



Support the Academy

Elevate Social Science for
the Benefit of Australia



Support the Academy: Elevate social science for the benefit of Australia

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia was established in 1971 and works with its elected Fellows to advance the nation's understanding of people, communities, institutions, and systems in ways that improve and strengthen democracy and social cohesion, social and environmental outcomes, regional and international relations and physical and psychological wellbeing. The Academy is a registered charity and deductible gift recipient, and support from Fellows and friends plays a vital role in enabling its mission and activities.

The Academy is deeply grateful for one-off and regular gifts, bequests, named endowments or awards and impact investing. This brochure outlines some of the key activities for donor support. The Academy President or staff are always happy to discuss other ways people can get involved and support Australian Social Sciences.

1. Strengthening policy and advocacy through evidence-informed dialogue

The Academy plays a unique role in bringing Australia's leading social scientists into conversation with **public servants, policymakers, parliamentary decision makers and the wide range of agencies seeking advice on social policy issues**. These engagements — roundtables, briefings, workshops, and deep-dive discussions on critical policy issues such as democracy and social cohesion — help ensure that policy development is informed by the best available evidence.

Support for this program will:

- Expand the Academy's capacity to convene high-quality, non-partisan policy dialogues on contemporary issues such as housing, productivity, social cohesion, education, health, and climate adaptation.
- Enable the Academy to produce concise, accessible evidence syntheses and briefing materials for government audiences.
- Strengthen relationships between Fellows and the Australian Public Service, fostering a culture of evidence-informed decision making.
- Support the Academy's ability to respond rapidly to emerging policy challenges.

Philanthropic investment in this area helps ensure that Australia's policy landscape is shaped by rigorous research, diverse expertise, and thoughtful debate — a contribution with long-term national benefit.

2. Seriously Social: A national school education program

Australia's future depends on young people who can think critically, understand society, and navigate complex social issues with confidence. The Academy's **Seriously Social school education program** is designed to meet this need by promoting **high-quality, evidence-based social science teaching and learning materials** for use in primary and secondary classrooms.

This program aims to:

- Equip teachers with accessible, curriculum-aligned resources grounded in contemporary social science research.
- Support students to develop skills in critical thinking, civic literacy, social inquiry, and evidence evaluation.
- Showcase the breadth of Australian social science — from economics and psychology to sociology, political science, human geography, and Indigenous studies.
- Provide schools, particularly in under-resourced communities, with free or low-cost materials that broaden learning opportunities.

Philanthropic support will enable the Academy to expand resource development, partner with educators and curriculum bodies, and deliver national outreach to teachers. Donors can help ensure that every Australian student has access to rigorous, engaging social science learning that prepares them for active citizenship and lifelong curiosity.

3. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social science researchers

The Academy is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in the social sciences. Building on the success of the Rechnitz Fund, established in 2023, the Academy seeks to expand its capacity to offer dedicated grants for Indigenous researchers, particularly those in the early stages of their careers.

This program focuses on:

- Providing grant funding, research support, and professional development opportunities for emerging Indigenous scholars. Enabling community-led and culturally grounded research that strengthens knowledge systems and informs policy.
- Supporting pathways into academic careers, research leadership, and national recognition.
- Creating opportunities for Indigenous researchers to connect with Fellows, mentors, and interdisciplinary networks.

Donor contributions will directly support grant rounds, fellowships, and capacity-building initiatives. This investment strengthens the future of Australian social science by ensuring Indigenous voices, methodologies, and priorities are central to national research conversations.

4. Communications and public engagement: Sharing social science with Australia

The Academy's communications and engagement program is central to its mission of promoting public understanding of the social sciences. This program includes **Social Sciences Week**, the Academy's flagship national outreach initiative each September; **Socium**, the Academy's biennial magazine; and a year-round calendar of **public lectures, conversations, and events**.

Donor support will help the Academy:

- Grow Social Sciences Week into a truly national celebration, expanding events in regional and remote communities and strengthening partnerships with universities, cultural institutions, and civil society organisations.
- Enhance the reach and quality of *Socium*, ensuring it remains a compelling platform for sharing research, ideas, and stories with a broad audience.
- Deliver public lectures and events that bring Fellows and leading thinkers into conversation with the Australian community.
- Invest in digital engagement, storytelling, and media outreach that elevate the visibility and impact of social science research that informs debate and discussion.

Contributions to this program help build a more informed, engaged, and socially literate Australia — one where evidence and expertise are valued in public life.

5. Workshops with impact

The Academy's long-standing workshops program has supported over 200 research and policy-focused meetings convened to address some of the critical challenges facing social science research disciplines, and the broader society they serve. Groups of 20-30 interdisciplinary researchers, policy makers, community and business leaders come together – typically over two days – to discuss evidence gaps, policy options and priorities for action in a diverse range of areas such as domestic violence prevention, health promotion, urban planning, climate resilience, digital governance, and space and frontier regulation.

The Academy's core funding supports grants of up to \$9,000 for 7-10 workshops per annum, but there are always more excellent proposals than can be supported.

Over time, the workshops program has proven to be one of the Academy's most impactful ways of convening social science expertise, and general or topic-specific donations will help support more grants and better outcomes for Australia.

A gift to Australian social science and a better future: How your donation will help

Donation range	Potential focus and impact	Donor recognition
\$10-\$50	Your gift will support the Academy's policy, advocacy and communications activities	Annual report (if desired)
\$100-\$250	Your gift will support the Academy's policy, advocacy, communications and education activities, such as supporting a student group to participate in the Seriously Social great debate program	Annual report and website (if desired)
\$500-\$1,000	A bursary for a student group or Indigenous scholar to attend an Academy event or activity, in addition to general options	Annual report and website (if desired)
\$5,000-\$10,000	An additional workshop program grant on a general or specific topic area (specific topics subject to discussion with grants and awards committee)	Annual report and website (if desired) Named grant if desired (particularly if ongoing)
\$20,000-\$50,000	Research grants in support of one or more Indigenous researchers One or more focused Seriously Social education modules, distributed to all Australian schools	Named grant if desired, acknowledgement in annual report and website. Tickets to and acknowledgement at Gala Dinner (if desired)
\$100,000+	Programmatic support for Academy policy, communications, education, workshops or awards programs. Potential focused policy program Named grants and awards	Named grant if desired, acknowledgement in annual report and website. Tickets to and acknowledgement at Gala Dinner (if desired)



Guests at the Academy's 2025 Gala Dinner

A shared commitment to Australia's future

Each of these programs reflects the Academy's belief that social science is essential to a fair, prosperous, and cohesive Australia. Charitable support from Fellows and friends enables the Academy to pursue work that is ambitious, inclusive, and nationally significant.

Whether supporting young learners, emerging Indigenous scholars, evidence-informed policymaking, or public engagement, donors play a vital role in strengthening the social sciences and their contribution to the nation.

If you would like to explore these opportunities further or discuss how your support can make a difference, the Academy would be delighted to speak with you.

Connect with us

Find out more at socialsciences.org.au/about/support-the-academy/, contact president@socialsciences.org.au or call our office on 02 6249 1788.



Student participants in the Academy's 2024 Great Student Debate