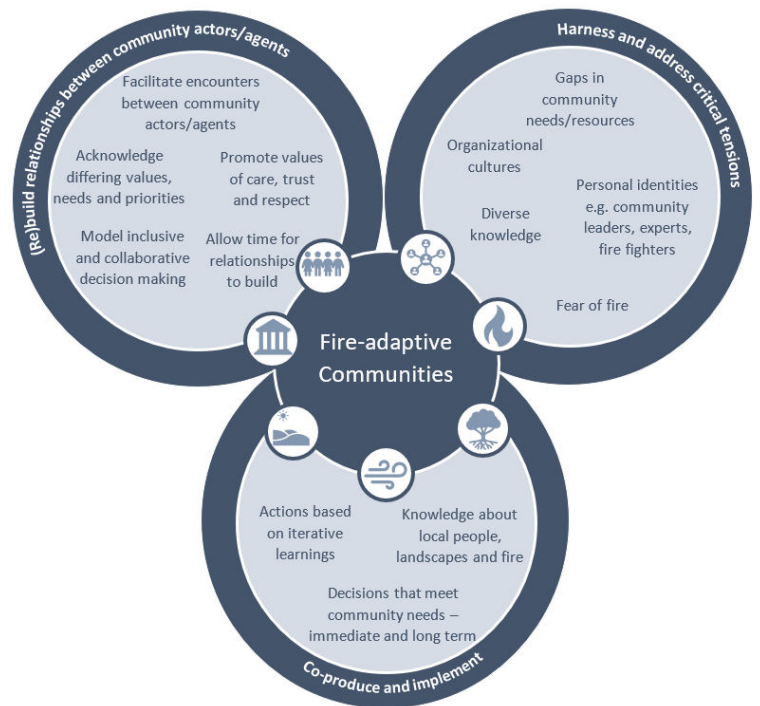
The research of PhD student Zoë D'Arcy aims to develop a conceptual framework that describes the various attributes that fire-adaptive communities could possess in an Australian context. Analysis of the themes that emerged from the subject matter experts led to the model in this poster's diagram.

### Emphasis on cross-community connections

All interviewees place emphasis on the importance of cross-community connections. The three connections described by interviewees were as being of importance were between people and place; between people within communities, and between people and all levels of government.

Interviewees argued that (re)building cross-community relationships is an important step in becoming fire-adaptive. Cross-community connections could result in collaborations that could help facilitate knowledge, plan actions, and solve problems into the future.

However, at the same time, interviewees identified critical tensions that arose from asymmetrical power relationships within communities. These tensions provided the potential to either enable, or be a barrier to, fire-adaptive approaches.



### Only a future state, or are there already fire-adaptive communities in Australia?

All interviewees were asked if they could name examples of fire-adaptive communities, or fire-adaptive initiatives, already occurring in Australia. All of them could. Zoë's PHD research goes on to examine two of these as case studies, to find what lessons could be applied to Australian communities more generally in the future.



### Further information

For additional information scan the QR code or contact:  
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