Name of Submitter:

Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia

Draft 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap
Submission Template

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap. The Roadmap, along with the Higher Education Infrastructure Working Group Final Report and the Research Infrastructure Review Final Report provide a comprehensive assessment of Australia's research infrastructure system and needs.

This Academy welcomes the recommendation to establish an Australian Data Cloud to deliver a more integrated, coherent and reliable system to meet the needs of data-intensive, cross-disciplinary and global collaborative research. Consistent with our submission in September 2016, we assume that such a Data Cloud would support the collection, analysis, curation and the utilisation of Australian data, including fundamentally basic data such as:

- The Australian population census and other important data sources including longitudinal studies of individuals (such as the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia, Longitudinal Study of Australian Children and Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth, funded by various Australian government departments)
- Nationally representative cross-sectional surveys such as the Australian Election Study and Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, and periodic surveys by the Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Time series of economic and social phenomena such as unemployment, labour force participation and other statistics produced from the ABS Labour Force Survey
- Administrative data collections such as the Research and Evaluation Database from the Department of Employment and the Mortality data register from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and open data sources such as data.gov.au.
- Business data collections such as the historical records of firms and other organisations held in locations such as the Butlin Archives and recent data from business activity and records
- Qualitative data collections such as the sub-studies from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health
- Linked data such as that provided through the Population Health Research Network and Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network, and the Australian Census Longitudinal Dataset.

Recognising the importance of Australian data management we also appreciate the need for global networks to provide for bilateral and multilateral research where these do not violate personal data security or compromise national interests.

We also raise an issue that we believe requires further consideration.

The Academy is concerned that Table 2 (pg 23) implies that social science research, or that the focus of social science research infrastructure, has no contribution to make in the National Science and Research Priorities of Food, Soil and Water, Cyber-security, Energy or Resources. We believe social science research has major contributions to make to increase innovation in these areas. Disciplines such as agricultural economics, management, international law and sociology have made significant contributions to the Australian food industry and will continue to do so in the future. Similarly, disciplines such as sociology, economics and law have significant contributions to make in determining the allocation and use of water resources in our economy and communities. In cyber-security, sociologists, economists and legal practitioners will contribute to our national and international need for considered policies. In energy and in resources, economists, accountants, geographers, lawyers, management researchers and sociologists will all make significant contributions to improving the efficiency of business operations and their impact on people. These contributions by social science researches will inevitably rely on access to primary, longitudinal and linked data to assess trends and to model opportunities for future national needs.

The Academy thanks you for this opportunity to contribute to the development of this important document.