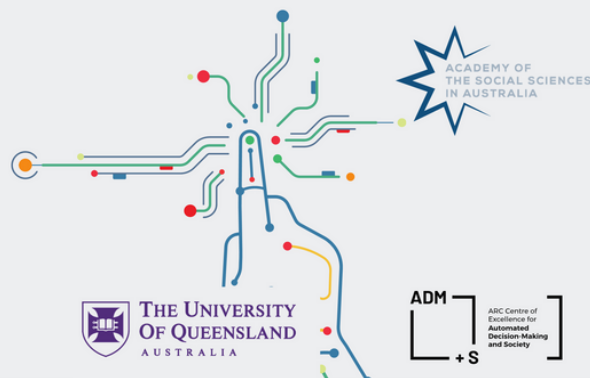


Decadal Plan for Social Science Research Infrastructure 2023-32



Submission # 17

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Date	17 August 2023
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Response

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Decadal Plan for Social Science Research Infrastructure. Please find our comments below.

1. Indigenous Data

The report rightly flags the urgent need for increased researcher literacies “on appropriate protocols for prioritising and designing research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and on collecting and using Indigenous data.” Clearly all such protocols should be led by Indigenous researchers and, ideally, be contextualised locally (given the languages, customs and expectations of difference Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups varies greatly).

2. Linked Assets

Linking existing datasets is an area of both great promise and significant peril. As noted, “in a digitalised world, the social sciences sector needs to grapple with the problem of efficiently (and safely) linking sensitive data assets”, but this must take place within a framework of trust. There have been too many examples of data being insufficiently protected by government and corporate entities in Australia. Custodianship of personal data, especially linked data as it becomes more and more valuable, requires the highest levels of security and privacy protection so the public and others can trust that linked data will be secure and only used for the explicit purposes approved in advance by research institutions.

3. Federated Data Needs Federated Literacies

We commend idea of a FEDERATED DATA MODEL that shares access and resources across the tertiary sector in order to maximise the use, access and stability of critical datasets and sources (assets). Any move in this direction needs to be matched with a federated approach to data literacies around these tools and assets to ensure everyone who contributes and has access has equal knowledge to the tools and resources to actual use and interpret the data in these federated systems.

4. Federated Literacies must include a national approach to Ethics

Even when using the same methodologies and same resources, different ethics review committees at different institutions can interpret risk and reasonable precautions in radically different ways. A shared national guide and resource to help inform the way Ethics is approach for Federated Data, Assets and Literacies must include an explicit, open, guide to ethical use and ethical application. (A comparable model might be the Association of Internet Researcher's "[Internet Research: Ethical Guidelines 3.0](#)").

5. Accessibility

In developing shared online assets, tools, databases and other resources, attention needs to be paid to making these as accessible as possible, including ensuring as wide an access as possible for People with Disabilities of various forms. (The 'Doing social science in 2032' discussion paper, for example, was beautifully laid out with many visuals, but there was no parallel version made available for people using screen readers, and the very visual discussion paper actively prevented screen reader access). If required please reference Dr. Katie Ellis (Director) and Dr. Tama Leaver (HoD) from Curtin Universities' Centre for Culture and Technology.

Kind Regards,

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