2026 National Research Infrastructure (NRI) Roadmap Issues Paper Consultation
Issues Paper Consultation Survey
Department of Education

Issues Paper Consultation Survey – public and attributed responses

Topic 3 – Humanities

This document includes public and attributed responses to the following questions of the Issues Paper Consultation Survey

- Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
- Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
- Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Please note

- Where necessary, text answers to the above questions have been redacted to remove contact details and third-party personal information
- blank submissions have been removed
- respondents who wished to remain anonymous are contained in the document "Anonymous responses to Issues Paper Consultation Survey"

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Fri, Dec 19, 2025, 12:40 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39ca5c82480a48d32ad6d]

Title
Ms

First Name
Erin

Last Name
Vest

Organisation
Northern Australia Indigenous Reference Group

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Three priorities for humanities-oriented NRI are:

1. Infrastructure for observing social and institutional transitions in regions such as northern Australia as Net Zero, critical minerals and Action Plan investments reshape communities and institutions, drawing on longitudinal, place-based datasets.
2. Infrastructure for generational wealth and capability analytics, integrating production–income–asset indicators with companion measures of capability, resilience, institutional capacity, ownership and substitution, and supporting regional "observatories" that explain divergent trajectories across places.
3. Humanities-informed AI and decision-support environments, using the wealth-creation metrics as a backbone for AI-assisted scenario testing, reflection and institutional learning in policy and program design.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Over the next 3–5 years, NRI investment will be particularly important for:

• Design and testing of simple, stable accountability frames for complex systems, including experimental work on how production–income–asset metrics and their companion indicators are constructed, communicated and used in practice.
• Evidence-informed market and policy design, with linked data on procurement, finance, regulation and firm-level outcomes (including Indigenous enterprises) to assess whether market rules are compounding participation into ownership and asset-building.
• Learning-systems research, capturing how institutions interpret signals and adjust, including measures such as time from signal to adjustment and the breadth of regions where capability, reduced reliance and ownership advance together.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

A hybrid model is recommended. Specialist humanities infrastructure roles (for example, in social and institutional analytics and Indigenous-focused data environments) require deep disciplinary expertise and strong relational capacity. At the same time, cross-cutting NRI (environmental, health, economic, AI) require generalist staff with sufficient humanities understanding to embed social, ethical and institutional considerations in design and governance.

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Tue, Dec 16, 2025, 04:41 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39bbc62f6232d3e8641e3]

Title
Dr

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Rebecca

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Farrington

Organisation
AuScope Ltd

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
N/A

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
N/A

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Diversity is key for all teams, with many existing science-based NRI staffed with experts from the humanities. A generalist research infrastructure workforce would support a broader range of research domains and provide a solid foundation for an innovative and sustainable RI workforce.
An excellent example of this can be evidenced by the Melbourne Data Analytics Platform (MDAP) at the University of Melbourne (https://www.unimelb.edu.au/mdap). MDAP is a diverse team of research data and academic specialists, drawn from science, engineering, the humanities, and the social sciences, enabling data-intensive, data-informed, and collaborative research across the University of Melbourne.

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Mon, Dec 15, 2025, 11:25 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3990e6ae8ee5be5d2df39]

Title
Ms

First Name
Laura

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Regan

Organisation
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
At AIATSIS, our priorities are the following:
Our first priority is sustained and expanded investment in Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) and Indigenous Research Data Commons (I RDC) . We want to see the continuation of support for HASS & I RDC.

Secondly, we want more support of data repurposing and enrichment services, such as metadata enrichment to enable data repurposing. The humanities needs expert resources for managing, protecting, and sharing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data to facilitate large-scale research, policy development, and community-driven on-Country initiatives.

Thirdly, we support the creation or development of digital observatories, including generating data assets in real time. AIATSIS agrees that there is a need to ensure AI is being used responsibly as a tool in research practices relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There need to be processes in place to protect data, and it must be made clear what people can and cannot do with data (i.e. from collections). One suggestion is to update licences to include a statement about the use of AI, as well as promoting similar statements on webpages.

The AIATSIS Digital Services Team are committed to implementing the Indigenous Data Governance Framework within the 7-year implementation timeframe. In the next 6 to 12 months, AIATSIS will be launching its first Information and Data Governance Framework as well as a holistic Enterprise Information and Data Strategy.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

The ideal workforce involves a hybrid model of collaboration that encompasses both a specialist and generalist workforce. Generalists have sufficient knowledge of domain areas and specialists develop technical skills. The combination of skills and expertise in both areas provide a rounded approach to challenges and proposed solutions, assuming sufficient and effective communication.

At AIATSIS we run Paper and Talk workshops in collaboration with Living Languages Australia. The aim of the workshops is to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community researchers with access to language materials held at AIATSIS and other collecting institutions and through comprehensive training sessions with one-on-one linguist support partners, equipping community researchers with the skills and knowledge to interpret, use, and share these resources. Running such workshops requires collaboration across multiple teams at AIATSIS and would not be possible without the specialised and generalised skillsets of the participants and our employees.

Issues such as recognition, career development, progression and security need to be addressed across all institutions. Solutions will require long-term funding for programs to support staff, facilities and equipment.

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Fri, Dec 12, 2025, 04:55 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39a6ef424bcc5a3c2e4ab]

Title
Prof

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Organisation
Phenomics Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
General principles proposed:
1. NRI be sought and valued for support of all knowledge creation including the humanities and social sciences as well as the physical and biological sciences and how they can all benefit from such infrastructures as are suitable for their research methods.
2. Regular consultation with the relevant Learned Academies in these areas, as well as with appropriate tertiary and other related institutions.
3. Delivery of NRI in a way that supports multi- or trans-disciplinarity in research and innovation be affirmed as appropriate and welcomed.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

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Fri, Dec 12, 2025, 02:02 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39a69b1bc7e160bfaf76b]

Title
Mr

First Name
Ross

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Latham

Organisation
GLAM Peak

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. A shared national platform for our cultural collections that is underpinned by a sustainable funding model to ensure longevity, currency and usefulness

GLAM Peak welcomes and endorses the view that:
. Cultural collections are central to humanities research, but Australia needs a nationally coordinated approach to enhancing NRI collections.
. Australia's national collections are siloed across disciplines, geography, culture, jurisdiction and material classification.
. A lack of interoperability across governance and protocols, standards, classifications, platforms and technologies, creates barriers to interdisciplinary research and for research end-users.

Based upon research, collaborative effort and ongoing dialogue between the GLAM Peak and humanities sector continuously since 2015, it is our firm belief that a "Cultural Atlas of Australia" is a necessary prerequisite to enable the visibility, reach, and availability of our cultural collections.

We recognise that not one platform can do everything, so would welcome the creation of a "Cultural Atlas of Australia" to stand alongside TROVE and the Atlas of Living Australia to provide the much-needed portal for online access to cultural collections held by state institutions, small history rooms and museums across Australia that are significant to research but not yet discoverable or useable.

This approach would in some way address the current issues where in the absence of sufficient recurrent funding, workforce capacity and system capabilities, access to significant collections held across our state and territories is compromised; additional an atlas would provide a practical means for small voluntary operated oragnisations to make

their collections discoverable and accessible in the absence of a dedicated system of their own to manage and preserve their digital content.

Australia’s humanities collections are fragmented by differences in standards, governance, and technological platforms, which obstructs interdisciplinary research and limits access for end-users. Creating interoperable repositories would unify these collections under common metadata standards and governance frameworks, promoting seamless discovery and reuse of diverse cultural and scholarly resources.

Additionally, a nationally managed "Cultural Atlas of Australia" has realistic potential to enable development of digital tools and ethically developed AI-driven query capabilities to enhance the use of collections for humanities research, including indexing, cataloguing, and analysis of available resources.

A sustainable ongoing funding model to operate and maintain the system is critical. A possible option is a user pays subscription model.

2. Secure digital infrastructure and staff capabilities to enable the ethical long-term stewardship, authenticity and appropriate access to sensitive and cultural content

Developing secure, sovereign digital environments built for humanities research is crucial to safeguard sensitive and culturally significant collection content. Humanities research often involves use of a range of content types and formats —such as audio recordings, video, visual art, and Indigenous knowledge—that require strict compliance with privacy laws and respect for culturally specific governance to determine access and use

Our national research infrastructure must offer secure storage and compute environments that enable humanities researchers to work with collections and data safely, including access to sovereign large language models (LLMs) and generative AI tools that are ethically tailored to humanities research. Additionally, such platforms must facilitate fit for purpose governance models where Indigenous communities and other critical stakeholders retain control and agency over access and use of their cultural materials.

Over the past decade there has been sustained focus on developing the cultural competency of Australia's cultural collections sector workforce, this is evidenced by staff development program as well as policies and tools via:

• Responses to the 2019 Tandanya Declaration on Archives
• Ongoing use of the ATSILRN Protocols to inform practice and improve capability
• The NSLA Culturally Safe Libraries Project to uplift capability and provide core tools to guide best practice
• Respect and Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Cultures and Country in Australian Libraries
• The ongoing improvements being achieved via the AMaGA Indigenous Roadmap project
. The valuable critical thinking and direction provided by the Indigenous Archives Collective

Subsequently the cultural collections sector is positioned well to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, the humanities sector and other critical stakeholders to develop the infrastructure necessary to ensure long-term stewardship, authenticity and appropriate access to sensitive and cultural data.

3. Establishing a digitisation and cataloguing initiative for significant cultural materials
GLAM Peak is pleased to see this issue recognised in the issues paper. Whilst collection digitisation has become business as usual practice across Australia's cultural collections sector, less than 50% of collection content with demonstrated humanities research potential has been digitised or well described.

Again, this is due to the absence of sufficient recurrent funding, workforce capacity and system capabilities, ins our states and territories in particular. Access to fit for purpose tools to enable long term authenticity and storage of digitised content is a related issue as is the affordability of digital storage for small museums and history rooms across Australia.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders knowledge systems
2. Protecting and sustaining our natural environment
3. Australia's identity - providing a "place for every story" - the stories, celebrations, learnings and impacts of the ever-growing cultural diversity of Australia.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
The GLAM Peak view is that there is a demonstrated and ongoing need for developing and supporting a Specialist Humanities Infrastructure Workforce.

Pros:
• Deep domain knowledge and cultural literacy essential for understanding humanities research nuances.
• Well equipped to design, manage, and maintain infrastructure tailored specifically to humanities data types and governance requirements.

Cons:
• May risk siloing expertise, limiting flexibility in adapting to cross-disciplinary infrastructure needs or emerging technologies outside traditional humanities areas.
• Potentially narrower career pathways and challenges in scaling workforce numbers due to specialized skill demands.

We also believe is this is a need for the presence as well of Generalist Research Infrastructure Workforce with Humanities Expertise that can work as connectors of knowledge, research assets and opportunities. Whilst they may be less in number, we think there is a need for some "connectors and all-rounders".

Pros:
• Flexibility to operate across multiple disciplines, supporting integration between humanities, health, social sciences, and digital technology sectors.
• Ability to bridge technical infrastructure expertise (data science, cloud computing, AI) with humanities domain knowledge, facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation.

Cons:
• Risk of insufficient depth in humanities-specific cultural and ethical understanding, which could impact sensitive data stewardship and community trust.

• Generalist training may overlook specific governance requirements unique to humanities and Indigenous data.

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Thu, Dec 11, 2025, 10:21 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Ms

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Organisation
Cooperative Research Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
CRA agrees with the Issues Paper that the current NRI system could benefit from stronger digital transformation, collections interoperability, and social data capability.

CRA finds the following top three priorities for NRI investment for the humanities:
1. Nationally coordinated, interoperable collections infrastructure;
2. Digital observatories and secure and sovereign social/behavioural data infrastructure
3. Sustainable and safe platforms for culturally significant materials

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
CRA recommends recognising the following emerging areas of humanities research that will require investment:

• Digital society observatories (AI impacts, online behaviour, misinformation, social cohesion).
• Infrastructure for participatory and community-led research, including ethical data donation platforms and co-designed methodologies.
• Human–technology interaction & digital wellbeing which includes mental health, attention economies, digital addiction, youth and online safety.
• Capabilities that integrate humanities with environmental, health, regional or technology missions.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

CRA recommends a hybrid workforce model where specialists ensure cultural, ethical and contextual integrity and generalists provide scalable digital, data and technical capability.

• Pros and Cons of a specialist workforce- Pros: Deep cultural, ethical and contextual expertise; essential for managing sensitive humanities data; Cons: Harder to scale, higher cost, and may create disciplinary silos.
• Pros and Cons of a generalist workforce - Pros: Flexible, scalable and strong in digital and technical capabilities; supports interoperability; Cons: Lacks depth needed for cultural stewardship and may mishandle sensitive data without specialist oversight.
• Pros and Cons of a hybrid Workforce: Pros: Combines specialist depth with generalist scalability; ensures cultural integrity while supporting modern digital infrastructure; best supports cross-disciplinary work; Cons: Requires coordinated planning, investment and clear role definition.

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Tue, Dec 9, 2025, 12:35 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Mr

First Name
Warwick

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Dawson

Organisation
University of Newcastle

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Linked-up, national digital infrastructure is essential to support researchers, cultural institutions, and knowledge curation, particularly by building on the existing capabilities identified in the paper. Such infrastructure should deliver accessible, user-friendly, and well-visualised data that reveals humanities knowledge to diverse audiences, including both the public and researchers.

To achieve this, investment in humanities research digitisation must occur on a larger scale. Strategic Initiative Funding, distributed through mechanisms such as the ARC or ARDC, could enable the systematic collection of research data sets created by humanities research teams. This would encompass existing digital assets, non-digital materials requiring digitisation and curation, and their translation into usable, integrated data resources.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Digital archives, encompassing born-digital sources such as audio, visual artefacts, and digital research collections, form a critical foundation for future scholarship. To maximise their value, digital mapping work should be integrated into existing platforms, strengthened, and reinforced as part of the national infrastructure. Platforms such as TLCMap and other mapping assets can support place-based research that locates histories, languages, journeys, and records of human activity in time and space. This has wide application across linguistics, First Nations research, history, art, music, archaeology, and environmental studies.

Equally important is the integration of complex archive networks into a single national search platform, connecting community and state-based repositories to ensure broad accessibility. Finally, a specific focus must be placed on the safe integration of AI tools.

This requires careful design to enhance discovery and usability without compromising the integrity of data for users and curators.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

A specialist workforce in humanities knowledge is essential, not only to train and develop others in discipline-specific expertise, but also to evolve across boundaries of non-humanities digital infrastructure and foster collaboration. One possible model is a “super workforce” team, comprising leads in specific areas supported by smaller teams working together on interdisciplinary problems and challenges. This staged approach may be preferable once core humanities expertise has been harnessed and consolidated, ensuring that collaboration builds on a strong foundation of disciplinary strength.

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Tue, Dec 9, 2025, 01:00 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Ms

First Name
Erika

Last Name
Slavin

Organisation
University of Western Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The humanities are essential to understanding Australia's cultural, social, and technological transitions. From UWA's perspective, three interrelated areas represent the most significant opportunities for future NRI investment in the humanities.

1. Advanced Data Practices
Contemporary humanities increasingly rely on computational, geospatial, and multimodal methods to interpret culture, language, and society. Investment in shared digital infrastructure, tools, and analytics platforms would support responsible AI-enabled research, 3D and multimedia visualisation, and advanced data management. This capability would position Australia to lead in responsible, data-driven humanities research aligned with national priorities in digital transformation and ethical AI.

2. Digital Archiving and Preservation
A coordinated national approach to digital archiving is required to safeguard Australia's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Shared digitisation infrastructure, metadata standards, and sustainable long-term storage, aligned with FAIR and CARE principles, enable interoperable access to collections held across universities, GLAM institutions, and communities. This would strengthen cultural preservation, enhance public access, and could support Indigenous data sovereignty and community-led governance.

3. Workforce Development and Capability Building
Sustained investment in digital skills and cross-disciplinary capability is essential to fully realise the potential of humanities infrastructure. Training programs in data stewardship, digital preservation, computational analysis, and research ethics would enable researchers to engage confidently with emerging technologies and datasets. Building this workforce capability would ensure inclusive access to infrastructure and strengthen Australia's capacity for translation, innovation, and global collaboration.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

UWA recommends a hybrid approach that prioritises the development of a generalist research infrastructure workforce with strong humanities domain expertise and the ability to bridge across disciplines, complemented by targeted specialist roles in key enabling areas such as digital preservation, cultural data stewardship, and Indigenous data governance.

A generalist workforce with cross-disciplinary literacy will be critical to maximising the value of humanities NRI investments and ensuring interoperability with broader national research infrastructure systems (e.g. ARDC, AURIN, PHRN). As the humanities become increasingly integrated with social, environmental and technological domains, bridging capability will be essential to connect humanities researchers, data scientists, and technical specialists, and to translate cultural and historical expertise into cross-sector applications.

At the same time, the humanities NRI ecosystem requires a foundation of specialist expertise to maintain research integrity, accessibility and cultural responsibility. Key roles include:

• Digitisation facilitators and archivists, to manage complex multimedia and 3D data.
• Collection curators, to oversee data quality, metadata standards, and long-term preservation.
• Cultural data stewards, to ensure ethical, community-led management of data and uphold Indigenous data sovereignty and cultural protocols.

This balanced model, anchored in cross-disciplinary capability but supported by specialist expertise, will best equip Australia’s humanities research infrastructure to operate as an interconnected national system that is sustainable, innovative, culturally informed, and aligned with emerging research practices.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 06:44 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39930401337c20d6a6bfc]

Title
Dr

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Organisation
The Australian National University

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
No comment

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
No comment.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
No comment.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 06:08 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399170cccde5bb3b45a6e]

Title
Ms

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Janet

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Catterall

Organisation
Open Access Australasia/Council of Australasian University Librarians (OAA/CAUL) joint submission

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Interoperable Shared Repositories
Investing in nationally coordinated, open-access repositories is essential to overcome the current siloing of humanities data across disciplines, geographical regions, cultures, and jurisdictions. Australia's humanities collections are fragmented by differences in standards, governance, and technological platforms, which obstructs interdisciplinary research and limits access for end-users. Creating interoperable repositories would unify these collections under common metadata standards and governance frameworks, promoting seamless discovery and reuse of diverse cultural and scholarly resources.

Such repositories could support advanced digital tools and AI-driven query capabilities to enhance humanities research, including indexing, cataloguing, and analysis functions. They must be designed as open, networked infrastructures built on public-interest governance principles, enabling multi-sector participation from academic institutions to Indigenous communities. Additionally, these repositories need to provide or interface to compliant compute and storage infrastructure to capture the benefits of institutional, cloud, or HPC resources as required, while remaining capable of securely handling sensitive formats such as audio, video, and culturally significant data, thereby embedding respect for cultural protocols and privacy legislation.

2. Diamond Open Access Journal Infrastructure
Supporting diamond open access (OA) journal infrastructure prioritizes the sustainability and equity of humanities scholarship dissemination. Diamond OA journals are community-governed and free for both readers and authors, eliminating paywalls common in commercial publishing models. This model aligns well with the values and needs of humanities researchers who seek inclusive, no-cost publishing venues.

Investment is needed to strengthen this approach via open-source publishing platforms to underpin these diamond journals, ensuring they have sustainable business and data models. Enhancing digital tools for editorial workflows, indexing, and analytics promotes greater visibility and impact for humanities research outputs. Integration with interoperable shared repositories further extends accessibility and reusability of published materials. Such infrastructure supports diverse forms of scholarly communication relevant to humanities research, including non-traditional outputs like multimedia works or community-engaged scholarship.

3. Secure Infrastructure for Sensitive and Cultural Data
Developing secure, sovereign digital environments such as TREs (Trusted Research Environments) and SREs (Secure Research Environments) built for humanities research is crucial to safeguard sensitive and culturally significant data. Humanities research often involves complex data types—such as audio recordings, video, visual art, and Indigenous knowledge—that require strict compliance with privacy laws and respect for culturally defined governance arrangements.

Infrastructure must offer secure storage and compute environments that enable humanities researchers to work with these data safely, including access to sovereign large language models (LLMs) and generative AI tools tailored to humanities analysis. These secure platforms facilitate participatory governance models where Indigenous communities and other stakeholders retain control and agency over access and use of their cultural materials.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Digital Humanities and AI-Enhanced Research:
The increasing use of AI, machine learning, and large language models in humanities research for text analysis, cultural heritage digitisation, and social data interpretation demands advanced computational infrastructure. NRI investment should support development of open, sovereign AI environments tailored for humanities data, enabling researchers to harness these technologies responsibly and creatively.

Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Heritage Management:
Growing recognition of Indigenous-led research and cultural protocols necessitates secure, compliant data infrastructure that respects privacy, sovereignty, and participatory governance. Investment is needed in repositories and tools designed specifically for managing multimedia and sensitive Indigenous knowledge aligned with cultural values and legislative requirements.

Interdisciplinary and Cross-Sector Research Integration:
Humanities research increasingly intersects with health, environment, social sciences, and digital technology fields. This calls for interoperable infrastructure capable of bridging diverse data types, standards, and disciplinary practices to support complex, multi-dimensional inquiries.

Sustainable Open Publishing and Scholarly Communication:
As researcher-led diamond open access journal models grow, investment is needed to expand sustainable, community-governed publishing platforms that accommodate diverse humanities outputs, including multimedia and collaborative works.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Specialist Humanities Infrastructure Workforce

Pros:

Deep domain knowledge and cultural literacy essential for understanding humanities research nuances.
Better equipped to design, manage, and maintain infrastructure tailored specifically to humanities data types (e.g., multimedia, text corpora) and governance requirements.

Cons:

May risk siloing expertise, limiting flexibility in adapting to cross-disciplinary infrastructure needs or emerging technologies outside traditional humanities areas.
Potentially narrower career pathways and challenges in scaling workforce numbers due to specialized skill demands.

Generalist Research Infrastructure Workforce with Humanities Expertise

Pros:

Flexibility to operate across multiple disciplines, supporting integration between humanities, health, social sciences, and digital technology sectors.
Ability to bridge technical infrastructure expertise (data science, cloud computing, AI) with humanities domain knowledge, facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation.

Cons:

Risk of insufficient depth in humanities-specific cultural and ethical understanding, which could impact sensitive data stewardship and community trust.
Generalist training may overlook specific governance requirements unique to humanities and Indigenous data.

In the context of developing a shared research infrastructure, a combination of specialist humanities infrastructure experts, who bring essential deep knowledge of humanities data and research practices, and generalist infrastructure professionals, who offer flexibility and cross-disciplinary technological skills, provides the most effective and adaptable workforce.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 05:28 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39841f5d9e50e7f06c289]

Title
Ms

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Jo

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Webb

Organisation
Animals Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
There is growing community demand for ethical, transparent and socially accountable governance of animals across research (ANZCCART/University of SA, 2022). Australians believe that policy decisions should prioritise impacts on animals, incorporate scientific evidence, and consider animal sentience (Alliance for Animals/BehaviourWorks, 2023). Yet Australia lacks the humanities research infrastructure required to understand the social, cultural, ethical and political forces that shape contemporary human-animal relations.

Strengthening national humanities infrastructure is vital to inform policy and regulation in relation to the ethical treatment of animals. The Draft Final NDRI Investment Plan acknowledges the need to consider options for reorganising or enhancing governance on new and existing digital research infrastructure. As such, NRI investment in humanities should assist in addressing the systemic failures surrounding the use of animals in Australia, including fragmented, inconsistent and scientifically incomplete governance.

The top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities include:
1. Digitised social research hubs to promote and support the transition to NAMs alternatives to replace animal use.
2. Infrastructure for evaluating the ethical and social impacts of both animal and non-animal models, including national survey instruments to explore human-animal relations.
3. Interdisciplinary platforms, digitised archives and data repositories to facilitate discourse and policy analysis across ethics, law, science and technology, biomedical research etc.

References

ANZCCART/University of SA, 2022 - https://anzccart.adelaide.edu.au/newsletters-publications-and-events/anzccart-survey

Alliance for Animals/BehaviourWorks, 2023 - https://www.behaviourworksaustralia.org/projects/the-2023-australian-animal-welfare-survey

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Emerging areas of humanities research that will require investment in the next 3-5 years include:

• Dedicated infrastructure to support independent studies that address the costs/benefits of animal use in society – evaluation and analysis on the ethical and social impacts of animal use and the psychological harms emerging across workforces is fragmented. Dedicated infrastructure is needed to facilitate independent studies that explore, assess and address industry practices that erode human-animal relations.

• Longitudinal research on community sentiment, perception and attitudes on research ethics and practice - the ethical status of animals is an increasing concern in the scientific community and the community at large, reflecting humanity's recognition of animal sentience and greater environmental consciousness, i.e. 71% of Australian adults support dedicated funding for developing alternatives to using animals in research, up from 67% in 2018; and 71% support replacing animals in research with scientific alternatives, up from 61% in 2018 (AFSA, 2025).

Reference

AFSA, 2025 - https://animalfreescienceadvocacy.org.au/australians-support-replacement-of-animals-in-science/).

2026 National Research Infrastructure (NRI) Roadmap Issues Paper Consultation
Issues Paper Consultation Survey
Department of Education

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Title
Dr

First Name
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Avrahamzon

Organisation
Research Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
• Use of linked and longitudinal data to study equity, health and wellbeing
• Adoption of digital technologies to improve health outcomes and health systems
• Indigenous data sovereignty

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
• Understanding the social, cultural, commercial and other determinants of health to advance prevention policy
• Planetary health and the impact of climate change on population health and the health system
• Public trust, social licencing and ethical frameworks for the use of AI in health, health data, digital health and advanced technologies such as genomics and precision medicine
• Health inequities and the development of culturally safe, inclusive and gender responsive approaches to health and medical research and innovation
• Consumer and community involvement in health and medical research and innovation
• Mental health and wellbeing

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
The humanities are foundational to health and medical research and innovation, providing interdisciplinary lenses with which we can understand how health and medical discoveries can be socially meaningful, trusted and effective. Investment in humanities research infrastructure and the workforce which underpins it is an investment in better health outcomes and should be embedded across the ecosystem. Given the inherently fast-changing nature of the health and medical research and innovation landscape, the

humanities workforce needs capacity for deep domain-specific expertise as well as the ability to pivot and work across disciplines as the sector shifts.

Research Australia therefore proposes a hybrid workforce approach that focusses investment on building both domain-specific expertise (e.g. Indigenous data sovereignty), alongside wider humanities literacy across the system. For the health and medical research and innovation sector, this should be embedded and aligned with the upcoming National Health and Medical Research Workforce Plan and reinforced by wider efforts to promote humanities upskilling, mobility and non-traditional pathways into humanities research.

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Title
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Organisation
Australian Publishers Association

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
From the perspective of literature, books and written culture:

Sustainable funding for mature digital humanities infrastructure
– including platforms such as Libraray platforms, Titlepage, AustLit and related HASS data commons, recognising maintenance, enhancement and workforce as core NRI functions.

Nationally coordinated collections, digitisation and interoperability
– across libraries, archives, publishers, book trade data and cultural collections to enable integrated research and policy analysis.

Digital observability and data infrastructure
– to collect, link and analyse cultural, reading and platform data (including crowdsourced and donated data) to inform cultural, education and AI policy.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
WE seek greater knowledge of our own cultural sector (athourship, books and reading) which requires investment in Digital humanities and cultural data science – large-scale analysis of literary, cultural and platform datasets,

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
APA favours specialist humanities research infrastructure roles, with structured collaboration with generalist digital/technical staff.

Humanities (and particularly literary and publishing-related) infrastructure has distinct requirements: complex rights and licensing frameworks, rich metadata, interpretive and contextual work, ICIP awareness, and domain-specific standards. Generalist teams tend to default to STEM paradigms and overlook these needs.

A specialist workforce signals that humanities and creative sectors have their own infrastructures and practices, while joint projects, training and career pathways ensure knowledge exchange with generalist NRI staff.

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Title
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In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
As the NRI Roadmap Issues paper clearly identifies, digital observability is critical and requires access to digital platforms and data and new tools and methods to support research on the digital public sphere. The urgency and complexity of this challenge is growing with new technologies and platforms coming online every day: from the emergence of publicly available AI chat services to the expanding reach of datafied products and services; the Internet of Things (IoT); and smart data embedded in everything from cars to children's toys. Given these pressing challenges, we believe the top 3 priorities for NRI investment in the humanities are: 1) Enhance and expand the capabilities of the Australian Internet Observatory for digital observability; 2) Secure collections for digital social and cultural data; and 3) National digital cultures collaboration initiative.
1. Enhance and expand the capabilities of the Australian Internet Observatory for digital observability, discoverability and multimodal capabilities
A key priority for the next NRI roadmap should be an expanded set of tools for data collection, exploration and analysis across digital platforms and services which takes into account the diversity of data sources, formats and platforms. Digital observability is needed not only for social media and the large platforms, but also chat agents, Gen AI, connected devices (cars, smart wearables), retail platforms, search and the proliferation of smaller platforms and services we use. Observability involves studying not just what we do in digital culture but how automated models shape life; that is, we need to be able to study machines, data, institutions, people as a configuration.
Key capabilities for AIO Phase II include tools for digital observability, discoverability and multimodal data processing:
a. Observability: Dynamic data and platform access and collection infrastructure for digital observability
Digital platforms require a range of evolving methods for data access and collection as platforms, devices and services change and innovate. This will require expanding current

methods such as Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and data donation tools (mobile apps, browser extensions and downloads) to the development of automated, adaptive data collection tools for digital platforms and services, smart data and Internet of Things (IoT) and providing access to a wide range of digital systems for auditing and data collection at scale from established and emerging digital platforms, sensors and smart devices. We need platform and application neutral data collection - generalisable, durable processes for studying life in digital societies.
A full-scale observatory means having both the 'hard' infrastructure of tools with the resources to run participation panels and data donation in an ongoing way. We also need tools that go beyond data-intensive approaches to be able to observe and understand the algorithms, machines and interactions occurring in real time, understanding the computational models and processes and how they shape social life. This requires test environments and synthetic data generated by AI and digital twins.
b. Discoverability: Advanced analytics and interactive visualisations for insights
Researchers need a range of tools to visualise and analyse both quantitative and qualitative data, and new technologies are opening up innovations for data analysis from digital and social data that are unprecedented. Advanced analytics for humanities researchers include:
• Intuitive interfaces and dashboards for data visualisation, exploration and insights including no code solutions, agentic models and AI queries.
• Test environments that simulate platform interactions to determine algorithmic and social drivers of misinformation spread, and rigorous and independent testing of platform effects
• Digital Twins for immersive interaction and to model the impact of regulatory interventions.
c. Multimodal capabilities
Multimodal data and analysis need to be factored into digital observability as a default. GenAI capabilities also need to be implemented for complex analysis, labelling and insights including the computational capacity for processing at scale. This includes domain-specific LLMs for Australian contexts, including models trained on local datasets relevant to law, health, and media studies and tools for fine-tuning open-source generative models tailored for research in HASS Secure, institutionally managed AI systems that support text, image, audio, and video synthesis for research while ensuring privacy and compliance.
2. Secure collections for digital social and cultural data
Digital collections for humanities research go beyond national collecting institutions and cultural collections to include born-digital data, collections, secure storage for sensitive data, and data governance, management, access for research data. Data collected from digital platforms needs to be stored and made available for researchers via secure repositories and digital collections including the diverse formats and multimodal content. These do not currently exist. We recommend enabling:
• New and expanding value of cultural collections by making them more explorable, interpretable, and connected, leveraging their value to create more culturally-attuned models.
• Capacity to leverage the value of connections across collections nationally and internationally.
• Access to digital compute and storage infrastructure for sensitive data including audio, video and visual media, to enable compliance with legislation, privacy requirements, cultural protocols and participatory governance frameworks.

3. National digital cultures collaboration initiative

A national digital cultures collaboration initiative is required to provide strategic leadership and coordination across disciplines, sectors and NRI facilities and to support national and international partnerships for computational humanities and social science research.
The NRI system has struggled to connect research and infrastructure across HASS, GLAM and STEM investments, with many aspects of the system remaining siloed, limiting productivity and innovation. Building strong links between the Australian Urban Research Information Network (AURIN), including the RMIT node, and the Australian Internet Observatory is a key example of the connections that need to be made.
Key elements of the National digital cultures collaboration initiative:
• Develop an International array of digital observatories. Support durable forms of data use by building shared tools and standardised data schemas with international partners to ensure Australian infrastructure is integrated with best practices internationally, leveraging investments happening in other countries.
• Develop networked open technology standards built for public interest, governance frameworks and a multisector community of participants working to drive innovation in the operations of public goods - based on emerging models of digital public infrastructure being adopted globally. This would build the capacity of all actors to implement, innovate, scale, and lead digital transformation, ensuring digital sovereignty and a thriving local digital ecosystem.
• Develop systems and standards to enable data portability and interoperability which is a fundamental precondition for service delivery, credential verification, security, data privacy and data sharing in many areas.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
New and emerging areas of humanities research enabled by NRI investments in the Australian Internet Observatory and Digital collections could address the following national science and research priorities:
• Transitioning to a net zero future:
Access to new technologies and data are needed to support research on new ways of understanding and achieving net zero and a circular economy. For example, humanities research on digital platforms can support insights on the circulation of scientific evidence and misinformation on climate change and energy transitions.
• Supporting healthy and thriving communities:
Recent digital transformations have had a major impact on the way in which individuals, families and communities access and share health and wellbeing information and services, generate data, and interact with the health system. With many health products and services being provided via digital platforms and apps, digital observability becomes a new frontier for humanities researchers. Emerging areas of humanities research supported by tools for digital observability will provide critical insights into the social, cultural, developmental and environmental drivers of individual and community health including: preparing for pandemics; social and technological solutions for improved care; place-based and culturally appropriate approaches to build community.
• Elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders knowledge systems
The digital transformation challenge provides many benefits and challenges for Indigenous communities and represents a critical area of investment for research and research infrastructure for Indigenous researchers in the humanities.
• Protecting and restoring Australia's environment
Digital platforms and collections offer vast amounts of data on environmental and cultural attitudes, artefacts, history and the circulation of knowledge and ideas. New tools, such

as simulations and digital twins, present new opportunities for humanities researchers to make connections across disciplines.

• Building a secure and resilient nation

The emergence of AI-driven misinformation and fraud, particularly in political and economic/financial sectors is a growing threat to the stability of democracy and free markets. The fragmentation of the media and communications landscape is also making it increasingly difficult to monitor national and international conversations, posing serious challenges for election integrity, policymaking in all areas, and public accountability. Robust data access and visualisation tools for humanities researchers, supported by the Australian Internet Observatory, will support emerging areas of research in the humanities such as election campaigning, disinformation, and public communication and manipulation.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Our stakeholders supported both of these options. Senior research leaders in the Humanities supported specialist infrastructure staff because they argued that bringing together qualitative and quantitative data sets will require a specialist workforce, whose expertise will be a significant presence in the research landscape.

In terms of researchers: the NRI Roadmap should support specialised training for uplift across humanities, arts and social science (HASS) disciplines and researchers across sectors and for the Research Software Engineers who work with them.

In terms of technical staff: their numbers should be expanded within the humanities to support digital and computational humanities research, which will require both a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce and a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines.

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Title
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Brass

Organisation
Australian Academy of the Humanities

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Humanities methods, models and infrastructures are central to building, embedding, and sustaining Australia's capability to deeply and systematically understand how societies, cultures and peoples engage with and adapt to change. Australia is at a point of momentous change navigating the impact of the AI and digital transformation, climate crisis, increasing international tensions, threats to social cohesion, a loss of faith in science, and a worldwide decline in trust in liberal democracy. This is the wider operating context for Australia's research and innovation agenda, and it is why, in developing next-generation NRI through the 2026 roadmapping process, Australia needs to 'hard-wire' the humanities (and wider arts and social sciences – HASS) into the system on its own terms and in collaboration with STEM and Indigenous research.

Our submission to the NRI consultation in March 2025 focused on three priorities: an Indigenous Capability, National Research Collections Infrastructure Capability, and a HASS Coordinating Capability. In this submission, we extend and update this advice. (See Australian Academy of the Humanities (March 2025) 2026 NRI Roadmap Survey https://humanities.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/250326-AAH-2026-NRI-Roadmap-survey-response.pdf)

Given the Issues Paper is seeking feedback on an Indigenous Capability at questions 2-3, we have not listed it in the humanities-focused priorities below. That said, we view the development of a systemic Indigenous Capability as a priority for the 2026 NRI Roadmap. As we did in March 2025, we support a "dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Research Data Commons capability", which as the Issues Paper articulates "would require scaling up from the Improving Indigenous Research Capabilities (IIRC) Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA) programs currently established under the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC), and should draw on related collaborative initiatives hosted by various institutions." Realising an Indigenous Capability of this scale and scope,

is of value to humanities researchers Indigenous and non-Indigenous, including archaeologists, historians, and linguists, who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural, heritage and language data.

The three current priorities for NRI investment in the humanities are:

1. Scaling and integrating:
• The 2026 NRI Roadmap needs to capitalise on current NCRIS investments through the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and Indigenous Research Capability (HASS&I) Research Data Commons (RDC). Two of the first-stage projects are at the point of maturity to be developed as distinct and integrated capabilities in the NCRIS landscape: the IIRC and LDaCA, as the Issues Paper recognises. A second phase of projects will be on a similar trajectory beyond 2028 including the Australian Internet Observatory (AIO), the Australian Creative Histories and Futures (ACHF) project, and the Community Data Lab (CDL).
• A national strategic capability is needed to coordinate widely distributed humanities NRI. ARDC investment has been 'game changing' in incubating humanities capability and will continue to play a major role, the opportunity is to now evolve the work of co-ordination. A coordinating entity is needed to steward the sector, build partnerships at scale with data custodians (especially in the Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) sector), facilitate workforce development, and leverage the wider R&I landscape. To maximise the value of 'distinct and integrated' projects requires integrated foundational technologies and services, and supporting data linkage. The Paper singles out long-standing and mature NRI, such as AustLit, to that list we would add the Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures (PARADISEC) and others.
• Internationally there are models and mechanisms we can learn from. An NRI strategic agenda for humanities needs to be part of broader uplift and investment for the humanities – and wider HASS. In the UK, infrastructure funding has been used to scale humanities and arts research to deliver "the largest public infrastructure investment in virtual screen production in the UK, which has already inside a year met its co-investment targets". (In the UK context see overview by the Executive Chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Professor Christopher Smith, on Why the Arts and Humanities Need Strategic Funding: https://anatomiesofpower.wordpress.com/2025/01/05/credo-why-arts-and-humanities-needs-national-strategic-funding/ ; and for details on the CoSTAR investment: https://www.ukri.org/councils/ahrc/remit-programmes-and-priorities/convergent-screen-technologies-and-performance-in-realtime-costar/)

2. Maximising data discoverability:
• Humanities need secure, national scale, long-term repository infrastructure with common metadata standards and governance frameworks. We can learn from European initiatives such as HAL and Huma-Num, which are working towards robust frameworks for long-term digital research in the humanities [see HAL https://hal.science/?lang=en; Huma-Num https://www.huma-num.fr/about-us/]. Pilot work being done through the ARDC's Community Data Lab is also instructive here. Such foundational infrastructure requires national planning, with buy-in from universities, to achieve the systems needed for humanities research collections to endure. This will go some way to addressing the ongoing challenges of legacy datasets, but it is more about future proofing data assets and a pre-condition for sovereign AI approaches centred on Australian content. Responses to the March 2025 consultation identified this as a priority issue. STEM also has this problem, so a 'joined up' discussion would be productive. Australia's sovereign data in the humanities is at risk.

• A National Research Collections Infrastructure Capability is needed to improve accessibility and unlock fragmented national cultural data assets for research. This problem is well known and has been articulated in successive roadmaps. It can be cracked. We need to move beyond current episodic project-based approaches. What the Atlas of Living Australia has done in federating data for the biological collections needs its counterpart for the cultural collections. This involves building partnerships at scale with GLAM to unlock different types of collections, multi-modal, multi-media, and leverage data capture (digitisation) capability. An international path-setting example is the UK's Towards a National Collection program, funded through the AHRC, (see https://www.nationalcollection.org.uk)

Two state-based models are potentially scale-able and warrant investigation:
o The Digitisation Centre of Western Australia, a multi-GLAM, multi-university collaboration which digitises cultural and significant research collections to the highest international archival standards, for all five WA universities, the State Library of Western Australia and Western Australian Museum. (see https://www.uwa.edu.au/digitisation-centre-of-western-australia). The partnership most recently securing investment to establish Western Australia's first 3D Object Scanning Laboratory located at the WA Museum. Led by Edith Cowan University (ECU) Professor Helena Grehan this will transform the study of some of Western Australia's most significant, and fragile, scientific objects (see https://www.ecu.edu.au/newsroom/articles/news/major-grant-unlocks-was-precious-scientific-collections-to-the-world)
o Tasmania's research and GLAM partnerships through the Digital History Tasmania initiative, a data commons not-for-profit organisation. This alliance between academics, family and local historians and archivists and curators holds more than 4 million digitised records as a single collection which share common metadata standards. Led by Professor Hamish Maxwell-Stewart it is a collective effort to assemble long-run intergenerational datasets capable of evidencing intergenerational transmission of inequality, gene environment interactions and the difficulties associated with closing the gap. While we now possess the tools to digitise large record collections, museum and other institutional catalogues, and heritage objects, we lack the necessary infrastructure to consistently mark these up, link them together and hold them in common. Recently it has linked up with University of Adelaide, Monash University, UNE, the State Library South Australia, State Archives South Australia, Birth, Death and Marriages, South Australia and Genealogy South Australia to digitise and mark-up record collections for that state in ways that share meta data standards with Tasmania.

• Improving discovery at scale needs to be complemented by discoverability tools for analytic and research translation capabilities, to meet the needs both of humanities researchers .

3. Supporting humanities-driven AI and digital capability, with a focus on:
a. Observability of the digital environment, digital platform/AI data — for coming to grips with problems including mis/disinformation, political communication, and unregulated advertising. The Australian Internet Observatory (see https://internetobservatory.org.au), an initiative of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society (ADM+S) and ARDC has the lead on this agenda. Humanities and social sciences methodologies bring unique methods for understanding what happens in interactions with platforms, but more significantly how automated models shape our everyday lives.
b. Rapid advancement of large language models (LLMs) presents humanities scholars with novel challenges and opportunities. New tools, methods and approaches, advanced computation, and data mining capabilities are needed for the next phase of generative AI.

A major bid underway for an ARC Centre of Excellence focused on multilingualism, if successful, would interrogate linguistic biases of LLMs and develop unique Australian approaches.
c. NRI investment needs to be run through institutions that will endure for the long-run, not institutional structures (departments, centres, projects) that will be dissolved over time. International models developing AI research capacity in national libraries (Norway and the UK are key examples here) offer significant lessons for Australia. (In 2025 the Norwegian government announced investment in both a language modelling unit at the National Library of Norway and also national infrastructure AI clusters). This development is important because it protects culturally sensitive data and enables initiatives that are focused on issues that are specific to and pressing for those contexts. It also brings together experts in technology with the experts in curation, management and protection of data (librarians and other information professionals in this sector). Libraries are a major part of the NRI ecosystem for humanities researchers, they are also leaders in life-long learning, especially around literacy (including digital), so having these capacities together creates potential for libraries to continue to innovate in this role with emerging technologies.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Scaling data observation and analysis capabilities as noted above are ongoing challenges, but humanities researchers also increasingly require simulation and emulation capabilities. This is true for media researchers working with digital media platforms, and for digital heritage and collections work, such as Prof Melanie Swalwell, who is the project lead for The Australian Emulation Network: Born Digital Cultural Collections Access, an ARC Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities (LIEF) awarded to a consortium of universities and GLAM organisations (see: https://auseaasi.org)

A major issue over the next 3-5 years is to achieve gains in multimodal infrastructure for working across video, audio, text, image-based data.

Across the spectrum of humanities disciplines, scholars are commencing to construct and train customised Large Language Models (LLMs) tailored to their research objectives. Early results demonstrate the remarkable potential of models tuned to humanities inquiries. It is probably not feasible nor necessary for every discipline to pursue its own specialised model in Australia; nevertheless, there is compelling reason to invest in the creation of more broadly conceived LLMs suitable for reasonably cognate fields. Regardless of their scale, whether large or small, this enterprise presents similar conceptual, technical, and ethical challenges.

Humanities research brings strengths in commercial data harvesting and in the context of AI, sophisticated ways to handle/mitigate colonial ontologies (i.e. deep-seated, often invisible, ways of being, knowing, and relating to the world shaped by colonialism, contrasting sharply with Indigenous worldviews), and commercial co-opting of data. Thinking through the challenges of AI as infrastructure and developing critical approaches to AI as a set of methods is a major challenge. HASS disciplines are well placed to evaluate the actual and likely social impact of the tools, infrastructures and AI being developed.

Another emerging area which has yet to be mindfully addressed in the NCRIS landscape is the major potential for interdisciplinary HASS + STEM + Indigenous approaches to tackling major research challenges. There is important work happening at project-based level

showing how we could take national/strategic approaches to driving health or environmental outcomes through cultural heritage initiatives. A major program of work through the ARC Centre of Excellence for Indigenous and Environmental Histories and Futures, for example (see https://ciehf.au). In the context of longitudinal health outcomes, the work of Prof Janet McCalman's ARCHER project is also instructive. It is aiming to build a foundational historical database for the people of Australia from our world-leading birth, death and marriage registrations, starting with Victoria and Queensland in 1855 and coming up to the present by linking with the ABS PLIDA dataset. ARCHER is multi-disciplinary but is, above all, bringing humanities and social sciences into STEM — to enhance population and health studies with good historical context.

Finally, we wanted to stress the need for substantial planning and scoping and partnership building for collections infrastructure (see our response to Q4) to deliver over the next 3-5 years. A phased process, building on the WA and Tasmanian examples is one way forward.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

In short, we think there is a need for both specialist (software preservation; data librarians, research software engineers) and generalist (storage, compute, domain expertise) capabilities. A national workforce capability strategy for the humanities is a priority to drive both functional and critical data literacy. Discipline-specific knowledge needs to be at the heart of the kind of infrastructure humanities researchers are building because the infrastructure itself are also the research problems.

At the functional end of the spectrum, the essential conceptual groundwork ensuring that digital materials are created in formats that allow curation and reuse beyond the life of a single project. Tools are already to hand: for example, TEI-XML for textual corpora, CIDOC-CRM for cultural heritage, and other long-established standards. Where we lag is in recognition, guidance, and infrastructure to help humanities scholars incorporate such modelling from the outset of projects.

A primary concern is ensuring employment security. Currently, research infrastructure staff are frequently employed on project-specific contracts, without any assurance that the expertise they acquire will be retained, let alone expanded. This situation not only jeopardises individual career trajectories but also undermines the overall health of the research ecosystem. The research infrastructure workforce for humanities capability needs to straddle depth of understanding of the disciplinary practices and norms of humanities disciplines and technical skill. A specialised centre (potentially situated in the ARDC or coordinated with the ARDC) would provide a stable platform where such staff could accumulate experience across multiple projects. This would enable them to provide consistent, expert support to researchers while simultaneously developing valuable professional development paths of their own.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:57 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
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Organisation
ATN Universities

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Consistent with our broader positions on equitable access and digital capability, ATN Universities supports continued investment in digital research infrastructure that enables humanities and social sciences research. This includes archives and libraries, data platforms, compute access and tools that assist researchers across all disciplines. Given feedback from members, we note that humanities research often relies on qualitative, contextual and culturally situated data, and that current national infrastructure provides limited capacity to link, search or analyse qualitative datasets across collections. Addressing this gap would significantly improve the usability of humanities data.

We also recommend ensuring that humanities researchers benefit from national investments in data, AI and digital capability, and that these investments are planned and delivered in ways that support participation across the full research system. This includes investment in data curation capability, recognising that humanities data requires interpretation, contextual knowledge and cultural understanding rather than simple storage or technical organisation.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
ATN Universities acknowledges that fields such as digital humanities, creative industries, data and AI-assisted social analysis are growing and align with strengths across many member institutions. Consistent with our support for a connected research system, we encourage consideration of cross-disciplinary platforms that link humanities with STEM-related innovation, noting that digital infrastructure can support collaboration across research domains.

Member feedback highlights that qualitative data infrastructure represents a significant emerging need. Humanities researchers currently lack national platforms that allow

qualitative datasets to be linked or searched across repositories, limiting the potential for large-scale or comparative research. Developing this capability would support emerging research approaches across the humanities and social sciences.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

In line with our broader workforce principles, ATN Universities supports a generalist NRI workforce with the ability to work across disciplines. This includes technical capability combined with domain literacy, so that staff can support multi-disciplinary collaboration. Transferability and adaptability are important, consistent with the skills principles articulated through our Strategic Examination of R&D (SERD) submissions.

We recognise the need to strengthen humanities domain expertise within the generalist workforce. This includes capability in qualitative data curation, cultural literacy and contextual understanding, which are essential for working with humanities collections and for supporting interdisciplinary research. Feedback from members also noted that many Indigenous researchers work within social science and humanities disciplines, and strengthening domain expertise can support more culturally appropriate and informed data management practices.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:48 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
A/Prof

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Elizabeth

Last Name
Williams

Organisation
Australian Nuclear Research and Education Network

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Aligned with the remit of ANREN, priorities we support include understanding public perception, fears and expectations of all things nuclear, including connection to Indigenous cultural alignment. To that end, explorations of how to appropriately and respectfully embed Indigenous knowledge systems in our ways of working are essential to support, as is work on the development of ethical and transparent governance frameworks that support the responsible use of nuclear technologies in Australian contexts.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
One key emerging area of humanities research of relevance to our community is health care inequalities, fairness and justice. Australia's capacity to provide equitable access to diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine is increasingly constrained by the structural vulnerabilities of its radionuclide supply chain and lack of research and development in new diagnostic and therapeutic radionuclides, particularly alpha emitters. Integrating health focused research infrastructure (e.g. a 30 MeV cyclotron) with support for research on how best to equitably and appropriately expand access to care for populations that currently struggle to access it, would not only expand scientific capability but would provide a pathway for addressing core humanities-based concerns that underpin ethical national research infrastructure, including health equity, justice, sovereignty and fairness.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
We think this is a question that is best addressed for a specific research infrastructure context. The depth of expertise in a given humanities area will differ, as will a facility's

ability to recruit someone with that depth of expertise, so some flexibility in approach is likely to be best here.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:38 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Mrs

First Name
Rosie

Last Name
Hicks

Organisation
Australian Research Data Commons

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Through consultation with humanities research, GLAM and wider-sector communities, ARDC has identified both new and significantly expanded cross-cutting research infrastructure requiring priority investment.

1) DATA & METADATA ENHANCEMENT: Humanities research relies on a range of historical and contemporary data produced and collected for other reasons, such as government and administrative data; records; and GLAM-curated collections. Cultural data is more valuable for humanities researchers when the data is enriched through standards, metadata and common analytics data models. And yet that enrichment can be expensive.

AI technology presents an opportunity for the enhancement and enrichment of data and metadata to support discoverability and usability, and provide the appropriate context for researchers to reuse and repurpose data. Priority investment should include:
- Enhancing descriptions of existing data collections
- Developing tools for data and meta transformations, including recreating systems needed to access data in outdated formats
- Implementing standards that meet the needs of different forms of research, with dedicated support for moving data between these standards
- Systems to allow data to be transformed along common humanities dimensions, such as temporal and geospatial.

2) DATA PRESERVATION AND ACCESS: Dedicated infrastructure is needed to preserve Australia's irreplaceable cultural and research data, and to ensure it remains findable, usable and meaningfully accessible for humanities researchers. Much of this data – whether held in GLAM institutions, community organisations, or research projects – was created in contexts not optimised for long-term preservation. As a result, data may be inconsistently structured, poorly described, or difficult to maintain and reuse.

To address these challenges, investment must support the use of robust, standards-based preservation tools and protocols. Approaches such as the PILARS protocols provide clear guidance for safeguarding data over time, ensuring provenance, integrity, longevity, accessibility, reusability and security. Complementary frameworks like RO-Crate enable the packaging of data and rich metadata in a structured, machine-readable form, dramatically improving interoperability and research usability across diverse archival and custodial settings.

Adopting these preservation-focused infrastructures – grounded in CARE and FAIR principles – ensures that Australia's cultural and humanities data can be effectively stewarded and continually reused. Sustained investment in these tools and standards will allow researchers to harness the full value of Australia's cultural, historical, and community-generated data to generate new insights and knowledge.

3) DIGITAL OBSERVATION INFRASTRUCTURE: Contemporary society is increasingly conducted online. Observation and analysis of online behaviour and materials allows researchers and governments to make informed public policy decisions. Investment in a humanities-specialised digital observation infrastructure would provide humanities researchers with access to at-scale social, economic and cultural data; and the analytical tools and governance needed for cutting-edge research. Areas for priority investment include:

- Data donation tools, e.g. browser extensions directly capturing use-data via plugins, and data download packages, which facilitate social media archive research
- Further development of web archiving activities that produce unique, analysis-ready data collections, including those focused on topics of national significance
- Simulation infrastructure to expand digital observation activities, enabling the combination of different data types to create digital twins
- API data capture models.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

New and emerging research areas in the humanities reflect large-scale societal and technological shifts, including:

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: A large proportion of our lived experience and societal life is now conducted online. This shift is changing the way humanities research is conducted, with much of what was physically archived in the past (e.g. correspondence, reporting, media) now entirely digital and ephemeral. Spanning all humanities disciplines, digital information is creating new areas of research, with a corresponding need for suitable infrastructure – such as observatories to collect data.

AT-SCALE HUMANITIES RESEARCH: The increase in the type and volume of data that underpins much of humanities research is extending beyond the traditional breadth and reach of humanities disciplines. Technological advances, including improved data visibility and access, and rapid societal shifts are impacting the methods used by humanities researchers. Humanities researchers increasingly combine qualitative methods with quantitative data, creating new areas of inquiry and generating new knowledge. For example, the impact of digital platforms on the democratic process requires new research

approaches and novel technology applications, such as sovereign LLMs and digital twins, to democratise data access and combine sociodemographic with textual data.

The digital nature of many new and expanding areas of humanities research requires the development of generalist capability designed with HASS in mind from the start – for example, Trusted Research Environments (TREs) tailored to HASS uses, including the anonymous and ethical analysis of audiovisual data. Similar advances are increasing cross-disciplinary humanities research, with data repurposing infrastructure facilitating the enrichment and reuse of nationally significant cultural and other data.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

New and emerging humanities areas, and societal and technological shifts, mean the sustained development of both specialist and generalist NRI expertise is required. The ideal workforce involves both generalists who develop sufficient knowledge of domain areas, and those with domain expertise who develop sufficient technical skills, allowing personnel to leverage knowledge in both areas, with sufficient understanding to communicate effectively.

PROS - GENERALIST WORKFORCE
- Investment in a generalist workforce equipped to operate infrastructure with wide possible applications (such as storage, management, compute) is efficient.
- Existing NRI training is often tailored for non-humanities disciplines, with non-humanities examples; there is a possible efficiency of scale to leverage.
- Opportunities for cross-pollination of infrastructure solutions and approaches between research domains.

CONS - GENERALIST WORKFORCE
- It is unclear when in the ‘generalist’ model/skills pathway the still-necessary specialist humanities domain knowledge would be obtained and how. Currently, generalists who learn on the job in humanities projects require guidance and input from humanities specialists; this does not create stand-alone NRI generalists with humanities domain knowledge.
- A generalist workforce requires development of the difficult-to-teach ‘meta’ skills for cross-domain learning (e.g. comfort with no ‘right’ answers).
- Recasting specialist roles as more generalist might lead to talent attrition, with specialists less likely to apply for general NRI roles.

PROS - SPECIALIST HUMANITIES WORKFORCE
- While some aspects of ‘hard’ infrastructure have broad applications, the development and configuration of this infrastructure for humanities research requires humanities domain knowledge, to ensure infrastructure meets specific and future humanities research needs.
- Some analytical techniques are unique to digital humanities (e.g. corpus linguistics). Specialist humanities NRI staff understand the different configuration, use-cases and history when compared to STEM or other data.

CONS - SPECIALIST HUMANITIES WORKFORCE:
Driving new technology innovation and uptake is less likely among a specialist workforce. Staff coming from a single domain are more likely to reach for existing methods, rather

than adopting new approaches – compounded by a lack of exposure to alternative techniques, and a duplication of infrastructure in each discipline – e.g. the separation of HASS and STEM commodity infrastructure, such as storage and compute.

Examples of strengthening NRI skills for humanities researchers include initiatives delivered through ARDC's HASS & Indigenous Research Data Commons:
- LDaCA: piloting one day sustainable data training to provide to universities as part of HDR curriculum.
- SSRIN: uplifting digital research skills knowledge of social scientists in Australia by creating a national skills framework – auditing skills gaps, then creating a tailored training program.
- AIO: research training program to improve skills for research with social media data across all disciplines.
- CDL2: creating resources in research software engineering aimed at those working on humanities projects.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:31 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39928a43167cd24b77883]

Title
Mr

First Name
Jarrod

Last Name
Ross

Organisation
Universities Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Universities Australia supports the plans articulated by the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and Australian Academy of the Humanities developed in partnership with Universities Australia member institutions.

• ASSA: Connected, Innovative and Responsive: Decadal Plan for Social Science Research Infrastructure 2024-33.
(https://socialsciences.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Decadal-Plan-for-Social-Science-Research-Infrastructure-2024-33.pdf)

• AAH: 2026 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap, March 2025.
(https://humanities.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/250326-AAH-2026-NRI-Roadmap-survey-response.pdf)

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:31 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39928a00c18781563c360]

Title
Prof

First Name
Julian

Last Name
Thomas

Organisation
Australian Internet Observatory

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The digital transformation of Australian culture, society and economy is a key challenge for researchers in the humanities and other disciplines, as well as for policy makers, consumers and regulators. A recent Productivity Commission report on Harnessing data and digital technology estimates that improving people's ability to access data that relates to them could spur competition and innovation and deliver productivity gains worth as much as $10 billion a year.

As the NRI Roadmap Issues paper clearly identifies, digital observability is now a critical capability for understanding culture, society and public life. To make digital culture and society more observable (and therefore also more accountable to policy makers, consumers and regulators) we need to provide researchers with the tools and methods for research on the human interactions, content and automated models embedded within digital platforms and services. The urgency and complexity of this challenge is growing with new technologies and platforms coming online everyday, from the emergence of publicly available AI chat services to the expanding reach of datafied products and services, the Internet of Things (IoT) and smart data embedded in everything from cars to children's toys.

The Australian Internet Observatory is a ground-breaking initiative established in 2024, through co-investment with NCRIS and the Australian Research Data Commons and university partners, to develop new tools and methods for researchers studying digital platforms and social data. Given the scale and complexity of the challenges we face in this field, continued investment in the Australian Internet Observatory (AIO Phase II) is critical. The top three priorities for NRI investment for humanities as well as social science and many other disciplines is an expanded range of capabilities for the Australian Internet Observatory focused on Digital Observability, Discoverability and Multimodality.

ENHANCED DIGITAL OBSERVABILITY
Australian researchers need durable capabilities to observe an expanding and evolving range of digital platforms and services as they continue to play a central role in our economy, society and everyday practices. Building on the capabilities enabled through the first phase of investment in the Australian Internet Observatory (AIO), a key priority for the next NRI roadmap should be enhanced tools to study not only the dynamic and rapidly changing social media ecosystem and very large online platforms, but also generative and agentic AI systems, connected devices (including connected cars, appliances and wearables), retail platforms, search and the proliferation of smaller and emerging platforms and services Australians use everyday. Observability involves studying not just what happens in our interactions with platforms, but also how automated models shape our everyday lives. Platforms, devices and services are changing rapidly and therefore the methods and tools required for data access and collection must also be highly adaptable.

AIO has provided new capabilities for researchers, including using Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and data donation tools (mobile apps, browser extensions and downloads). A high priority for future investment should be an expansion of these capabilities to include automated, adaptive data collection tools for a wide array of digital services, smart data, AI and the Internet of Things (IoT). These capabilities are likely to use methods including data donations, digital twins and synthetic data. A full-scale observatory will also need the capacity to run participation panels and an ongoing program of data donation. This capability will be increasingly important to researchers across humanities, arts, social science, health, and behavioural science disciplines who need to understand how digital platforms influence and shape social life, and how public debate, policy and regulation for digital platforms can be better informed and more effective.

DISCOVERABILITY VIA ADVANCED ANALYTICS AND VISUALISATIONS
Australians' social lives cross over many digital platforms and services in the course of a day, and the data generated is vast and diverse. Researchers require new tools and skills to explore, prompt, query and visualise these multi-modal data sets and collections. AIO Phase I has been developing user-friendly tools to provide sector uplift for HASS research including ways to analyse, visualise, and connect data at scale, opening up unprecedented opportunities for new forms of data analysis and insight. Further Investment in the capabilities developed through AIO will provide intuitive interfaces and dashboards for data visualisation, exploration and insights including no code solutions, agentic models and AI queries, test environments that simulate platform interactions and support rigorous and independent testing of platform effects. AIO Phase II will also collaborate with other NRI facilities such as AURIN to incorporate social data into Digital Twins (DTs) to simulate complex human behaviors, social systems, and infrastructure interactions using real-world data from sensors, social media, and government records.

The wider ecosystem of HASS research data and collection also needs to be made discoverable and explorable by connecting digital social data with other data sources including administrative and survey data, cultural collections and data from other disciplines including environment and health data. Too many research and collection activities are isolated, we need to link these efforts and build on the best models including those generated by AIO, other NRI facilities such as AURIN, ARDC and PHRN, GLAM collections, as well as through international collaboration. Discoverability means building shared tools and standardised data schemas with international partners to ensure Australian infrastructure is integrated with best practices and leveraging investments happening in other countries. Data collected from digital platforms also needs to be stored and made available for researchers via secure repositories capable of storing diverse

formats and multimodal content. We also need access to digital compute and storage infrastructure for sensitive data including audio, video and visual media, to enable compliance with legislation, privacy requirements, cultural protocols and participatory governance frameworks.

MULTIMODAL CAPABILITIES
As the digital economy becomes more extensive and more deeply embedded in Australians' everyday lives, the scope and complexity of platform data has rapidly expanded. In particular, the capability to deal with text, audio and video platform datasets has become essential for researchers across a wide range of disciplines . Everyday interactions with digital systems are now mediated not only through text but through complex combinations of image, video, sound, interface design and algorithmic curation, meaning that digital culture is inherently multimodal. However, humanities data infrastructures and collections often reduce this complexity to singular modes, through limitations in data architectures, or collection methods. In order to support research into current and emerging AI-driven digital platforms and services, research infrastructures such as AIO will need to respond to the growing complexity, scale and velocity of platform data, new data formats. This will involve treating multimodal data and analysis as a default research condition, not an edge case, and factoring this into relevant NRI capabilities. GenAI capabilities need to be implemented for complex analysis, labelling and insights including domain-specific LLMs for Australian contexts, models trained on local datasets relevant to law, health, and media studies, and tools for fine-tuning open-source generative models tailored for research in HASS. We also need secure, institutionally managed AI systems that support text, image, audio, and video synthesis for research while ensuring privacy and compliance.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Australians live interconnected digital lives that already traverse a wide array of digital platforms, services and devices everyday. To support research aimed at understanding how digital technologies shape social life we need the capacity to observe these practices and experiences. The emerging field of computational humanities moves us beyond individual platforms to examine generative models, connected devices and the countless digital touchpoints embedded in everyday life. This work demands robust, long-lasting infrastructure that is not tied to any single platform or service, and that is broadly accessible. Observability of digital data, platforms and services is critical to our capacity to research, regulate and manage digital technologies for national benefit and to address the national research priorities such as health and wellbeing, community resilience and natural disasters, misinformation and social cohesion, scams and cybersecurity, and the society-wide impact of Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Expanding the skills and capabilities of the next generation of researchers to understand and work with new tools and methods is critical if we are to address the digital transformation challenge. The NRI Roadmap should support specialised training for uplift across humanities, arts and social science (HASS) disciplines and researchers across sectors and for the Research Software Engineers that work with them. HASS disciplines have long been underutilised in shaping and training the technical workforce. Embedding HASS-informed perspectives, ethics, culture, history, communication, power, social context,

into the training of technical staff enriches their ability to design and maintain responsible digital systems. A software developer who has meaningful exposure to ethics or media studies, for example, brings a depth of understanding that is rarely cultivated through STEM-only pathways.

At the same time, expanding the number of technical staff within the humanities to support digital and computational humanities research is critical and this will require both a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce and a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines. Building capability among technical staff embedded with humanities researchers not only supports bespoke infrastructure development within HASS, but also feeds expertise back into Australia’s wider technical ecosystem. The result is a workforce that is both technically proficient and socially literate, able to navigate the complex ethical, cultural and societal challenges that define today's digital transformation.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:22 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Prof

First Name
Bradley John

Last Name
Evans

Organisation
The University of New England

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
UNE identifies three priorities. First, Indigenous and community knowledge infrastructures that can be securely governed by communities and linked to Earth observation and environmental data (e.g. linking language, oral histories and legal materials with the proposed UNE ASPIRE's hyperspectral mapping of Country, including indigenous food bowls and billabongs). Second, a national humanities and social data commons with strong geospatial and EO integration, enabling environmental humanities, legal and policy research to work directly with time series Earth system data. Third, ethics, consent and social licence infrastructure (tools, workflows and governance mechanisms) to manage sensitive cultural and community data across NRIs in a way that is practical for researchers and communities.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Key emerging areas include: (i) environmental humanities and environmental law that integrate Indigenous law, history and landscape change using long term EO records; (ii) critical data, Earth Observation studies beyond the current scope, examining how AI enabled EO (including CLIMA like models trained on hyperspectral data from UNE ASPIRE and satellites) shape governance of land, water, carbon and rights; and (iii) biocultural heritage and landscape futures, where humanities researchers and Indigenous communities use tools such as the propsed UNE ASPIRE's repeat imaging of Indigenous food bowls and biocultural landscapes to co design restoration, adaptation and stewardship pathways.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

UNE supports a mixed workforce model. A small number of specialist humanities and Indigenous digital scholarship roles are needed at national level (in a humanities data commons and Indigenous Data Commons) to provide deep expertise in ethics, cultural protocols and engagement. At the same time, the broader NRI workforce should be technically generalist but trained to work across disciplines, including with humanities scholars and Indigenous partners. For example, staff in UNE ASPIRE, as a proposed NCRIS capability, need to bridge remote sensing, AI, environmental science, law and Indigenous knowledge in designing and interpreting airborne campaigns. This mixed model combines depth with integration and avoids isolating humanities capability.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:20 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Dr

First Name
Merran

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Smith

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Digitisation and linkage of historical births, deaths and marriages records from all Australian jurisdictions which will enable a wide range of important demographic, economic and social research is a top priority.
In the past, capture of these historical records has generally involved a manual transcription process which is time-consuming and costly and this has greatly limited research. AI tools are now available to cost-effectively digitise, link and provide access to the historical data. Pilots have been completed for two states (Queensland and Victoria) which clearly demonstrate the feasibility of AI-assisted digitisation and linkage.
The importance of investment in this RI area was highlighted in the Academy of Social Sciences Australia's recent Decadal Plan for Social Sciences Research Infrastructure 2024-2033.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
There has been some progress with digitisation of historical births, deaths and marriages records in Australia and valuable research including into intergenerational disadvantage has been completed using these records. Investment is needed over the next 3-5 years to systematically digitise and link these historical records and integrate them with other linked data including the ABS PLIDA, health and socioeconomic data. This will enable in depth research on intergenerational disadvantage and the risk and protective factors that impact the lives of individuals and contribute to outcomes for the wider community, including Indigenous and other Australian populations/communities.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
While there would be benefit in a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines, there will remain a need for specialist humanities RI workers.

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Title
Dr

First Name
Markus

Last Name
Herderich

Organisation
The Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI)

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
As with all investments into AI enhanced systems, knowledge bases in the Humanities built with and utilised by AI agents need to be verified on an on-going basis to ensure their trustworthiness, and prevent deliberate or unintentional contamination of knowledge bases.

This is important because AI agents often rely on retrieval-augmented generation mechanisms and memory modules to improve performance, and inform the agent's task planning and execution. This may lead to an agent's own knowledge base differing from the original data and creates challenges around their security and trustworthiness.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
No answer provided, as this is not a domain we are familiar with.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
No answer provided, as this is not a domain we are familiar with.

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Title
Prof

First Name
Wojtek

Last Name
Tomaszewski

Organisation
Social Science Research Infrastructure Network

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Enabling infrastructure that reflects the complexity and connectivity of contemporary knowledge

Data in the humanities and many areas of the social sciences are inherently complex, contextual and dynamic. They are often interpretive rather than purely observational, contested rather than definitive, and evolve over time as meanings, classifications and sources change. Research infrastructure designed around assumptions that data should be uniformly “clean”, standardised and stable risks fundamentally misunderstanding how knowledge is produced in these fields, and in doing so constrains both the questions that can be asked and the methods that can be employed.
Until relatively recently, Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) disciplines were systematically under-served by national research infrastructure investment. This imbalance is now beginning to be addressed through NCRIS investment in the ARDC’s HASS and Indigenous portfolio, which is delivering tangible benefits in data availability, capability uplift and methodological innovation across HASS disciplines. It is critical that this momentum is sustained. Continued investment is needed not simply to “catch up”, but to close long-standing infrastructure and workforce gaps between HASS and other disciplines, and to ensure that HASS research infrastructure is fit for purpose in an era of integrated data, advanced computation and AI.

This investment could continue through strengthened support for the ARDC, or progressively evolve towards stand-alone NCRIS capabilities with a dedicated HASS focus. Either way, the guiding principle should be infrastructure that is designed around the realities of HASS research, rather than retrofitting HASS into models developed for other domains.

2. Facilitating connections beyond HASS

A second priority is to ensure that HASS research infrastructure actively facilitates connections with other disciplines rather than reinforcing silos. Social Sciences Research Infrastructure Network (SSRIN) considers the social sciences in a broad, multidisciplinary context, linked to the humanities (including ARDC HASS&I Focus Areas such as Language Data Commons of Australia, Australian Internet Observatory, and Improving Indigenous Research Capabilities), but also to health and population research, environmental science, spatial data and urban analytics (for example through connections with AURIN). Given these existing linkages, the social sciences are well placed to act as a partial bridge between the humanities and disciplines beyond the HASS domain. However, this should not be interpreted as a reason for the Humanities and Arts to remain inward-looking. There is a strong case for more systematic engagement by humanities disciplines with the "outside world", including the development of interoperable infrastructure that enables meaningful connection to scientific, health, environmental and spatial data systems.

Failure to do so risks a marginalisation of humanities (and the social sciences) research within national research agendas. By contrast, well-connected and interoperable HASS infrastructure provides a critical platform for genuinely multidisciplinary approaches to some of the most pressing challenges of our time, such as AI-driven disruption, democratic resilience, social cohesion, and the changing role of higher education among them.

3. Building sustainable workforce and translational capacity across HASS

Finally, investment in infrastructure must be matched by investment in people. Building sustainable, dedicated workforce capacity across HASS disciplines – while ensuring interoperability with other domains – should be a clear priority. This is partly about capability uplift among HASS researchers themselves, but it is equally about developing specialist roles that sit at the interface between disciplines.

These roles require staff with sufficient understanding of modern research infrastructure, computational methods and emerging technologies, combined with deep appreciation of HASS epistemologies, methods and ethical concerns. Such expertise is essential for working effectively with HASS researchers, engaging with other disciplines, and translating between different data cultures. Without this bridging capacity, even well-designed infrastructure risks being underused or misaligned.

Taken together, these priorities emphasise that future NRI investment should focus not only on disciplinary equity, but on enabling complexity, connectivity and capability across the research system as a whole.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Humanities research is entering a period of rapid transformation, shaped by the convergence of large, multi-domain datasets and increasingly powerful AI-enabled methods. Over the next three to five years, this shift will generate new and pressing demands for National Research Infrastructure that extend well beyond the traditional boundaries of humanities disciplines. Many of the most promising and policy-relevant areas of humanities research are becoming tractable only through deep integration with data and infrastructure developed in the social sciences, health and environmental domains.

Emerging areas likely to require targeted NRI investment include digital cultural analytics (for example, large-scale analysis of literature, film, music and visual culture); computational historical geography (integrating historical maps, place-based archives, environmental records and population data); language and discourse studies at scale (including analysis of online and social-media communication); and migration and mobility studies that link archival sources with contemporary administrative and geospatial data – illustrated by initiatives such as the ARCHER project highlighted in the Decadal Plan for Social Science Research Infrastructure. There is also growing interest in research that explicitly connects humanities sources with social and health data, such as combining historical and archival material with linked administrative datasets or electronic health registers to examine long-run social determinants of health.

Across these domains, progress depends critically on the ability to integrate heterogeneous humanities data, such as free text, handwritten archives, audio-visual materials, historical maps, geospatial layers and digital social-media streams, with large-scale social science administrative assets such as the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA), as well as with health and population data. This integration cannot be achieved through ad-hoc projects alone; it requires sustained NRI investment in interoperable standards, rich and discipline-aware metadata, secure and trusted linkage mechanisms, and analytical environments that respect domain-specific ethical and cultural considerations, including Indigenous data governance.

Furthermore, humanities data face unique challenges in relation to FAIR principles. While making data findable and accessible is necessary, interoperability and reusability require infrastructure that accommodates ambiguity, multiple interpretations and evolving classifications. The success of modular, well-documented approaches in administrative data infrastructure – exemplified by PLIDA – suggests a useful model. NRI investment could extend this approach by developing metadata frameworks and data services tailored to humanities data, but explicitly designed to interoperate with social science, health and environmental datasets, and to support privacy-preserving and legally compliant multi-source linkage.

Finally, emerging AI capabilities offer substantial opportunities to accelerate data integration, cleaning, transcription, annotation and analysis across these multi-domain research areas. Strategic NRI investment in shared AI-enabled tools, compute environments and reproducible workflows – appropriately governed and transparent – would provide significant leverage for humanities research. Treating integrated, multi-domain data and responsible AI services as first-class research infrastructure, supported by skills development and community engagement, has the potential to enable genuinely transformative humanities research over the next decade.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

This does not need to be framed as a binary choice between a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce and a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise. Both are required, and their effectiveness depends on being developed in a complementary and coordinated way.

A specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce is essential to ensure that infrastructure design, data curation and analytical tools are grounded in the epistemic,

methodological and ethical realities of humanities research. Humanities data are interpretive, heterogeneous and context-dependent, and often involve complex questions of authorship, provenance, cultural sensitivity and contested meaning. Specialists embedded in humanities communities are best placed to steward such data, develop discipline-appropriate standards and metadata, and ensure that infrastructure genuinely supports humanities research practices rather than constraining them.

At the same time, the future research infrastructure environment will be increasingly integrated, computational and cross-disciplinary. This creates a parallel and equally important need for a cohort of research infrastructure professionals with strong data and computational skills but with sufficient humanities domain expertise to work fluently across disciplines. These individuals require strong capabilities in modern infrastructure platforms, data integration, computational methods and emerging technologies, including AI, combined with a working understanding of humanities research questions, data types and sensitivities. Their primary value lies in their ability to act as translators and bridge-builders, connecting humanities researchers with social scientists, health and environmental researchers, data custodians, infrastructure operators and policy stakeholders.

Crucially, these two workforce types should not operate in isolation. Specialists provide depth, authority and disciplinary legitimacy; generalists provide connectivity, scalability and system-wide coherence. Effective NRI investment over the next three to five years should therefore support pathways that allow movement and collaboration between these roles, including joint appointments, cross-training programs and career structures that reward boundary-spanning work.

In practice, this implies investment not only in people but also in institutional settings, such as hubs, networks or centres of practice, where specialist humanities expertise and generalist infrastructure capability can be co-located. Such an approach will maximise the return on NRI investment by ensuring that humanities research infrastructure is both deeply fit for purpose and fully integrated into Australia’s broader research infrastructure ecosystem.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:00 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399137434dccd866a3d5c]

Title
Dr

First Name
Luke

Last Name
Hendrickson

Organisation
Australian Bureau of Statistics

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Investment in ABS integrated data infrastructure to support social sciences as an integral part of the Decadal Plan for Social Science Research Infrastructure 2024-33. Investment over 2028-2032 will create a well-connected capability, where available data assets and access services are highly visible, affordable, accessible and governed through standardised, transparent protocols and processes.

ABS Integrated Data Infrastructure links hundreds of person-level, business-level, and location-based datasets across government. ABS platforms like the Business Longitudinal Analysis Data Environment (BLADE) and the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA) are already informing business innovation, policy development, and productivity analysis.

Integrated data supports a significant body of critical research focused on evaluating policy impacts on productivity, innovation, R&D, health, ageing, disability, education, income, and labour market - especially in health. Insights from this research are informing policy decisions, such as research on migrant health outcomes informing the Refugee and Humanitarian Entrant Settlement and Integration Outcomes Framework.

ABS data holdings span domains, including education, migration, trade, entrepreneurship, taxation, income, government payments, health, and demographics. Crucially, data integration across these domains enables analysis of service use and wellbeing. PLIDA, linked with the annual General Social Survey, is central to the Australian Government's Measuring What Matters reporting and Closing the Gap reporting and analysis. It helps understand entrenched disadvantage and its effects on community health and wellbeing. The Life Course Data Initiative used PLIDA to bring together cross-jurisdictional data from a range of early childhood, health and community services, to generate insights that can better inform long term policy responses to address disadvantage, particularly for children and young people between 0-14 years.

PLIDA also supports education research by connecting children's health and development data with family demographics, enabling analysis of childhood disadvantage. It includes detailed income and employment data—such as personal income tax, government payments, and superannuation—supporting robust poverty and inequality research. Migration datasets within PLIDA reveal movement patterns, motivations, and outcomes, informing policies like refugee integration. When combined with BLADE, PLIDA enables deeper analysis of labour mobility, productivity, and the effects of tax and welfare policies on workforce behaviour and innovation.

Together, these assets demonstrate the ABS's critical role in unlocking the economic and social value of data. By providing safe access to the same data used by government officials, supported researchers can speak the same language, enhancing policy contestability and fostering collaboration and new ideas.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Australia has an opportunity to improve public policy, economic, health and social research by better using the data we already collect. Every payslip, doctor's visit, tax return, and childcare booking creates a record in government systems. These records can be linked together to help researchers understand complex issues like health, climate adaptation, housing, and inequality. It's cost-effective, protects privacy, and reduces the need to collect the same data repeatedly.

The ABS is a global leader in linking data. Each year, it securely connects over 210 datasets from across government. These include Medicare claims, education records, income tax, business activity, housing, and more. The ABS provides access to these datasets through the ABS DataLab, a secure platform for researchers.

These assets allow researchers to move from small surveys to millions of anonymised records. They allow researchers to see patterns that aren't visible in one dataset alone. For example, linking tax data with childcare and survey data can reveal how income affects childcare choices nationally, but can also uncover detailed trends in inequality down to the community level. Researchers can then test these findings with qualitative studies, targeted surveys or trials. Research with this data has uncovered new, critical information that has changed our view of the world and changed the policy landscape. Humanities researchers from all disciplines are able to leverage the development of this broad serving infrastructure.

Despite the potential, ABS integrated data infrastructure is predominately used by government analysts or university researchers in the health and economics disciplines. Many humanities researchers find discoverability, access costs, skill requirements and capacity bottlenecks prohibitive. Building affordable, accessible, user-friendly integrated data infrastructure with capacity to meet growing demand from the research sector will be critical over the next decade. Investment over 2028-2032 is required to:

1. Fill key data gaps in the life course of Australians and Australian communities through ABS integrated data infrastructure. This includes developing a capability to merge qualitative data resources with qualitative to support multi-disciplinary and collaborative research.

2. Provision affordable access to integrated data infrastructure that builds social scientists' capability to connect their research to current policy issues through collaboration and connected government administrative data at the person- and community-level.

3. Develop AI capabilities within the secure ABS environment to support the productive use of the infrastructure, including merging digitised qualitative data on Australian stories with quantitative analysis of Australian demographics and social trends.

4. Offer a range of infrastructure access arrangements that meet both baseline privacy and ethics requirements, as well as supporting broader non-academic community access.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 03:30 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3992520404e102ba14a8d]

Title
Prof

First Name
Janeen

Last Name
Baxter

Organisation
ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Continued investment in humanities and social sciences: Until recently, HASS disciplines were largely overlooked by NRI funding. This has now changed with NCRIS investment into the ARDC HASS&I portfolio, which is starting to provide tangible benefits and uplift across the HASS&I disciplines. It is critical to continue that investment – both in the Humanities and Arts, and the Social Sciences (HASS), to keep the momentum and bridge the infrastructure and workforce capability gaps between the HASS and other disciplines. This investment could continue via ARDC or could move towards supporting stand-alone NCRIS capabilities with a dedicated focus on HASS.

The ASSA Decadal Plan 2024-33 provides a broad roadmap that could guide social science investment priorities.

2. Facilitating connections with other disciplines, beyond humanities and social sciences: The SSRIN submission to the previous consultation survey (March 2025) it took a broad and multidisciplinary view on the social sciences – pointing to the links with humanities (including other Focus Areas in the ARDC's HASS & Indigenous Research Data Commons – Language Data Commons of Australia, Australian Imaging and Observational Infrastructure, Australian Indigenous Research Data Commons – but also to links to Health Sciences/People program in the ARDC, environmental science, and spatial data including links to the Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network (AURIN). Given the existing connections, perhaps the social sciences could serve as a 'bridge' between the Humanities and the 'outside world'. But regardless of the role of the social sciences in this, there is a case to be made for HASS to engage further outside of their broad disciplines, and to build connections – including interoperable infrastructure – that connects our disciplines to the 'outside world'. Otherwise, we are at risk of being (or continuing to be) siloed and isolated. The HASS disciplines have a major role to play in multidisciplinary approaches and collaborations that are needed to tackle the big challenges facing the world right

now, such as the disruption caused by AI, the democratic crisis, the role of higher education, inequality and social disadvantage. Ensuring we are connected to other disciplines (including in interoperable research infrastructure) is a key requirement to enable that kind of multidisciplinary collaboration.

3. Building capacity across the humanities and social science disciplines:
Further investment in a dedicated workforce for the HASS disciplines is a priority. This is partially about capability uplift across the HASS researchers but is also about having experts with good knowledge of modern infrastructure, technologies, computational methods as well as understanding of HASS disciplinary issues. Such experts can work with HASS researchers but also with other disciplines and the 'outside world' to build cross-disciplinary bridges.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Humanities research is entering an era defined by large, multi-domain data and powerful AI tools. Over the next 3–5 years this will create new and urgent needs for National Research Infrastructure. Emerging humanities areas that will require targeted NRI investment potentially go outside traditional disciplinary boundaries, and may include areas such as digital cultural analytics (e.g. large-scale analysis of literature, film, music and visual culture), computational historical geography (integrating historical maps, place-based archives and population records), language and discourse studies at scale (e.g. social-media language mapping), migration studies (linking administrative migration records and geospatial traces), and links between humanities and social and health data (e.g. combining historical/archival material with electronic health registers to study long-term social determinants of health). Each of these areas becomes tractable only when humanities data are integrated with other data, like the social-science administrative datasets, such as the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA), electronic health registers, and contemporary internet/social-media streams.

Integration across disciplines requires interoperable data standards, rich metadata, secure linkage mechanisms, and tools that respects domain-specific sensitivities (for example Indigenous data governance). Humanities data are very diverse, covering free text, handwritten archives, audiovisual recordings, geospatial layers, and digital social media data. This data needs to be made FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable) in ways that work with other data including social-science administrative linkages and clinical registers. PLIDA style infrastructure shows the value of curated, well-documented modules; NRI investment could expand that model to include metadata schemas tailored for humanities but interoperable with other disciplines and developing pathways to multi-source data integration that preserve privacy and legal compliance.

Emerging AI capabilities can dramatically accelerate integration, cleaning, annotation and analysis of such multi-domain data. NRI should invest in shared AI toolkits and digital platforms that enable reproducible pipelines of key humanities data. NRI investment that treats integrated, multi-domain data as first-class research infrastructure, coupled with responsible, transparent AI services and skills development, has the potential to unlock transformative humanities research.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

As noted earlier, there is a need for a capability uplift across the HASS researchers. But it is also essential to invest in some people with expert knowledge of modern infrastructure, technologies, and computational methods combined with a strong understanding of the HASS disciplinary issues who can work with HASS researcher but also with other disciplines and the 'outside world' to build those cross-disciplinary bridges.

Australia has invested strongly in whole-of-population administrative data compiled from the records of welfare delivery agencies, census data, housing, tax, health and medical data (eg PLIDA). A potential next stage could be to collect population-level qualitative data using AI to undertake life histories, sentiment analysis and conversations about current social issues and trends. Similar data have been collected in the US as part of the American Voices project (Edin, Kathryn J., Corey D. Fields, David B. Grusky, Jure Leskovec, Marybeth J. Mattingly, Kristen Olson, and Charles Varner. 2024. "Listening to the Voices of America." RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences 10(5): 1–31. https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2024.10.5.01.) The ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course Centre is currently investigating whether a similar project is feasible in Australia, and we are building links with other countries who are undertaking similar proof-of-concept projects.

Projects of this nature have the potential to greatly enhance our understanding of population sentiment and greatly enrich insights available from the census and administrative data such as PLIDA. NRI investment in the digital platforms, the AI capability, large language model capability, ethics, privacy and social licence to support moving HASS research in these exciting new directions would be invaluable.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 03:11 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399240c2b2e106923210d]

Title
Prof

First Name
Christopher

Last Name
Armstrong

Organisation
University of New England

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
First, Research Infrastructure contributing to Closing the Gap; Second, a national humanities and social data commons with geospatial and temporal integration, enabling humanities, legal and policy research to work directly with time series Earth system, environmental and cultural data. Third, ethics, consent, permission protocols and social licence infrastructure (tools, workflows and governance mechanisms) to manage sensitive cultural and community data across NRIs in a way that is practical for researchers and communities.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 02:54 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
A/Prof

First Name
Christopher

Last Name
Marquis

Organisation
University of NSW

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
I don't feel qualified to meaningfully answer this question

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
I don't feel qualified to meaningfully answer this question

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
I don't feel qualified to meaningfully answer this question

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 02:51 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3991de5a00e58eeea07ea]

Title
Prof

First Name
Melanie

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Swalwell

Organisation
The Australian Emulation Network

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
I will speak to the emulation capabilities that we have been building. By way of background, emulation is necessary to access many obsolete forms of digital media particularly complex digital artefacts with software dependencies, such as digital games, media art, and other historic computer artefacts.
Developed by computer scientists at Freiburg University, the Emulation-as-a-Service (EaaS) platform provides access to obsolete computer environments (hardware, operating systems (OSes)) enabling legacy software and other complex digital artefacts to be emulated and accessed by users in a web browser. It is the most developed emulation solution at present.
The Australian Emulation Network has received two LIEF grants (LE22, LE25) to roll out an Emulation-as-a-Service-Infrastructure (EAASI) platform in Australia. This is currently being successfully used by some forty university and GLAM organisations. We have run disk imaging training and host regular meetings of an AusEAASI Community of Practice, which have been instrumental in ensuring organisations and researchers have the required skills to emulate their legacy collections and other content.
As more and more of the content Humanities scholars study is born digital, emulation is likely to be required by more researchers. I would therefore argue that the AusEAASI network should be a priority for investment in the Humanities, though its utility reaches into other disciplinary areas that require access to legacy artefacts, e.g. Built Environment.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
I will give a slightly different response to this question. As above, I expect the demand for emulation to scale up over the next 3-5 years, both amongst researchers who will realise that it is reasonable to expect access to digital artefacts from the recent past, and those cultural institutions seeking to provide access to their formerly inaccessible collections

(and indeed, are emboldened to acquire more born digital items for their collections now that they know they can preserve these and make them accessible).

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

It's pleasing to see that “highly skilled personnel” are included within the definition of NRI. Software preservation is specialised work. Realistically, many but not all of the artefacts that Humanities scholars will want to access will be in the collections of cultural institutions. We have been training professionals in GLAM organisations in doing such work under the auspices of LIEF funding. However, a service where scholars could get assistance in preserving (disk imaging) and rendering born digital artefacts would also be beneficial (perhaps a central facility in each state, such as the existing WA Digitisation Service at UWA, which we have helped to set up with equipment and training). Humanities scholars will unearth all manner of significant digital artefacts currently in private hands and which cultural institutions may not want to acquire, and they will need access to specialist equipment and know-how to be able to study these. The Digital Heritage Lab that I run at Swinburne University currently assists scholars where we can, but this need is likely to ramp up in the future.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 02:48 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Prof

First Name
Marcia

Last Name
Langton

Organisation
The University of Melbourne

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The NRI Roadmap Issues paper makes explicit mention of the two ARDC-funded Indigenous programs. Their achievements confirm the issues raised in this paper:

"The 2023 NCRIS Investment Plan led to some significant relevant NRI uplift. For example, the Improving Indigenous Research Capabilities (IIRC)37 project is developing and improving access to secure, culturally appropriate data management tools and platforms that enable more effective management, sharing and protection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' data. Similarly, the Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA)38 project is enabling researchers and communities to access and use nationally significant collections of written, spoken, multi-modal and signed language, which is opening up social and economic possibilities for Australia's language data in translational research.

Australia's NSRPs include the priority "elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems". This priority highlights the importance of a science and research system that is culturally safe, that supports preservation and protection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional knowledges, languages, data sovereignty, and cultural expressions and other intellectual property. It also calls for the incorporation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge into the development and application of critical and emerging technologies, especially in relation to digital and data technologies. The 2026 NRI Roadmap must build on these foundations and identify directions for the NRI system to further foster long-term arrangements that recognise, protect, and elevate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems across Australia's science and research sectors."

Indigenous Research Data Commons

The Improving Indigenous Research Capabilities project (IIRC) - a key project of the Indigenous Data Network -- proposes that an Indigenous Research Data Commons should be established and led by its Indigenous leaders and broader team to address the key priorities for the humanities, incorporating disciplines from the sciences and social sciences:

1. National Capability Building: comprehensive capability building programs for Indigenous communities,
researchers, and data practitioners across Australia to nurture the next generation of Indigenous data scientists
and leaders, creating a skilled workforce ready to address future research challenges.
2. Data Integration and Governance: Collaborating with national data custodians and Indigenous organisations to
improve Indigenous Data Governance practices, including developing secure, scalable protocols for cross-domain
data linkage and exploring emerging technologies to enhance data sharing while ensuring Indigenous control over
their data.
3. Artificial Intelligence and machine learning integration, focusing on ethical AI practices that respect Indigenous cultural protocols. This builds a foundation for future AI-driven research and innovation in Indigenous contexts.
4. Cybersecurity: Implementing a comprehensive, future-proof framework with Indigenous-led Trust & Identity solutions, ensuring secure data sharing protocols that adapt to evolving cybersecurity challenges.
5.Galleries, Libraries and Museums (GLAM) Innovation: Establishing interoperability protocols with GLAM partners, developing standardised metadata schemas, and implementing granular access control protocols.

The IRDC unites national data agencies, universities, Aboriginal organisations, and international collaborators,
building a national network of expertise to address complex data challenges. Leveraging NCRIS investments, the
IRDC could - with greatly expanded funding:
•Enhance national research infrastructure capabilities
•Foster Indigenous-led research and data governance
•Drive innovation in data integration and analysis
•Support evidence-based policy formulation and service delivery
•Contribute to Closing the Gap objectives via data-driven approaches.
These priorities of the Indigenous Data Network demand a more robust approach to research infrastructure in the humanities, integration, innovation, and an inclusive approach to the disciplines in the sciences and social sciences.The NRI Roadmap issues paper and related papers raise key questions about future NRI investment for the humanities.

The Nation Research Priorities as identified in the NRI papers have been considered with an emphasis on the following priorities. However it is our view that fundamental to a future NRI ecosystem, infrastructure and workforce is delivering on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Indigenous knowledges. As explained in our response to the first question, we recommend that an Indigenous Research Data Commons be established and led by its Indigenous leaders and broader team to address the key priorities for the humanities, incorporating disciplines from the sciences and social sciences. this would enable researchers in the humanities to become involved in an effective way in:

1. Enhancing and coordinating cultural collections infrastructure. The paper notes that "Australia needs a nationally coordinated approach to enhancing NRI collections" and that cultural collections are "central to humanities research".

2. Developing digital research infrastructure for humanities data. This includes "access to digital compute and storage infrastructure for sensitive data including audio, video and visual media" as well as "sovereign large language models (LLMs) and secure development environments for generative AI and simulation."

3. Building capacity and developing the specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce. The paper states there is a "sector wide requirement for capacity building and workforce development" including a "specialist research infrastructure workforce for humanities research infrastructure".

These priorities focus on improving collections access and coordination, providing digital infrastructure tailored for humanities data and methods, and developing the specialised workforce needed to support humanities research infrastructure. Addressing these areas would strengthen the overall ecosystem of humanities research infrastructure in Australia. The Australian Academy of the Humanities encompasses disciplines such as history, languages, linguistics, philosophy, culture, arts, archaeology, heritage studies, and Indigenous studies. In conjunction with social science and multidisciplinary Indigenous knowledge research involving the humanities, social sciences, and sciences, profound changes have occurred in understandings of Australian prehistory, history, environments, and human society, including the languages of the First Australians. Future NRI investment in the humanities should prioritise integrating research infrastructure to build a secure, resilient research environment and workforce. The Australian Academy of the Humanities makes the point that the sciences and technology alone cannot deliver research impact, and further that 'The successful implementation of [the National Research Priorities] will demand the best of social, cultural and political research, alongside science discovery and application,' along with creating 'the conditions for Indigenous leadership at every level' of the research priority on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems. As should be obvious, this applies to all disciplines that involve research on Indigenous knowledge, including those in the sciences and social sciences.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

The development of a robust research infrastructure workforce in the humanities presents a strategic challenge for Australia. We examined the merits of specialist versus generalist approaches and propose a hybrid model that leverages the strengths of both while mitigating their respective drawbacks.

Factors Influencing the Approach

Several key factors shape the decision-making process:

Variation in research priorities across disciplines

Fluctuations in funding levels and policy stability

Long-term strategic goals for humanities research

Proposed Hybrid Model

To address these factors, we recommend a balanced approach that combines elements of both specialist and generalist strategies:

1. Core Generalist Team

Develop a foundation of research infrastructure professionals with broad humanities expertise. This team would form the backbone of the workforce, capable of adapting to various projects and interdisciplinary needs.
Example: A generalist might have a background in digital humanities, allowing them to work across projects in literature, history, and cultural studies.
2. Specialist Augmentation
Supplement the core team with a smaller number of specialists in key areas of strength or national priority. These individuals would provide deep expertise in specific domains.
Example: A specialist in computational linguistics could be brought in for projects involving large-scale text analysis or natural language processing in historical documents.
3. Continuous Professional Development
Encourage ongoing learning and skill development to help generalists cultivate deeper expertise in specific areas over time.
Example: A generalist with a background in archival studies could undertake specialised training in digital preservation techniques, gradually becoming an expert in this niche.
4. Collaborative Environment
Foster a workplace culture that promotes effective collaboration between generalists and specialists, encouraging knowledge sharing and cross-pollination of ideas.
Example: Regular interdisciplinary workshops where specialists share their expertise with generalists, and generalists contribute insights on how to apply specialised knowledge across different humanities fields.
Benefits of the Hybrid Model
This approach offers several advantages:
Flexibility to adapt to changing research landscapes
Efficient resource allocation
Enhanced interdisciplinary collaboration
Balanced depth and breadth of expertise
Career development opportunities for staff
Conclusion
By implementing this hybrid model, Australia would have the flexibility to build a highly skilled, adaptable infrastructure for humanities research. This approach positions the research institutions and governance bodies to respond effectively to current needs while remaining agile in the face of future challenges and opportunities in humanities research.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 02:38 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399222e7fce577fa5e340]

Title
Ms

First Name
Julie

Last Name
Rothacker

Organisation
ACU

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1.Digitising archival records to promote community engagement which would make records available to researchers and open new avenues of inquiry and engagement. This would promote participatory research from beyond the Universities and allow communities to be more fully engaged in research. These records include records of groups such as First Nations and migrant communities, and the LGBTQI community. It would enhance and promote accessibility of archival materials by scholars and community alike but also promote the preservation of these vital records to telling Australia's national story.
2. Humanities Digital Infrastructure Programme. There needs to be a broader and wider programme established which would 1 - map humanities research infrastructure to identify platforms in existence, 2 - connect existing digital platforms, and 3 - develop new platforms to maximise use, visibility and accessibility. Such platforms would be connected nationally but also internationally to global platforms to widen the scope and scale of the digital infrastructure.
3. Digital technologies that would promote interdisciplinary research across STEM and HASS: Interdisciplinary research is vital and should be further promoted through humanities infrastructure. At present there is no mechanism through which humanities research infrastructure can intersect or connect with STEM infrastructure on vital economic, social and cultural questions and developments.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
1. Preservation: The issue of the preservation of archival records, archaeological sites and artefacts, and material culture that have hitherto not been preserved will continue to require NRI investment in the coming years. This is linked to no.1 above - Digitising archival records to promote community engagement which would make records available to researchers and open new avenues of inquiry and engagement.

2. Interdisciplinarity: Interfacing between and across the humanities and other disciplines would be an area to invest and promote which would open new research questions. This is linked to no.3 above.
3.Environmental Humanities: Investing in data sets and skills in the field of the environmental humanities would be vital moving forward in the coming years.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Specialist Workforce (Recommended)
Pros:
• Recognises unique expertise: Humanities research infrastructure involves complex cultural, historical, and ethical dimensions that require deep disciplinary knowledge.
• Global awareness: Specialists are well-placed to track and respond to national and international developments in humanities research infrastructure, ensuring Australia remains competitive and aligned with global standards.
• Innovation leadership: Specialists can identify emerging research areas, anticipate future needs, and design infrastructure that supports cutting-edge scholarship.
• Quality assurance: Specialist knowledge ensures that digitisation, metadata standards, and preservation practices meet rigorous scholarly and cultural requirements.
• Community engagement: Specialists understand the sensitivities of working with diverse communities, including First Nations and culturally significant collections, ensuring ethical and inclusive practices.
Cons:
• Higher cost for recruitment and retention compared to generalists.
• Potential risk of siloing if specialists are not encouraged to collaborate across disciplines.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 02:26 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Mr

First Name
Heath

Last Name
Marks

Organisation
Australian Access Federation

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Digital identity solutions for ‘beyond edu’ to strengthen collaboration and translation of research for government, industry and community
2. System-wide adoption of core standards and technologies for T&I solutions
3. Cyber secure authorised access to sensitive data

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Extensive consultation with the NCRIS community confirms the criticality and value of Trust and Identity (T&I) for humanities. T&I underpins all research themes and is an integral and interconnecting component of all research infrastructure. Priorities for the humanities sector include: trusted identity capability for secure authentication and access to sensitive cultural collections, federated across institutional boundaries (GLAM, universities, archives) and support for non-traditional researchers, or ‘beyond edu’. Existing and emerging humanities research requires robust and resilient infrastructure, software and other supports (for example: see Academy of Humanities submission 210 and their response). This includes assurance of identities, including non-human identities (agentic AI). Further investment and development in standards, global interoperability capability, and cybersecurity, will strengthen the adoption and implementation of secure, protected and sustainable infrastructure.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Existing and emerging humanities research requires robust and resilient infrastructure, software and other supports. This includes assurance of identities. Further investment and development in standards, global interoperability, and cybersecurity will strengthen the

adoption and implementation of secure, protected and sustainable infrastructure. To foster a generalist position, essential requirements could be included in grant submissions, e.g. requirements assessment and gap analysis against core standards, that outputs include strengthened, standardised digital infrastructure that is aligned to national and global standards for interoperability, protected and secure design and application for cyber secure and trust and identity services. This will address the challenges of 'digital rot' for data and artefacts that reside in less than optimal infrastructure, poor interoperability and integrations, resulting in technical debt and obsolescence.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 02:19 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Prof

First Name
Pascal

Last Name
Perez

Organisation
AURIN

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Although AURIN has a limited exposure to the domain, we acknowledge the need for Humanities to address current NRI-related limitations, such as digital transformation, cultural collection fragmentation, sensitive data management, AI-enabled observability or workforce upskilling. We can't comment on specific needs associated with collections or sensitive data. However, it seems that (1) digital transformation, (2) workforce upskilling and (3) AI-enabled observability could become three foundational priorities for Humanities at large.
The historically limited NRI funding for HASS needs to be addressed. However, a narrow focus on the Humanities must not overshadow the criticality of Social Sciences in addressing Australia's key societal challenges. While Australian cities host 90% of the population, generate 80% of the GDP and contribute to 60% of our carbon emissions, AURIN and PHRN have consistently received some of the lowest levels of NRI funding.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Regardless of the emerging area of research being selected, it is crucial for the Humanities community to identify relevant impact – beyond "we need to build it!" argument – that would justify NRI investment. Success is measured by usage and community benefit—particularly in emerging fields where track records are limited.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
While most NRI professionals will also have skills in a particular field of research, specialist FOR skills have traditionally been viewed as the domain of institutional teaching. A sudden

allocation of NRI funding for a specialist workforce in a single FOR, with opportunity costs necessarily being met by all other FORs, appears somewhat counter to the purpose of NRI. The NRI ecosystem must continue to prioritise its entire workforce. Those experts, whether from research or other domains, who have acquired both NRI and FOR experience and knowledge through their NRI careers.
Domain spanning and connecting skills would vastly enhance the impact and ROI of NRI. For example, digital and business skills, such as data governance and Indigenous relations, are widely sought by NRI providers and can be challenging to acquire within limited funding constraints.

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Title
A/Prof

First Name
Maggie

Last Name
Nolan

Organisation
AustLit

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1) Recognising maintenance as a key component of long-term sustainability for NRI; this would mean operational funding of mature, stable and widely used existing research infrastructure, including dynamic infrastructure that supports ongoing curation and interpretation, such as AustLit. Long term infrastructure would include storage, compute, hosting, research tools, consultation and advice, and attracting and retaining an appropriate workforce with domain expertise as the building block
2) Ongoing data collection including finding and preserving community-based access to Indigenous data
3) Interoperability – including making connections between data and datasets as appropriate

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
New and emerging areas of humanities research are changing rapidly so any NRI investment will need to be responsive to emerging research needs – in this sense it will also need to be process-oriented. With that being said:
1) Digital humanities and digital data
2) Embedding Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property and Indigenous Data Governance in new and existing research infrastructure
3) Developing safe, responsible, and ethical AI tools for working with humanities data in order to maintain trust with research, industry and Indigenous communities of users

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

While there are some infrastructure positions that can be shared across disciplines, the most effective RSE professionals who work in the humanities have specialised in the humanities, which is already a diverse range of disciplines with diverse research questions and approaches to knowledge/data/information/materials.
The solutions for humanities are often very different from those for science, and retaining people who have knowledge of these specialised systems is vital. More generally, we have seen time and time again, that when there is generalist infrastructure, humanities disciplines are overlooked. That is both because of biases as to the relative importance of humanities, and because the needs of humanities researchers and infrastructure are different.
A generalist workforce is unlikely to have the necessary grounding to meaningfully collaborate and support cutting edge research in the humanities and runs the risk of perpetuating the default assumption that ‘infrastructure’ is physical rather than digital and the province of STEM and will thus overwhelm any embedded humanities expertise. Creating a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce is a clear statement that humanities has, and always has had, its own infrastructure, and that this infrastructure has its own specialist needs, skills, and experience.
Investment, however, should also create opportunities for collaboration between specialists and generalists.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:44 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3991835109e1f22c2f818]

Title
Prof

First Name
Simon

Last Name
Ringer

Organisation
The University of Sydney

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. National-scale digital infrastructure for HASS
Expand and strengthen the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) and Indigenous Research Data Commons to improve access, trusted research environments, interoperability, and ethical governance of cultural and social data.

2. Digitisation and linked data for cultural collections
Invest in digitising galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAM) collections and enable linked data capabilities for advanced research in history, languages, and cultural studies, with Indigenous cultural protocols embedded.

3. AI and computational tools for humanities research
Develop infrastructure for text mining, natural language processing, and ethical AI applications to study public discourse, cultural trends, legal and policy narratives and contemporary social phenomena.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
- Digital humanities and AI ethics: Infrastructure to analyse societal impacts of AI, algorithmic governance, and digital trust.
- Climate and environmental humanities: Platforms integrating cultural, historical, and ecological data to inform climate adaptation and sustainability policy.
- Health and society research: Secure data environments for studying health inequities and cultural dimensions of wellbeing.
- Immersive technologies: Virtual and augmented reality platforms for heritage interpretation, language revitalisation, and public engagement.
- Societal inequalities: Platforms integrating multidimensional administrative data for studying societal inequities and inform social and economic policy.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

A hybrid approach is recommended:
- Specialist roles (digital archivists, cultural data stewards, ethics/IP advisors) are critical for managing sensitive collections and ensuring cultural protocols.
- Generalist technical staff with humanities domain awareness enable interoperability and support interdisciplinary projects.

Pros of hybrid approach:
- Combines deep expertise with flexibility across disciplines.
- Builds resilience in workforce planning and supports emerging technologies.

Workforce development should include training pathways for HDR students and early-career researchers, leveraging programs like Sydney Social Sciences and Humanities Advanced Research Centre (SSSHARC).

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:42 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399181b0e6cc91d7d78f6]

Title
Prof

First Name
Neena

Last Name
Mitter

Organisation
Charles Sturt University

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
(1) NRI investment should prioritise shared digital research platforms, open data infrastructure, and cross institutional training hubs that reduce marginal costs for humanities research students and early career researchers.
Supporting dedicated humanities research infrastructure that sustains the pipeline of scholars and educators would help to address the structural disincentive created by current humanities undergraduate student fee settings and protect participation by equity groups who are disproportionately exposed to high debt.
(2) Establish a national information and media literacy research infrastructure anchored in school libraries and teacher librarians.
• Treat information literacy and media literacy as critical national capabilities, not optional enrichment, and position them as a core humanities-led NRI priority across the education system.
• Build a coordinated infrastructure that includes shared assessment instruments, longitudinal datasets, and secure data repositories to investigate how children and young people learn to find, evaluate, create, and share information in complex digital environments.
• Resource teacher librarians and school libraries as central research partners who can co design and trial curriculum embedded approaches, rather than relying on ad hoc, teacher dependent initiatives.
• Align with the ALIA ACSL statement which frames information literacy as intersecting with media and digital literacy, as the cornerstone of lifelong learning, and identifies qualified school library staff as experts in leading information literacy and a culture of inquiry across the school community.
(3) Create humanities projects that embed information, media, and civic literacy research across sectors from early childhood to higher education.

• Fund longitudinal, cross sector research infrastructure that tracks information and media literacy development from early childhood through school to university, with particular attention to equity cohorts.
• Integrate humanities-based expertise in ethics, critical interpretation, and civic engagement into national data and AI infrastructures that now shape children's information environments at scale.
• Prioritise platforms that allow teacher librarians, classroom teachers, initial teacher education providers, and humanities researchers to share data, tools, and evidence about effective pedagogy, rather than duplicating small, isolated projects.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Generative AI, algorithmic curation, and young people's information practices.

• Develop infrastructure to study how recommendation systems, generative AI tools, and platform algorithms shape what children and students see, believe, and produce.
• Resource school libraries and teacher librarians as observatories of these practices, with the capacity to gather de identified learner data, trial interventions, and share results through national platforms.
Curriculum embedded information, media, and digital literacy as a whole of school responsibility.
• Invest in shared repositories of curriculum aligned learning designs and assessment tools that integrate information and media literacy into all learning areas, not only English or humanities.
• Build infrastructure to evaluate how different models of collaboration between teacher librarians and classroom teachers influence student outcomes in information literacy, including critical analysis, ethical use, curation, and creative re use of information.

Teacher librarian workforce, school library systems, and educational equity.

• Treat the distribution, roles, and impact of qualified teacher librarians and staffed school libraries as a key object of humanities and education research, given evidence that these professionals lead information literacy development and a school wide culture of inquiry.
• Build national data infrastructure that links school library staffing, programs, and resources with student achievement and civic participation indicators, to inform policy and funding decisions.

Humanities led evaluation of national digital and data infrastructures used in schools.

• Create capacity for humanities researchers and teacher librarians to interrogate the pedagogical and ethical effects of learning management systems, educational platforms, and data dashboards that now mediate much of students' informational experience.
• Support cross disciplinary labs where humanities scholars, data scientists, and educators co design guidelines and tools for transparent, explainable, and educationally sound use of these systems.
• Create career pathways that allow humanities/education graduates, including experienced teacher librarians, to move into research infrastructure roles, which will help offset the pipeline risks created by high humanities student contributions while enriching NRI capability with deep domain knowledge.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

The workforce discussion mostly treats research-infrastructure staff as technical operators. The Roadmap should:
(a) Adopt a mixed approach encompassing specialist and generalist roles, with the latter able to work across disciplines, and
(b) foreground roles that bridge human judgement, governance and AI capability (data stewards, “translation” staff, human–AI interaction specialists)

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:38 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39917d5b57e5cbf48ec6c]

Title
Prof

First Name
Sharon

Last Name
Goldfeld

Organisation
Murdoch Children's Research Institute

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
There would be enormous benefit to humanities in NRI Investment for Generation Australia. A goal of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia Decadal Plan for Social Science Research Infrastructure 2024-2033 was that social science data and analytics are easily found and reused by researchers nationwide in ways that maximise the value of existing assets and infrastructure, and allow urgent research questions and societal challenges to be addressed by researchers. These assets should be designed for diversity, be open to partners and community, prioritise First Nations led data governance and sovereignty, and enable equitable access.

An existing asset and infrastructure that delivers on this goal is large, consented population cohorts, like Generation Australia. These cohorts have recruited families with cultural and language diversity and are prioritising Frist Nations led data governance and sovereignty. They have been designed to be used by researchers, policymakers and the community. With consent to collect data (including address data) and link to administrative data, cohorts provide an opportunity to conduct surveys with thousands of Australian families about their history, language and social circumstances, like employment and place, as well as aligning to long standing social databases through PLIDA at the Australian Bureau of Statistics. More importantly because Generation Australia is set up for interventions it can also test social policy through both individual and community targeted policies. The size and scale of Generation Australia means research can be scaled in a way not previously possible, with results more relevant to diverse populations immediately. Only large cohorts can deliver for the humanities, particularly economics, social sciences, environment and languages.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:31 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm397d1f74f081103d31e33]

Title
A/Prof

First Name
Melanie

Last Name
Rug

Organisation
Centre for Advanced Microscopy-ANU

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
It would be commendable to have teams that bridge across disciplines to maximise outputs and contribute to a clearer understanding of each discipline's capabilities and nurture a culture of multi-disciplinary research.
However, the individual NRI disciplines also require an ever-increasing workforce of specialists with clear career paths to attract and retain these highly-skilled personnel for continuity in world-leading research support.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:31 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399177758be17ce51a318]

Title
Prof

First Name
Michael

Last Name
Haugh

Organisation
Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA)

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Long-term Humanities Research Data Archival Repository Infrastructure with CARE and FAIR ACCESS controls and research data management systems for nationally significant humanities data assets.
Investment in repository services and data preservation that leverages existing infrastructure in HASS&I RDC for a distributed archival repository model that enables interoperability and data sharing across institutions.

2. Data Repurposing and Enrichment Services that provide tools for data transformations, metadata transformation, and metadata enrichment for reusing and repurposing humanities data.
Leverage humanities' strength in interpreting and reusing complex data and connect humanities data assets with data in the social sciences, health, urban research, and other domains.

3. Data Observatory and Analytics Tools that support observing changes in human behaviour and analysing humanities data at scale (i.e. data-intensive humanities research).
Leverage existing strengths in HASS&I RDC for large-scale observation and analytics of humanities data to build for the next generation of researchers to order to ensure maximal adaptability and responsiveness to emerging research paradigms.

Key existing components of the Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA) that support these priorities include: the PILARS protocols for sustainable research infrastructure, RO-Crate as an implementation-neutral approach to describing data, and the ONI data portal for making data available to human and machine agents with appropriate security controls for data capture and access, and LDaCA Analytics for language and text analysis, including the Australian Text Analytics Platform (ATAP) and the Language Technology and Data

Analysis Lab (LADAL). These components of the LDaCA infrastructure have been purposefully designed to be maximally adaptable to a wide range of research disciplines across humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS) and beyond.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

1. Analytics infrastructure for working with audiovisual (AV) data at scale in secure environments.
This analytics infrastructure needs to be seamlessly connected to research data management infrastructure to ensure AV data is appropriately accessed, to support anonymisation where required, and to provide secure environments for analysis where full anonymisation is not possible.

2. Infrastructure for linked humanities data assets, including development of Digital Twins that combine social science sociodemographic (tabular) data with humanities life-story textual data, thereby enabling large-scale analysis of human populations over time.

3. Sovereign AI infrastructure that readily accessible to and adaptable by humanities researchers which supports multilingual research. Currently LLMs are best suited for work on very widely spoken languages like English or Mandarin Chinese, but can be adapted through investment for working with humanities data assets in a much wider range of languages.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Both pathways are required. An effective workforce will require a mix of both humanities domain expertise and technical skills.

Some fundamental aspects of infrastructure (‘hard’ infrastructure, storage, management, compute) are common and a generalist investment would be efficient. It is important to “stop treating investments in commodity infrastructure like storage and compute as separate between HASS and STEM. In addition, driving change requires motivation - those coming from specialist domains are more likely to keep doing things the way they always have rather than adopting new approaches.

However, training researchers to improve computational approaches for humanities disciplinary workflows, including reusing data and analysing humanities data at scale, require specialists with domain knowledge and skills learning to interoperate with other domains.

The ideal workforce involves both generalists who develop sufficient knowledge of domain areas, and those with domain expertise who develop technical skills, enabling solutions to leverage deep knowledge in both areas, with sufficient understanding to communicate effectively.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:23 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399170315ee119491fd00]

Title
Mr

First Name
Dale

Last Name
Holland

Organisation
The Australian National University

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. AI infrastructure for the humanities - see Q5.
2. Cultural Collections as infrastructure, spanning the GLAM sector and university collections. Although collections was in the 2021 roadmap the focus has been on biological/scientific collections through ALA. While that work is important to continue, we have not seen enough progress on support for cultural collections.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Humanities research is increasingly facilitated by LLMs. The case studies below demonstrate that there is an appetite for specialist LLMs that address inherent data biases found with commonly used LLMs.
However, in building and deploying LLMs as infrastructure for researchers, it is important for practitioners to understand the inherent limitations of generative AI as a predictive text generator, and there is a security danger in building too many niche applications. Some information sharing and shared development and design is essential to creating robust infrastructure.
There is work required in building infrastructure that suits the needs of humanities researchers, and delivering training to the broader humanities community.

Case Study 1: AI as Infrastructure Project
This project, led at ANU, is building a prototype open LLM tool tailored for historical research, which would be essential research infrastructure for history researchers. The team is also developing evaluation frameworks that can holistically assess research tools. Key goals of the project are the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives and reduction of bias from traditional sources (such as parliamentary records) by including secondary sources that provide broader cultural context.

This project highlights the perceived current inadequacy of general-purpose LLMs to perform high-complexity research tasks with a high level of trustworthiness.

Case Study 2: Dragonfly Thinking
Dragonfly Thinking is a decision-support software employing agentic AI to generate multi-lens analysis of complex problems, integrative assessment and strategic foresight. The model takes steps to overcome inherent biases built into large language models by building multiple agents trained through different theoretical and academic frameworks and working to form consensus and make connections between the findings of those agents. Dragonfly Thinking, founded by two ANU academics, exemplifies the strength of more specialised approaches to building and deploying context-specific LLMs.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
ANU supports building a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce over the timeframe of the next roadmap. The way in which research is conducted is not the same across humanities and science disciplines and to expect a workforce to jump between both is unrealistic until the humanities workforce is more mature. Once there is a mature humanities workforce in place it is appropriate to start building those bridges across disciplines.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:16 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399168a9b1e57492267b5]

Title
A/Prof

First Name
Ron

Last Name
Hackney

Organisation
Australian and New Zealand International Scientific Drilling Consortium (an AuScope project)

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Priority 1: Facilitate Science Communication Research

Social scientists are the ones that are best placed to understand the impacts of our work! The humanities play a crucial role in translating complex scientific, technological and infrastructural research into narratives that engage society, inform policy and build cultural literacy. Investing in infrastructure for storytelling means that the outputs of large scale scientific and national research infrastructure can be accessible, meaningful and relevant to Australians everywhere. Long-term investment in storytelling at scale: turn complex NRI science into stories that reach every classroom, regional museum, and living room in Australia.

Social science research applied to science more broadly has multiplier benefits: enhancing public trust in research, supporting education (K-12 and tertiary), strengthening regional cultural institutions and improving social cohesion through shared stories of national endeavour.

Social science research should be pan-disciplinary, bridging STEM, humanities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledge Systems, but still defined in a way that ensures NRI supports the research needed by government, industry and the community.

Priority 2: Support to the establishment of digital collections, data linkage and national cultural infrastructure.

To leverage the investments in infrastructure, human capacity is needed, as are structures that support transdisciplinary collaboration. The humanities need national-scale access to

collections, data-linkage, and secure digital services to support research, teaching, translation and public access. Integration and coordination capability across HASS.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Humanities research can play a role in identifying opportunities and defining the role of Australia's NRI in science diplomacy and strategic global engagement (e.g. involvement or membership in international RI programs). Australia is currently navigating a world shaped by geopolitical fragmentation, contested technologies, and increasing uncertainty in global norms. Humanities research is critical to developing Australia's capacity in science diplomacy, cultural intelligence, strategic communication, and ethical technology governance.

As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research leadership grows, humanities research will no doubt have a key role to play in elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledge Systems Indigenous. The humanities will bring expertise in ensuring the sovereignty of those Knowledge Systems, and in data governance and engagement infrastructure.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

NRI would benefit most from a centralised "specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce". This is because the many science disciplines that utilise Australia's NRI are not set up to manage the specific needs of cultural collections that are apparently siloed and lack interoperability (as stated in the Issues Paper).

In addition, scientists would benefit from support in identifying and communicating the impacts of the scientific research they undertake. Social scientists are the ones who really understand the impact of science on humanity. This means specialist capability has the best chance of supporting scientists, provided there is capacity for the specialist capability to meet the demand from a large NRI community.

An analogy may be supercomputing facilities. These appear to have worked well as centralised NRI facilities where the expertise is concentrated and focussed on providing a specialist service for the benefit of the whole NRI workforce.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 11:07 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3991613a7de541176e92f]

Title
Ms

First Name
Toni

Last Name
Moate

Organisation
Marine National Facility - CSIRO

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The UN Ocean Decade Vision 2030 presented 10 Challenges for a new ocean vision, with one of the goals “Restoring society’s relationship with the ocean”. This goal focuses heavily on Ocean Literacy and improving society’s understanding of the ocean’s value for human well-being, culture, and sustainable development. The goal recognises that protecting our world’s oceans relies on a fundamental understanding and connection between society and the ocean. This goal should drive increased focus for research activities that aim to meet this goal.

Underwater Cultural Heritage is gaining increased focus from the marine research community and will be included in the next National Marine Science Strategy (2025-2035) which will be released in early 2026. The scale of investment in this area is difficult to quantify but should be a consideration in continued support for the Marine National Facility, which is the only facility that currently services this research need.

Digital platforms for cultural data preservation and sharing, with community engagement (in regional/rural settings and primary/secondary schools) and ethical AI usage to ensure the workforce is equipped with cultural and technical skills.

The 2023 World Humanities Report (Australia) calls for federated digital platforms for cultural data preservation and sharing, with community engagement (especially in regional/rural settings and primary/secondary schools).

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Both Ocean Literacy and Underwater Cultural Heritage, as described above, would be considered new or emerging areas.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Whilst we see humanities research being an important contributor to our work, as part of the MNF we do not see the need for a dedicated focus on developing workforce in our area.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 10:30 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Dr

First Name
Judith

Last Name
Bishop

Organisation
La Trobe University - School of Humanities and Social Sciences

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Provision of Humanities-centric computing facilities and support staff; digitisation and metadata creation for the GLAM sector, with a particular focus on the needs of AustLit, given the threats to creative writing livelihoods at this point in time; support for critical AI systems evaluation and HASS involvement at all points of the AI product lifecycle. I also partly concur with thie need for "Digital research infrastructure [which] includes sovereign large language models (LLMs) and secure development environments for generative AI and simulation", but I believe the strongest emphasis should be on supporting the community-led development of automated speech recognition and OCR systems over generative systems.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
The above-mentioned areas are both current (urgent) and 3-5 year priorities.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
A specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce is essential to truly integrate the depth of humanities and social sciences knowledge into future national research infrastructure. These people would also be translators able to bridge across domains. The ability to translate is not precluded by deep specialist expertise but can go together with it, with the right training.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 10:22 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3991384dd5e58028804c5]

Title
A/Prof

First Name
Roger

Last Name
Osborne

Organisation
Association for the Study of Australian Literature

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Investment in humanities-related NRI should take previous investments and established NRI into account. Sustainability is a primary challenge to project-based investments. Funding allocations to offset operational and maintenance expenses for established datasets would ensure the longevity and accessibility of data collected in previous investment periods.

2. Continued data collection, particularly data collection related to regional, rural and remote communities, especially Indigenous communities.

3. Interoperability to enable large-scale data analysis and to facilitate aggregation of humanities data in national and international contexts.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
The rapid development and release of new technologies such as GenAI will have a profound effect on humanities research in the next decade. NRI investment in projects that build capacity in research, theory and infrastructure, particularly in postgraduate and early-career researchers will be essential.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Australia should develop a specialist humanities research infrastructure that builds on the modes of enquiry that are unique to humanities disciplines. Such specialist humanities research infrastructure should be informed by the humanities research questions and methodologies rather than being led by technology-driven projects that are “hammers in

search of a nail". By providing more opportunities for humanities researchers to participate in project-based enquiry, future NRI would contribute more meaningfully to the moral and ethical questions that arise in the development of new technology. This contribution would lead to a more fruitful cross-disciplinary engagements, especially with developments in information technology.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 10:10 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Prof

First Name
Daniel

Last Name
Angus

Organisation
ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision Making & Society

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
National digital observability infrastructure that can capture, audit and analyse the increasingly embedded, automated systems shaping everyday life, from algorithmic feeds to sensor-rich environments. This moves beyond static archives and supports continuous, real-time observability aligned with public-interest governance.

Dynamic participatory data collection frameworks, including data donation pipelines, community-governed data trusts, and culturally appropriate methodologies for working with marginalised and Indigenous communities. These enable humanities researchers to study society as it shifts, not only as it is retrospectively recorded.

Secure, high-capacity storage and compute environments for sensitive multimodal data, including video, audio, interface-level telemetry and platform interaction traces, with governance models suitable for cultural protocols and public-interest research. This supports work that relies on infrastructure capable of handling complex, high-risk digital materials safely.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Humanities research will increasingly need infrastructure that can contend with pervasive automation, AI-mediated communication, personalised media ecosystems, embedded sensors, and platform-driven public life. Three emerging areas requiring near-term investment are:
- Infrastructure for studying algorithmic and automated environments in situ, enabling researchers to observe and test how systems operate in real time across devices, platforms and civic contexts.

- Creative, community-led and culturally grounded data collection methods, including experimental ethnographic capture, participatory sensing, and Indigenous-led digital knowledge practices that ensure cultural safety and sovereignty.
- Tooling for dynamic, longitudinal social datasets, enabling researchers to follow behavioural, cultural and communicative change over time, moving the humanities beyond one-off snapshots toward sustained, adaptive analysis of digital society.

Together, these priorities align with ADM+S's work showing that understanding digital public life now requires infrastructure that is live, participatory, culturally appropriate, and capable of observing automated systems at scale.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Australia would benefit most from developing a generalist research infrastructure workforce with strong humanities domain expertise, supported by targeted opportunities for deeper specialisation. The ADM+S experience shows that interdisciplinary training, bringing together computer scientists, social scientists, and humanities researchers, creates a workforce capable of operating at the boundaries where contemporary research infrastructure increasingly sits. This hybrid model equips staff to navigate both technical systems and the cultural, ethical and social contexts that shape humanities research, while avoiding the siloing that can come with a fully specialist workforce.

A specialist humanities infrastructure stream offers strengths in custodianship and deep disciplinary knowledge, but is less adaptable to emerging needs such as digital observability, AI-mediated environments and the analysis of complex sociotechnical systems. By contrast, a generalist workforce with humanities expertise can bridge disciplines, translate between technical and HASS researchers, and scale across NRIs, ensuring the sector has the flexibility and interdisciplinary capacity required for the next decade of digital research challenges.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 10:04 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm399126fb91e52e229ab14]

Title
Dr

First Name
Tom

Last Name
McGoram

Organisation
Heavy Ion Accelerators

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
HIA does not hold strong views on this topic, but AI and its societal impacts, AI and national security, best practice ethical approaches to AI and AI governance do appear to be key priorities for the nation.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
See above

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
The latter approach is most likely to encourage NRI workforce mobility, more sustainable career paths and cross-fertilisation of expertise across research infrastructure domains and is therefore HIA's preferred approach. It should be recognised that degrees of specialisation are to be expected and encouraged so it should not be an either-or approach.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 08:55 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3990e87efacccc0aad251]

Title
Prof

First Name
Coral

Last Name
Warr

Organisation
La Trobe University

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Capacity building and workforce development are critical for humanities researchers to develop the digital literacy and expertise to use AI and other digital tools.
2. Developing a nationally coordinated approach to enhancing NRI collections to simplify and enable access to cultural collections from the past and into the future. This may include persistent digital archiving and storage of research data outputs (e.g. heavier investment and expansion for platforms like PARADISEC), and user-friendly API access to existing corpora and data (e.g. Trove)
3. Ensuring the availability of digital compute and storage infrastructure for sensitive data, especially if the CARE principles are to be supported for indigenous data, and cloud-based data processing and analysis tools (e.g. motion tracking video, auto segmentation and annotation of non-standard language varieties)

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
An emerging area is Digital Humanities and AI integration to enable analysis of cultural datasets. This includes:
• AI-driven text, image, and sentiment analysis including natural language processing for literary works, pattern identification, and automated classification.
• Development of robust research software engineering capabilities to support development of research software for HASS communities.
• Immersive VR/AR environments for experiential engagement with historical events, cultural artifacts, and digital libraries require advanced networking and visualization infrastructure.
• Small-scale, ethically produced Large Language Models for testing and exploration
• Cross-disciplinary neuro-humanities research is merging neuroimaging tools (fMRI, EEG) with literary, aesthetic, and linguistic analysis and relies on brain-scanning facilities and data integration systems

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Australia should focus on developing a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines. Humanities research should be considered equivalent and equally important as STEM research and should be integrated rather than an isolated ‘special’ case.

Pros: The digital tools used across STEM and HASS disciplines are largely similar so there is significant benefit in integration and sharing of knowledge across disciplines rather than having a separate siloed approach.

Cons: In humanities research quantitative approaches often need to be grounded in qualitative understanding of the nuance of the data being examined to a greater extent than in STEM.

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Mon, Dec 8, 2025, 04:17 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm398ef443d9f07b3c19411]

Title
Dr

First Name
Beryl

Last Name
Morris

Organisation
TERN Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
While TERN's primary expertise lies in environmental science, we recognise significant opportunities for humanities research infrastructure to engage with environmental themes:
- Digital cultural collections integration with environmental data: collections documenting historical land use, cultural landscapes, and traditional resource management could be linked with long-term environmental monitoring data to understand landscape change over centuries
- Oral history and Traditional Knowledge preservation infrastructure that complements scientific environmental monitoring, particularly documenting multi-generational observations of ecosystem change
- AI and computational infrastructure for humanities, including capabilities for text analysis, cultural heritage digitisation, and simulation modelling that could enhance understanding of human-environment interactions

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
From an environmental research perspective, emerging humanities areas requiring infrastructure investment include:
- Climate change communication and behaviour research infrastructure: facilities supporting research into public understanding, decision-making, and behaviour change around environmental sustainability
- Environmental humanities digital platforms: infrastructure supporting interdisciplinary research connecting ecological data with cultural, historical, and social dimensions of landscape change
- Indigenous Knowledge digital archives: secure, culturally appropriate infrastructure for preserving and sharing Traditional Ecological Knowledge that complements scientific environmental monitoring

TERN's 2025 Research Directions Survey (181 responses from Australia's ecosystem science community) revealed researchers increasingly recognise the need to integrate with socio-economic, market, and policy drivers (50 mentions) to understand ecological outcomes shaped by carbon markets, landholder incentives, and social conditions enabling or blocking conservation. This suggests humanities research infrastructure supporting analysis of environmental decision-making, behaviour change, and policy effectiveness would complement environmental monitoring infrastructure, particularly as Australia develops environmental-economic accounting and biodiversity market frameworks.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

From TERN's perspective, our experience suggests a hybrid model is optimal.

Case for generalist workforce with humanities expertise:
- Facilitates genuinely interdisciplinary research, particularly environmental humanities
- Enables knowledge transfer across sectors
- Provides career flexibility and resilience for workforce
- Supports integration of diverse knowledge systems

Case for specialist humanities infrastructure workforce:
- Certain collections, archives, and cultural heritage materials require deep specialist expertise
- Humanities research methodologies and ethical frameworks differ substantially from STEM disciplines
- Career recognition and progression pathways need discipline-specific understanding

Recommended approach:
- Develop core competencies expected of all NRI workforce (data management, ethics, collaboration, Indigenous cultural awareness)
- Support specialist pathways for roles requiring deep humanities expertise (archivists, curators, cultural heritage specialists)
- Create structured exchange and secondment programs enabling workforce mobility between specialist and generalist roles
- Invest in training programs that help STEM-oriented NRI staff develop humanities literacy, and vice versa

This approach would enable humanities researchers to access the advanced computational, data management, and analytical infrastructure increasingly essential to their work, whilst ensuring culturally sensitive materials receive appropriate specialist handling.

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Sun, Dec 7, 2025, 10:32 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm398ea9b0b1a60df4b6d38]

Title
Mr

First Name
Mark

Last Name
Stickells

Organisation
Pawsey Supercomputing Research Centre (Pawsey) and the National Compute Infrastructure (NCI) through Prof Andrew Rohl

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Australia's Tier-1 HPC centres can support the humanities research sector by providing specialist skills and infrastructure to unlock insights and enhance research in this domain. This includes:
- Data collection storage and management across the humanities research sector.
- Enabling large-scale data analysis, complex visualisation and modelling e.g. sovereign large language models (LLMs) and secure development environments for generative AI and simulation
- Providing skilled experts and training to support researchers in understanding HPC and developing the skills to effectively utilise HPC to achieve research outcomes

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
As data collections related to humanities research grows, infrastructure and services to support the data storage and management needs of humanities researchers will be required. Furthermore, investment in infrastructure and services to support the expanding AI needs of the domain will also be key in the coming years.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
No comment.

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Sun, Dec 7, 2025, 03:24 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm398d2652075171501e502]

Title
Prof

First Name
Wojtek

Last Name
Goscinski

Organisation
National Imaging Facility

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
NA

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Over the next 3–5 years, the humanities—particularly psychology, cognitive science and related social sciences—will increasingly rely on advanced imaging capabilities.

Human imaging is becoming central to understanding behaviour, decision-making, culture, and wellbeing, and NRI investment will be essential to support reproducible research workflows, ethical data governance, and cross-disciplinary collaboration between imaging scientists and humanities researchers.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
NA

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 05:07 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm398336db57e6c0ddb4fe3]

Title
Mr

First Name
Ralph

Last Name
Marszalek

Organisation
The University of Queensland

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Continued investment in humanities and social sciences
Until recently, HASS disciplines were largely overlooked by NRI funding. This has now changed with the substantial NCRIS investment into the ARDC HASS & Indigenous portfolio, which is starting to provide tangible benefits and uplift across the HASS & Indigenous disciplines. It is critical to continue that investment – both in the Humanities and Arts, and the Social Sciences, to keep the momentum gained and to bridge the infrastructure and workforce capability gaps between the HASS and other disciplines. This investment could continue via ARDC, or could move towards supporting stand-alone NCRIS capabilities with a dedicated focus on HASS.
• Future investment should enable infrastructure designed for complexity and evolution, not tidiness.
o The principle: Humanities data is inherently complex, contextual, and evolving. Infrastructure designed on assumptions that data should be ‘clean’, ‘standardised’, and ‘stable’ fundamentally misunderstands humanities research and constrains what questions can be asked.
o In practice: - Storage and analytical systems that accommodate ambiguity, multiple interpretations, and changing understandings over time - Governance frameworks recognising that meaning is contextual - what’s appropriate access or use depends on who, when, why, and how - Infrastructure that supports ongoing curation and re-interpretation, not just preservation of fixed datasets - Recognition that ‘messiness’ isn’t a problem to be solved but reflects the actual nature of human cultural life
o Examples: - Systems for managing qualitative data where context determines meaning (interview transcripts, cultural materials, historical sources) - Infrastructure supporting Indigenous data governance where access and interpretation rights depend on relationality and cultural protocols - Platforms enabling communities to continuously engage with and recontextualise cultural materials, not just access static archives

2. Facilitating connections with other disciplines, beyond HASS.
It is imperative that the Humanities and Arts engage more outside of their broad discipline, and to build connections – including interoperable infrastructure – that connects our disciplines to the 'outside world'. Otherwise, the discipline is at risk (or continuing to be at risk) of being siloed and isolated. HASS disciplines have a major role to play in multidisciplinary approaches and collaborations that are needed to tackle the big challenges facing our global community – the disruption caused by AI, the democratic crisis, the role of higher education, for example. Ensuring interconnectivity with other disciplines, including in terms of interoperable research infrastructure, is a key platform to enable that kind of multidisciplinary collaboration.
• Humanities infrastructure must also enable intersectionality and relationality
o The principle: Complex social and cultural questions cannot be addressed with siloed data sources. Infrastructure must enable humanities research to intersect with other disciplines while respecting different epistemologies. It must also accommodate Indigenous and other relational ways of knowing that don't separate 'environmental', 'cultural', and 'social' data.
o In practice: - Technical interoperability allowing humanities researchers to connect their data with health, environmental, administrative, and other data sources - Governance frameworks enabling ethical integration of sensitive data from multiple domains - Infrastructure supporting research about relationships - between humans, between humans and Country, between humans and other-than-human beings - Platforms where different disciplines can work together without forcing humanities data into STEM formats
o Examples: - Capability to link language data with health outcomes, educational data, environmental monitoring - Infrastructure connecting cultural heritage collections with contemporary social analysis (synthesis of preservation and observation) - Systems supporting Indigenous knowledge about Country that integrate what Western frameworks separate into environmental/cultural/social categories - Collaborative platforms enabling policy-makers to access integrated humanities and social science insights

3. Building capacity across the HASS disciplines.
Further investment in a dedicated, but interoperable outside the discipline, workforce for the HASS disciplines is a priority. As per the priority outlined above, this relates to capability for uplift across HASS researchers, but also with respect to a workforce with the requisite knowledge of modern infrastructure, technologies, and computational methods in addition to a deep understanding of HASS-specific disciplinary issues. This workforce would be able to work with HASS researchers, and also with other disciplines and, and with other research stakeholders such as industry, government, and community groups, to build cross-disciplinary linkages.
• Workforce that embraces complexity and facilitates connection
o The principle: Infrastructure is only as good as the people who design, operate, and support it. Humanities needs workforce with deep domain expertise who understand why complexity matters and can facilitate connections across disciplines - not technicians trying to standardise everything.
o In practice: - Specialists who understand humanities epistemologies, research methods, and ethical requirements - Bridge roles connecting humanities with other disciplines and with technical infrastructure - Skills in facilitating collaboration, navigating ambiguity, and working with culturally sensitive materials - Recognition that the most valuable innovation happens at intersections, requiring people who can work across boundaries
o Examples: - Infrastructure specialists expert in Indigenous data governance and cultural protocols - Roles explicitly designed to translate between humanities researchers and technical systems - Professional development supporting people to work across disciplinary and cultural boundaries - Career pathways valuing connection-making AND tech expertise"

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Humanities research is entering an era defined by large, multi-domain data, and powerful AI tools. Over the next 3 – 5 years, this will create new and emergent needs for our NRI. Emerging humanities areas that will require targeted NRI investment potentially go outside the traditional disciplinary boundaries, and may include areas such as digital cultural analytics (e.g. large-scale analysis of literature, film, music and visual culture), computational historical geography (integrating historical maps, place-based archives and population records), language and discourse studies at scale (e.g. social-media language mapping), migration studies (linking administrative migration records and geospatial traces), and links between humanities and social and health data (e.g. combining historical/archival material with electronic health registers to study long-term social determinants of health). Each of these areas becomes feasible only when humanities data are integrated with other data, like the social-science administrative datasets, such as the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA), electronic health registers, and contemporary internet/social-media streams.

Integration across disciplines requires interoperable data standards, rich metadata, secure linkage mechanisms, and tools that respect domain-specific sensitivities (for example, Indigenous data governance). Humanities data are diverse, covering free text, handwritten archives, audio-visual recordings, geospatial layers, and digital social media data. Such data needs to be made FAIR in ways that work with other data, including social-science administrative linkages and clinical registers. PLIDA-style infrastructure shows the value of curated, well-documented modules; NRI investment could expand that model to include metadata schemas tailored for humanities but interoperable with other disciplines, and developing pathways to multi-source data integration that preserve privacy and legal compliance.

Emerging AI capabilities can dramatically accelerate the integration, cleaning, annotation and analysis of such multi-domain data. Our NRI should invest in shared AI toolkits and compute platforms that enable reproducible pipelines for key humanities data. NRI investment that treats integrated, multi-domain data as first-class research infrastructure, coupled with responsible, transparent AI services and skills development, has the potential to unlock transformative humanities research over the course of the Roadmap’s implementation.

Specific investment is needed in relation to:
1. AI ethics and epistemology
Alongside infrastructure investment, humanities capability in the critical examination of data sets, AI and algorithmic systems will require NRI investment. Specialist expertise in the ethics, epistemology and biases of research using large-scale models and linked data sets is particularly critical, as mentioned below in relation to workforce capability needs.

2. Enhancement of mature cultural data assets
Australia has established cultural data assets that serve as leverageable national infrastructure. For example AustLit, widely known and respected across the sector for research engagement, exemplifies best practice as evidenced by its sustainable business model and active research community. Investment is needed for enhancement activities including indexing, development of digital tools and technologies for query and data

analysis. Building on proven models such as AustLit provides a foundation for developing other keystone humanities data assets.

3. Infrastructure for data donation and crowdsourcing
New models of data collection including data donation and crowdsourcing are essential for observing social and cultural life in real-time, but require infrastructure that makes participation accessible and trustworthy. This includes systems to collect, audit, and analyse data from digital platforms, devices, and the Internet of Things, built on networked open technology standards with public-interest governance frameworks that demonstrate clear community benefit and ethical use, encouraging participation through transparency and trust.

4. Cross-domain data integration infrastructure
Complex social and cultural questions require connecting humanities data with administrative, environmental, health, and educational data sources. Infrastructure that enables ethical integration across sectors is essential - for example, understanding wellbeing outcomes requires linking social science, cultural, health, and educational data; and climate responses require Indigenous ecological knowledge integrated with environmental monitoring and cutting edge predictive modelling methods.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
As we outlined earlier, there is a need for a capability uplift across the HASS researcher workforce. This must be complimented by a workforce with expert knowledge in terms of modern infrastructure, technologies, and computational methods, and with enough understanding of HASS disciplinary issues who can complement and support HASS researchers.

We present pros and cons of adopting a generalist and specialist approach, below.

Specialist humanities workforce:
• Pros: Deep domain expertise in humanities epistemologies and research methods; credibility with humanities researchers; expertise in culturally sensitive governance; may prevent infrastructure defaulting to STEM-centric assumptions.
• Cons: A risk of siloing and a potential disconnect from broader infrastructure ecosystem; may miss technical innovations from other domains; much smaller talent pool.

Generalist workforce with humanities domain expertise:
• Pros: Facilitates knowledge transfer across disciplines; better positioned to leverage technical innovations; supports interdisciplinary research; easier to achieve critical mass.
• Cons: Risk of undervaluing humanities-specific expertise; may default to STEM-centric approaches; humanities researchers may not trust them to understand complex or nuanced requirements that are extant with their disciplines.

Australia needs both, working together in a hybrid model:
• Core specialist capability in areas unique to humanities (cultural protocols, Indigenous data governance, qualitative data, archival methods, information management and custodianship)
• Potential for bridging roles that are designed to connect humanities with broader infrastructure ecosystem

• An investment in professional development, enabling specialists to develop these bridging skills, and generalists to develop the necessary domain depth

Career pathways that value boundary-spanning work:
The most valuable workforce capability combines deep domain expertise with ability to work across boundaries. Any investment should focus on creating opportunities for specialists and generalists to collaborate on complex problems; innovation happens most effectively at the intersections of disciplines.
Embedded humanities expertise across projects has been shown to work well in other schemes, such as the ARC Centres of Excellence Program, and provides an excellent model by which we can build greater societal impact.

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 04:59 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm398330b328e6155558489]

Title
Dr

First Name
Chris

Last Name
Hatherly

Organisation
Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia is primarily concerned with social science research infrastructure, as outlined in its Decadal Plan 2024-33. However, there are significant overlaps between humanities and social science research methodologies and data sources; particularly in fields and disciplines such as history, anthropology and sociology. From this perspective, the top 3 priorities for NRI investment in the humanities from the perspective of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia are:

1. Integration and digitisation of civic and cultural collections (libraries, archives, museums).
2. Development of advanced digital observatories for social and cultural data.
3. Secure, FAIR-compliant platforms for humanities data sharing and reuse.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
From the perspective of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, emerging areas of research that will require dedicated NRI investment over the medium term include:

1. Digital societies and online cultural ecosystems.
2. AI-enabled analysis of historical and cultural collections.
3. Indigenous-led humanities research infrastructures, embedding sovereignty and cultural protocols.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia recommends a generalist workforce with humanities domain expertise.
The pros if this approach include the capacity to establish bridges across disciplines, support interdisciplinary collaboration, and increase the sustainability of NRI investments.
The cons of a specialist-oriented strategy include the risks of siloing and limited integration with broader NRI capabilities.

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 04:52 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Dr

First Name
Jane

Last Name
Fitzpatrick

Organisation
Australian National Fabrication Facility Ltd

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
We have no meaningful contribution to make here.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
ANFF does not have a deeply expert opinion on this topic but some areas that cross over into our sector are noted below.
Ethical use of emerging digital tools and the access to more data will be a key enabler and important guidelines for all RI moving forward. Generative AI and researcher–AI workflows are reshaping how textual, visual and audio sources are produced, searched and interpreted; the humanities must fund tools, evaluation frameworks, and ethics research to shape responsible use.
Looking at large scale digital heritage, archives and immersive preservation should be a key target going forward as our world and climate changes. This will require rapid digitisation, VR/AR for heritage, and large-scale archival projects requiring technical infrastructures and standards to preserve and make accessible cultural collections. Initiatives that could be funded include national-scale digitisation platforms, long-term storage and metadata standards, digitisation fellowships, ethical access frameworks.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
This is a confusing question. From our example we have specialist RI staff that operate our RI and make it do whatever the researchers wants, regardless of where they come from. For HASS based RI they would obviously need to be specialist in that infrastructure use (I am assuming collections, databases, conservation, ethics, survey and analysis). In addition, those NRI that have high levels of engagement with HASS disciplines will

naturally have staff that can both operate the RI and be able to interact with that user base.
So, if we have HASS RI, they will have specialists employed. If we have HASS-interacting RI then we will have staff that can service HASS. I do not see a place for a set of RI specialists outside of these 2 areas.

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 01:10 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39825e8f3950d1094bd31]

Title
Prof

First Name
Pieter

Last Name
Eichhorn

Organisation
Curtin University

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Support for open scholarly communication infrastructure remains a top priority for the humanities. Investment is required to ensure equitable access to humanities research and to build sustainable, community-led publishing models. This includes developing and funding fully open publishing platforms that are free to read and free to publish, while enabling researchers to retain all rights to their work. Strengthening these platforms will enhance visibility, long-term preservation and public accessibility of humanities scholarship.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Curtin University recognises the rapid expansion of areas such as digital humanities, creative practice, and data-enabled social research, all of which align strongly with our institutional capabilities and industry-engaged approach.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
A generalist research infrastructure workforce with strong humanities domain expertise is likely to deliver the greatest national benefit. Specialist skills are important in areas such as digital preservation, cultural data stewardship, and heritage technologies, but Australia’s research system increasingly relies on staff who can work across disciplines, operate shared digital platforms, and translate humanities needs into technical requirements.

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 12:10 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm398228310d80ed703cc9b]

Title
Dr

First Name
Andre

Last Name
Zerger

Organisation
Atlas of Living Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Not applicable to the Atlas of Living Australia's domain expertise.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Not applicable to the Atlas of Living Australia's domain expertise.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Not applicable to the Atlas of Living Australia's domain expertise.

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 11:33 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm398206314de66e6752381]

Title
Prof

First Name
Jacek

Last Name
Jasieniak

Organisation
Monash University

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The humanities play a critical role in helping Australia understand and respond to social, cultural, and technological change. At present, >90% of all NRI investment is focussed on STEM capabilities, creating a major capabilities gap around the humanities. To maximise the national impact of humanities research, future NRI investment should focus on coordinated, connected, and future-ready infrastructure that enhances collaboration, interoperability, and computational capability.

The top 3 priorities are:

1. Building a collaborative national ecosystem: A shift from competition to collaboration is essential to achieve the scale and coordination required for Australia to remain globally competitive. Investment should prioritise the development of shared national platforms and interoperable infrastructure that enable collaboration across institutions while maintaining excellence and diversity of representation. The cost and complexity of modern humanities data infrastructure cannot be sustained through fragmented, competing initiatives.

2. Interoperability across collections and institutions: Creating seamless access to Australia's cultural, linguistic, and social data assets is a foundational priority. Investment should focus on interoperability standards, including shared metadata frameworks and persistent identifiers, to connect currently siloed collections. This will enable cross-disciplinary research, facilitate data reuse, and strengthen the visibility and impact of humanities research nationally and internationally.

3. National strategy and infrastructure for HPC and AI: Humanities researchers increasingly depend on advanced computing for digital analysis, AI-driven methods, and complex data modelling (as per SERD recommendations). There is an urgent need for a national HPC

strategy that supports a diversity of users and use cases, from early-career researchers to established teams, and across disciplines. Investment should ensure equitable access to GPU-based computing and data infrastructure designed to advance AI, digital humanities, and computational social science, underpinned by robust training and support services.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Humanities research is increasingly central to addressing complex, multidisciplinary challenges, from climate adaptation and public health to digital transformation and data ethics. New or emerging areas of research and focus includes:

Living Labs: Investment is needed in university-anchored Living Labs that operate as relational research infrastructure, connecting experimentation, infrastructure, and community ecosystems. Living Labs provide collaborative, real-world environments that integrate research, teaching, and engagement to co-design social, cultural, and environmental solutions. They offer a scalable model for mission-oriented research, allowing humanities disciplines to bridge research and implementation while strengthening community and industry partnerships. Monash University recently launched the Advancing Living Labs Report, which can be found here (https://www.monash.edu/research/living-labs).

Data donation and citizen social science: Developing research infrastructure that supports data donation and citizen social science models represents an emerging priority for the humanities. These approaches engage citizens as active participants in research, contributing data, sharing lived experiences, and co-producing knowledge. Investment in such infrastructure would enhance data diversity, transparency, and public trust while allowing all Australians to share in the social and cultural value of research.

Data ethics, governance, and Indigenous research: Future NRI investments must embed ethical, inclusive, and culturally grounded governance frameworks for data use in humanities research. This includes building infrastructure and expertise in data ethics, informed consent, and Indigenous Data Sovereignty. Developing shared protocols, training programs, and governance models across the NRI system will support responsible innovation and ensure trust, accountability, and long-term social benefit.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Australia should prioritise developing a research infrastructure workforce with strong humanities domain expertise and the ability to bridge across disciplines. This approach recognises that the future of research infrastructure depends on people who can integrate technical, analytical, and cultural competencies across STEM and HASS contexts. The following should be considered:

Embedded expertise: Rather than creating a separate specialist workforce for the humanities, national efforts should cultivate a cross-disciplinary workforce capable of supporting diverse research domains. This means embedding technical experts, such as research software engineers, data specialists, and AI practitioners, within humanities faculties and research groups. These embedded staff will bring a deep understanding of the research context (for example, ethical handling of archives or Indigenous data) while applying rigorous engineering and data standards.

Digital and data literacy: At the same time, humanities and social science researchers require targeted upskilling in AI, data, and digital literacy. This does not mean expecting HASS researchers to become developers, but rather equipping them to understand the capabilities and limitations of digital tools, data-driven methods, and large language models (LLMs). Such understanding will allow them to effectively collaborate with technical experts and direct the design and implementation of research workflows.

Collaborative workforce development: Sustained partnerships between universities, NCRIS facilities, and industry should underpin workforce training programs that emphasise interdisciplinarity, ethical data use, and digital innovation. These programs should provide national pathways for career development, ensuring that research infrastructure professionals, whether based in STEM or HASS, share a common foundation in governance, data stewardship, and user-centred design.

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 10:36 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3981d2234f802b17f92f4]

Title
Ms

First Name
Jacinta

Last Name
White

Organisation
CSIRO

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Advanced Microscopy (all including electron microscopy) +

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Suitable staff to use and extend AI and software platforms that extend the capability of microscopy (and other) platforms

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Both, working in tandem, will work best. We need highly specialised skills alongside people who have worked more broadly (with varied project/work/institution experience) to get best results. Mixed experience teams are highly productive

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Fri, Dec 5, 2025, 09:39 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39819d7979e62fb03bec2]

Title
Ms

First Name
Louise

Last Name
Soroka

Organisation
Geoscience Australia

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
* Access to cultural heritage data (at a regional scale to be aligned with the priority reform 4 of the Closing the Gap agreement)

* Infrastructure for interdisciplinary research linking humanities, Earth sciences, and social sciences

* Support for Indigenous knowledge systems and languages

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
* Digital humanities platforms integrating spatial, environmental, and cultural datasets

* Tools for analysing the societal impacts of environmental change

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Both are required.

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Thu, Dec 4, 2025, 03:02 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm396e4ae605224424c4aef]

Title
Prof

First Name
Janet

Last Name
McCalman

Organisation
University of Melbourne

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Digitisation and linkage of historical births, deaths and marriages records in Australia. They are the most important personal historical records generated for people on this continent and can now be made accessible with AI. They are world class and make up for the loss of our census returns.The importance of investment in this RI area was highlighted in the Academy of Social Sciences Australia's recent Decadal Plan for Social Sciences Research Infrastructure 2024-2033. Australia needs a foundational historical record of its people that can provide the critical human architecture for HASS and STEM.
ARCHER would not only serve advanced research across HASS and STEM, it would also embrace the general community in local and family history via crowdsourcing. Community researchers can enhance biographies and family histories from TROVE and other public archives. ARCHER would transform local history, history of the family and of community building. It would complete the national investment in public history in TROVE and public archives and libraries' digitisation projects. It would, together with these, result in the world's best public historical archives program. Ethical controls can be applied to protect family reputations by controlled release of data and masking of sensitive content, as already happens with the NAA.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Capturing and 'reading' historical, especially handwritten records, for their full incorporation into the research space for both scholars and the community. The leading case is for the birth, death and marriage registrations, led by Victoria and Queensland, endowed with 'best in the world' regimes.
There has been some progress with digitisation of historical births, deaths and marriages records in Australia and valuable research including into intergenerational disadvantage, the destruction of the Indigenous population in Victoria and the creation of 'the Gap' by government policy, has been completed using these records. However digitisation has

generally involved a manual transcription process which is time-consuming and costly and this has limited research. AI tools are now available to cost-effectively digitise, link and provide access to historical births, deaths and marriages records, making them available for a wide range of important social research. Investment is needed over the next 3-5 years to systematically digitise and link these historical records. Pilots have been completed for records from two states (Queensland and Victoria) and these clearly demonstrate the feasibility of the approach.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

It would be advisable to develop a generalist research infrastructure workforce of flexible researchers who can embrace new technologies and work with multiple disciplines. Such a workforce must have a strong grounding in the humanities first, technology second.

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Thu, Dec 4, 2025, 01:46 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm397d59dbba99256c42aab]

Title
Prof

First Name
Clare

Last Name
Murphy

Organisation
University of Wollongong

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Unsure

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Unsure

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Unsure

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Thu, Dec 4, 2025, 11:43 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm397ce8df6e998dff2a643]

Title
Dr

First Name
Tara

Last Name
Martin

Organisation
Tasmanian Department of State Growth

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities are:

• That Australia takes a national approach to collections and recognising their value to research in the humanities, recognising the distributed national collection and that the majority of collection items are not held by National institutions in Canberra. Museum collections hold a vast and diverse wealth of material that is often under-utilised in research projects due to accessibility and discoverability. A key benefit is the ongoing commitment to store and care for collections, meaning they can be returned to and revisited by researchers over decades or hundreds of years.
• Supporting smaller and regional collecting organisations to digitise their collections and other collections data work, so they can be fed into a national data asset to aid discoverability.
• A national collection approach towards collection-based research projects with end-to-end considerations for data created and any collections used or created as part of the research. Projects that generate material (e.g. archaeology) do not include consisted consideration and costing for the long-term deposit, storage and care of collections. Nor is there a national data asset that retains research-generated data for further interrogation and use.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
New or emerging areas of research requiring investment include:

• Supporting smaller and regional collecting organisations to digitise their collections remains key – this will enable currently dark data to be visible and analysed democratically. Without this critical step, more advanced technological investment will be significantly reduced in efficacy.

• Developing a central (potentially federated) and accessible platform for the data, including supporting experts to clean and update data, make corrections and additions, and manage sensitive collections.
• The platform should be appropriately funded, facilitate secure data storage for images, sound recordings and all digital assets.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

General comment: The humanities would benefit from a national database and support system like the NCRIS Facility for biological sciences Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) . ALA has been transformative for pulling together biodiversity data across Australia. The NCRIS approach has been gradual, but a key element has been providing sound data back to contributors about how ALA data is used, and an ongoing grant system for users has helped smaller organisations continue to digitise and make their collections available.

Developing a specialist vs. generalist humanities research workforce:

Developing a specialist workforce will enable individuals to focus on their areas of expertise with the specific tools and equipment that will enhance further research. However, it brings a risk of siloing.

A generalist workforce draws from a wide range of expertise to share differing points of view, enabling cross-pollination of ideas from different disciplines, easing navigation of cross-disciplinary work. It brings a risk of dilution of effort, and sharing of resources amongst different experts may lead to compromises around equipment due to budget and space constraints.

There is always a need for specialists, however a majority generalist workforce brings increased flexibility.

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Wed, Dec 3, 2025, 06:25 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39792905569936aa08e5b]

Title
Mr

First Name
Stephen

Last Name
Forbes

Organisation
Council of Australasian Museum Directors

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The most pressing need for NRI investment in the humanities is for coordinated collections infrastructure for that nation's cultural collections, in the way that ALA supports the sharing and discoverability of biodiversity data. These collections are distributed across galleries, libraries, archives, museums (GLAM), universities, and community organisations—are unevenly digitised, lack interoperability, and are at risk of deterioration or loss. A comprehensive collections infrastructure would enable interoperability across current disparate initiatives, support the development of sovereign AI models trained on Australian cultural data, and facilitate advanced analytics, modelling, and simulation to inform policy and societal responses to complex challenges. Failure to act will compromise Australia's ability to preserve its cultural heritage, diminish research competitiveness, and impede evidence-based responses to national priorities such as social cohesion, democratic resilience, and climate adaptation. While platforms such as TROVE and AustLit do this work well for specific disciplines or material types there is no interoperability between platforms.
Development of robust Indigenous Governance protocols and principles and culturally appropriate access models to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and intellectual property. The development of these should use Indigenous-led governance models and participatory frameworks to empower communities, democratise research and access to their cultural materials and knowledge.
Greater interoperability and collaboration between cultural and scientific collections and humanities and sciences research will support the development of more robust responses to Australia's most complex problems many of which are socio technological. Humanities research provides critical insights into societal responses, ethical frameworks, and governance models, which must be integrated with scientific and technical data to design effective interventions.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Covered above to a degree. Primary issues we talked through the other day were around greater interdisciplinary research with STEM to provide richer data for humanities and sciences to better address complex problems.
Respecting indigenous knowledge and governance.
Exploration of ethical use of AI with humanities research. AI has the potential to scale, increase efficiency, and provide greater analytical depth in humanities research through automation of tasks such as cataloguing and metadata enrichment, which is critical for digitising and preserving cultural collections. For instance, the Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA) employs AI-driven tools to secure, and process endangered linguistic heritage, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Beyond preservation, AI supports advanced modelling and simulation, allowing researchers to move from descriptive analysis to predictive and scenario-based approaches. The University of Queensland highlights how generative AI and large language models (LLMs) can simulate social systems and cultural behaviours, while the Australian Internet Observatory (AIO) integrates computational techniques with social science to analyse digital platforms and algorithmic systems. Furthermore, projects such as Australian Creative Histories and Futures (ACHF) stress embedding Indigenous Data Governance principles into AI workflows, ensuring ethical and culturally appropriate use of sensitive materials. These examples illustrate that AI is not merely a technical adjunct but a strategic enabler for humanities research, requiring investment in high-performance computing, secure environments, and governance frameworks to realise its full potential.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Research Infrastructure that is generalist supporting both specialist humanities and STEM research provides for the integration allows for greater interoperability and collaboration between the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) and STEM disciplines is essential for addressing complex national challenges that are inherently socio-technical. Interoperability enables research that integrates cultural, social, and scientific data to inform responses to issues such as climate adaptation, democratic resilience, and technological transformation. It improves data discoverability and linkage, reducing duplication and fragmentation across dispersed collections and datasets, thereby creating a more coherent research ecosystem. Furthermore, interoperability supports innovation in modelling and simulation by combining cultural and scientific datasets, allowing researchers to move beyond descriptive analysis toward predictive and scenario-based approaches. For example, the Australian Internet Observatory (AIO) demonstrates how social science and computational methods can be combined to interrogate digital platforms and algorithmic systems, while the Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA) integrates linguistic heritage with digital tools for analysis and reuse. Similarly, the Australian Creative Histories and Futures (ACHF) project illustrates how cultural data infrastructures can align with emerging technologies such as AI, embedding ethical governance and Indigenous Data Governance principles into technical frameworks. These examples underscore that interoperability not only enhances research capability but also strengthens social licence and ethical governance for emerging technologies, ensuring that innovation is culturally informed and socially responsible.
Conversely the provision of more specialist humanities research infrastructure may allow for simpler integration and management of Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural data which require CARE principles and culturally appropriate access models, which do not align easily with open science norms in STEM. It may also better address issues of

negotiating governance frameworks that respect sovereignty and privacy while enabling collaboration and access to specific communities.

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Wed, Dec 3, 2025, 02:24 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm397856217199ab8358a19]

Title
Prof

First Name
Frank

Last Name
Bongiorno

Organisation
Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
(i) Reducing the precarity of HASS NRI
Some Humanities NRI is subject to arbitrary budget decisions of individual universities. A vivid recent example was the proposal of the College of Arts and Social Sciences at the Australian National University to abolish the Australian National Dictionary Centre and cut the Australian Dictionary of Biography so severely that many of its operations would have been curtailed. Even now, it is unclear whether the ANU is intending to devote National Institutes Grant funding to these projects, as it has done in the past. The ANU should not be permitted to receive NIG funding if it is not prepared to use it to support long-running and essential projects such as these. Other HASS infrastructure is located in the GLAM sector, whose institutions are subject to efficiency dividends. In several cases, budgetary stringency has left both digital and physical infrastructure vulnerable – for instance, the Trove database of the National Library of Australia. When a database is created on this scale, and when it comes to acquire such national importance, it is reasonable to expect that there will be infrastructure planning that extends beyond the 4-year forward estimates. It is also important that state-based NRI (such as state archives, libraries, and GLAM institutions) is also placed on sustainable, longer-term funding arrangements.
(ii) HASS workforce development
The last five years have seen major cuts in the universities to academic jobs in the HASS disciplines. Higher Degree Research enrolments are in decline. Fewer scholarships are available and the trend towards insistence on industry partnerships represents a STEM model being imposed on a sector, HASS, where it is rarely suitable. Postdoctoral opportunities are rare: the most recent DECRA round had a success rate of 13%. GLAM institutions have been subject to long-term financial stringency, even allowing for some funding injections to national public institutions in the last three years. There needs to be much greater investment in humanities workforce development – the training of the humanities workers of the future.
(iii) A fair share in a digital future

Their skills and creativity will be increasingly needed in the age of AI. When digital infrastructure and capabilities are discussed, there is a tendency to treat humanities researchers as if they are at the back of the line. In reality, digitisation is opening up whole new fields of research. Investment in the digital resources that make such work possible has been fitful at best, and sometimes plainly inadequate, as when the National Library of Australia warned that without further investment, Trove was in jeopardy. Humanities researchers should have a fair share in the country's digital future.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

- Environmental sustainability and climate change
- Health and well-being
- Democracy and governance
- International security and conflict prevention and resolution
- Languages/Linguistics, especially Indigenous
- Social cohesion, community development and post-conflict reconstruction

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

There is a tendency to see the humanities as a domain for the generalist. And while many of the technical skills required for Humanities NRI will be deployable in other domains, high-quality development will demand discipline-based competencies along with a capacity to operate in an interdisciplinary manner (acknowledging that effective interdisciplinary work presupposes competence in one or more disciplines). There is an analogy with university libraries, where subject-matter expertise has been eroded with many negative impacts on collecting. The development of more generic digital competencies in this space, while yielding many benefits, has not been a substitute for more specialised knowledge and understanding. Where cross-cultural and linguistic competencies are needed, there is, again, a demand for certain forms of specialist expertise in the Humanities NRI workforce.

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Wed, Dec 3, 2025, 01:57 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39783d862595ce06811cb]

Title
Prof

First Name
Rufus

Last Name
Black

Organisation
University of Tasmania

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The University of Tasmania's response reflects the need to strengthen foundational assets while enabling future capabilities.

Priority 1: Modernise and Digitise National Cultural Collections
Humanities research relies on galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAM), which have been underfunded for decades. Systematic national investment in cataloguing, digitisation, and linking collections is essential to unlock the potential of digital platforms and AI tools. A coordinated approach will benefit humanities and deliver cross-sector impacts in health, environment, and social research.

Priority 2: Build Advanced Digital and AI-Enabled Infrastructure
Australia needs integrated, national-scale platforms for cultural, historical, and creative datasets. These should include AI capabilities for text, image, and sound analysis, supported by governance frameworks that respect intellectual property and Indigenous data sovereignty. Sustained investment will connect fragmented datasets, enable cultural analytics, and build digital skills for researchers and creative industries.

Priority 3: Strengthen Partnerships and Access
National infrastructure should support collaboration between GLAM institutions, universities, and communities to ensure cultural heritage remains accessible and usable for future generations. This includes shared standards, interoperability, and long-term preservation strategies aligned with NRI Roadmap recommendations.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Priority 1: Digital Humanities and AI-Driven Research

Humanities research is entering a new phase where advanced digital tools and artificial intelligence will underpin discovery, analysis and innovation. Investment is needed in:
• National-scale digital platforms for cultural, historical, and creative datasets.
• AI and machine learning capabilities for text, image, and multimodal analysis to support research in ethics, culture, and social systems.
• Interoperability with global networks to ensure Australian research is visible, accessible and competitive internationally.
These capabilities will enable large-scale cultural analytics, comparative studies, and innovative approaches to understanding social and cultural change.

Priority 2: Open Scholarly Communication and Publishing Infrastructure
The sustainability of humanities research depends on modern, open-access publishing systems. Current reliance on costly international platforms limits accessibility and impact. Investment should focus on:
• Upgrading institutional repositories for interoperability and discoverability.
• Developing national open-access frameworks aligned with global standards.
• Reducing barriers to dissemination and ensuring Australian research outputs are widely accessible.
This will strengthen scholarly communication, support collaboration across disciplines and borders, and drive transformative societal benefits through shared knowledge and innovation.

Priority 3: Acknowledgment and Protection of Intellectual Property
As digital and AI-driven research expands, the protection of intellectual property and recognition of creators must be embedded in infrastructure planning. This includes:
• Governance frameworks that respect IP rights and ensure fair compensation for creators.
• Systems that balance open access with ethical use, particularly for Indigenous cultural knowledge and sensitive materials.
• Clear protocols for managing IP in collaborative and technology-enabled research environments.
Safeguarding IP is essential to maintaining trust, integrity, and equity in the research ecosystem.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
The NRI should prioritise a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce, complemented by strong cross-disciplinary capability. Deep expertise is essential for managing cultural collections, Indigenous data governance, and ethical frameworks for digital and AI-driven research. A specialist model ensures integrity and innovation, while enabling collaboration across disciplines through targeted training and joint roles.
Although this approach may require higher initial investment than a generalist model, it mitigates risks of cultural misinterpretation and compliance gaps, and positions Australia to lead in areas such as AI ethics and Indigenous data sovereignty.

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Wed, Dec 3, 2025, 01:52 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3978388a2095c264d967e]

Title
Prof

First Name
Grainne

Last Name
Moran

Organisation
University of New South Wales

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Sustained, secure and linked digital infrastructure
• Stable funding and national coordination for digital archives, cultural collections, and humanities data assets. Currently even mature data assets such as the DAAO (Design and Art Australia Online: https://www.daao.org.au/) are precarious, and funding through the Australian Creative Histories and Futures is not enough to support this infrastructure.
• Integrated platforms that connect libraries, museums, galleries, and archives to enable discovery, access and reuse

2. Advanced computing, data and AI capabilities tailored to humanities research
• Increased and proportional access to national compute and data resources.
• Dedicated infrastructure for text-based and qualitative analysis (image recognition, and cultural data interpretation), including open-source humanities-focused AI/LLM models and long-term data storage.

3. Humanities research infrastructure workforce and skills development
• Investment in software engineering, data stewardship, and technical support roles in the humanities, through existing NRIs.
• Capacity-building programs to ensure researchers and institutions can effectively use digital and AI-enabled tools.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
New and emerging areas of humanities research will require significant NRI investment to support the rapid growth of AI-enabled methods, advanced digital environments, and large-scale cultural and social datasets. The increasing use of AI and data-analysis tools will have major implications for the humanities, driving demand for data standards, data-

wrangling capability, secure access to diverse datasets, and suitable environments for managing and analysing qualitative and text-based data.
There is also an urgent need to invest in the linking of cultural collections—across libraries, museums, galleries, archives and related institutions—to enable integrated discovery, analysis and preservation of Australia's cultural heritage.
Additional emerging areas include virtual and augmented reality for research and teaching, such as virtual museums and reconstructed historical environments; digital infrastructure to support disaster-resilience research by capturing events and lessons learned; and big-data approaches to understanding sociocultural trends, including analysis of social media and demographic behavioural patterns.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

This may depend on which NRI investments Australia chooses to prioritise, particularly in relation to AI and data infrastructure. The workforce should be shaped by the systems being built: if Australia invests in peak, discipline-defining capabilities—such as dedicated AI tools or platforms for humanities—then a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce will be required, as seen in other mature domains (e.g. climate science). However, if the priority is expansion of general AI and digital infrastructure, then a generalist workforce that includes strong humanities domain expertise may be more appropriate, enabling integration into broader cross-disciplinary ecosystems – we are in favour of the latter.
The advantages of a specialist workforce include the ability to design, govern and operate infrastructure tailored to humanities needs, including sociocultural considerations. The disadvantages are reduced flexibility and the risk of reinforcing disciplinary silos at a time when machine learning, AI and emerging technologies increasingly require interdisciplinary approaches.
Conversely, a generalist research infrastructure workforce can more readily support cross-disciplinary solutions and adapt to rapidly evolving methods, but may struggle to embed the deep humanities perspectives needed for areas such as the societal evaluation of AI, autonomous systems, and other technologically mediated environments. Some respondents noted that humanities expertise will be essential in these areas regardless of the workforce model adopted.

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Wed, Dec 3, 2025, 10:28 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
A/Prof

First Name
Linda

Last Name
Pfeiffer

Organisation
CQ University - School of Education and Arts

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
DISTRIBUTED DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR REGIONAL CULTURAL COLLECTIONS
- Regional museums, libraries, archives hold significant but under-digitised cultural materials
- National coordinated approach to digitising regional collections
- Infrastructure that enables regional communities to access and contribute to cultural heritage
- Essential for regional history, Indigenous knowledge preservation, local identity research
DIGITAL OBSERVABILITY AND COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE
- Infrastructure supporting community-based research partnerships
- Tools for regional communities to document and analyse local cultural, social and environmental change
- Participatory research platforms accessible to non-metropolitan researchers
- Supports regional engagement and impact
ACCESSIBLE RESEARCH COMPUTING AND STORAGE FOR HUMANITIES
- Training and support for digital humanities methods in regional contexts
- Essential for competitive research regardless of location

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
PLACE-BASED DIGITAL STORYTELLING AND CULTURAL MAPPING
- Infrastructure for communities to create, store and share digital narratives
- Combines oral histories, environmental data, cultural knowledge
- Particularly important for regional Indigenous and multicultural communities
- Requires secure, culturally appropriate platforms with community control
CLIMATE CHANGE HUMANITIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL HUMANITIES
- Regional areas experiencing frontline climate impacts
- Infrastructure to integrate cultural knowledge, historical data, environmental monitoring

- Digital archives of climate adaptation stories and traditional knowledge
- Regional observatories combining humanities and science

REGIONAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE RESEARCH
- Tools to analyse regional demographic change, service provision, community wellbeing
- Integration of humanities perspectives with social data
- Critical for regional development policy and planning
- Requires accessible data infrastructure for smaller research teams

DIGITAL HERITAGE AND VIRTUAL ACCESS
- VR/AR for remote access to regional cultural sites and collections
- 3D scanning and preservation of regional heritage at risk
- Enables research on dispersed regional collections
- Provides global access to regional cultural materials

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Pros

Enhanced research capabilities: Dedicated infrastructure provides humanities researchers with specialized tools, databases, and resources tailored to their methodologies—like digital archives, text analysis software, and manuscript digitization facilities—that general-purpose systems might not offer.

Interdisciplinary collaboration: A centralized infrastructure creates opportunities for historians, linguists, philosophers, and other humanities scholars to work together more effectively, potentially leading to innovative cross-disciplinary insights.

Data preservation and accessibility: Specialized infrastructure can ensure proper archiving and long-term preservation of cultural materials, historical documents, and research data that might otherwise be lost or difficult to access.

Competitive research output: Better infrastructure helps humanities departments compete for grants, attract top scholars, and produce higher-quality research that can match the output of better-funded sciences.

Training opportunities: Students and early-career researchers gain access to cutting-edge tools and methodologies, better preparing them for modern humanities scholarship.

Cons

High costs with uncertain returns: Humanities research infrastructure can be expensive to build and maintain, while the economic returns are less tangible than in STEM fields, making funding justification difficult.

Unequal access: Specialized infrastructure might concentrate resources at elite institutions, potentially widening the gap between well-funded and under-resourced universities and creating barriers for independent scholars.

Risk of technological obsolescence: Digital tools and platforms can quickly become outdated, requiring continuous investment to remain relevant.

Potential mismatch with traditional methods: Some humanities research relies on individual scholarship, library work, and qualitative analysis that may not benefit substantially from specialized infrastructure.

Maintenance burden: Specialized systems require dedicated technical staff and ongoing support, diverting resources from other academic priorities like teaching or expanding faculty positions

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Tue, Dec 2, 2025, 11:14 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm397281531343b45484cab]

Title
Dr

First Name
Tony

Last Name
Willis

Organisation
Australian Council of Deans of Science

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
While not the focus of the ACDS, we understand that priorities that would strengthen humanities research capabilities include:
• Large-dataset capability, particularly for non-traditional data (oral records, Traditional Knowledges, ephemera, multilingual, creative, etc)
• Skills capability for traditionally-trained scholars in the humanities
• Interface between humanities/arts data and Generative AI.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
We understand that emerging priority areas for HASS researchers include:
• The impacts and opportunities associated with Generative AI
• Ethics around new technologies
• Climate change and net zero
• Regional and national security
• Changing geo-political dynamics
• Social cohesion and equity
• Research translation and interdisciplinary thinking
• Future of democracy
• Economic growth and sustainability
• Population wellbeing
• Developing urban, regional and rural pipelines for education and training
• Incorporating First Nations knowledges
• Languages and cultural competencies.
HASS colleagues emphasise that many of these issues are centred on HASS questions. Addressing them requires meaningful investment in interdisciplinary research.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

ACDS considers a mixed model the most sustainable.

- A generalist workforce provides flexibility and broad capability.
- Specialist roles remain essential for deep domain expertise.
- Our view is that this hybrid approach will best serve national capability.

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Mon, Dec 1, 2025, 05:59 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm396ecdef181648253b818]

Title
Prof

First Name
Paul

Last Name
Roe

Organisation
James Cook University

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
JCU identifies the following top three priorities for NRI investment in the humanities, integrating national needs with areas where JCU can provide distinctive leadership:

1. A national-scale HASS and Indigenous Research Data Commons
A unified data environment enabling advanced analytics, AI integration, secure governance, and interoperability across humanities and Indigenous datasets. This would allow longitudinal, place-based, social, cultural and digital research at national scale, ensuring that insights relevant to Northern Australia and remote communities can be integrated into national policy systems.

2. National digitisation and integration of cultural collections (GLAM)
Investment in digitisation, cataloguing and interconnection of galleries, libraries, archives and museums—particularly for at-risk materials such as Indigenous languages, oral histories, ethnographic collections and cultural heritage materials across northern Australia. This infrastructure is essential to safeguard, access and activate these resources through FAIR and CARE-aligned systems.

3. Humanities-focused AI capabilities and digital observatories
Development of AI tools tailored for humanities research, including ethical frameworks, decision-support tools, and observatories for analysing social, cultural and digital media systems. This supports areas where JCU has national strength, including disaster communication, digital inclusion, misinformation and social resilience research.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
The most significant emerging priority for the humanities NRI is the development of culturally governed data repositories and protocols that embed Indigenous knowledge

systems and data sovereignty. This includes infrastructure that ensures Indigenous authority over access, use and benefit-sharing, while providing interoperability with national and global standards.

Building on this overarching need, key emerging areas requiring NRI investment include:

• Infrastructure to support analysis of misinformation, digital harms and social resilience during disasters, where JCU has national leadership in cyclone, heatwave and crisis communication.

• AI, NLP and speech technology for Indigenous and endangered languages, especially in northern Australia, where high linguistic diversity intersects with rapidly advancing AI opportunities.

• Digital inclusion research infrastructure to support remote Indigenous communities to participate in data collection, governance and benefit from digital tools.

• Cultural mapping platforms combining spatial, narrative, linguistic and ecological knowledge, supporting Indigenous-led land and sea stewardship and cultural heritage management.
Investment in these systems provides a foundation for downstream capabilities such as accountability frameworks, learning systems research and evidence-informed policy design.

Investment in these systems provides a foundation for downstream capabilities such as accountability frameworks, learning systems research and evidence-informed policy design.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
JCU supports prioritising the development of a generalist workforce with digital infrastructure capabilities capable of supporting interdisciplinary research across the humanities.

A generalist workforce

• Is more flexible and cost effective
• Can support interdisciplinary work (e.g. combining linguistics, anthropology and ecology)
• Reduces the risk of duplicated or siloed infrastructure
• Enables integration with STEM research infrastructure

However, a generalist workforce may lack the depth and expertise in specific key areas which may be available via a specialist workforce. Additionally, specialised knowledge and strong relational capacity are generally required for Indigenous-focused data environments.

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Mon, Dec 1, 2025, 05:26 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm396eb0266116b672c4d40]

Title
Prof

First Name
Simone

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Warner

Organisation
Agriculture Victoria Research, Agriculture Victoria, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Agriculture Victoria suggests the top three priorities for NRI investment could include:
1. OneHealth – greater understanding and funding to enhance understanding of the interlinkages between the health and agriculture sectors, noting the health of people is closely connected to the health of animals and our shared environment.
2. Biotechnology - To maintain and enhance existing investments in the biotechnology-related investments, particularly with the continued application and understanding of the application of Artificial Intelligence. These biotechnology investments are an essential key platform technology, supporting research activities across multiple priority areas. Learnings may be available via Agriculture Victoria's Biosciences Advanced Scientific Computer.
3. Proteins/Food nutrition - new investments in agriculture research and innovation to maintain the competitiveness of the food industry, value-add to a commodity-based sector and improve health and wellbeing.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
In addition to continued investment in the areas outlined in question 3, Agriculture Victoria suggests the top priorities for NRI investment could include:
1. Enabling market access – unstable markets effect agricultural incoming stability and production decisions. Fluctuating market prices, high production and transportation costs, trade policies, and competition from imported goods can significantly affect farmers' profitability and sustainability.
2. Supporting regenerative agriculture – adopting/mimicking natural ecosystem processes to revitalise the environment, improve biodiversity, enhance resilience and improve the overall environment for future generations. Implementing sustainable agriculture practices

that integrate trees and shrubs into landscapes (amongst other practices) can support broader productivity goals and enhance ecosystem functions.
3. AgTech - mechanization, automation, and the use of technology can help alleviate labour shortages, but they require investment and training. In addition, access to modern technology and innovation can also be uneven across regions. Investment in agricultural research and development, as well as providing training and access to technology, can empower farmers and enhance productivity.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Nil comment

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Mon, Dec 1, 2025, 01:21 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm396dcf486622686d9ef7a]

Title
Prof

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Ivan

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Marusic

Organisation
The University of Melbourne

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Strengthening and sustaining a digitally skilled humanities workforce
There is a critical need to grow and maintain digital capability across the humanities research ecosystem — including researchers, curators, collection managers, and the specialised research-infrastructure workforce who maintain and enable access to digital cultural resources. Investment is required in upskilling, training and engagement programs, as well as mechanisms to attract and retain infrastructure specialists and support the networks that allow coordination across NRI collections. This capability uplift is foundational to increasing national uptake and effective use of digital technologies, platforms and repositories.

2. A national platform for curated digitisation, preservation and storage of at-risk analogue collections
A coordinated, sophisticated national service is needed to digitise, curate and preserve at-risk analogue primary data and records. This platform should support long-term preservation of archival materials, provide robust metadata standards, and enable appropriate licensing, curation and controlled access for research and public engagement. Investments must ensure the longevity and integrity of collections, including protections against technological obsolescence and resourcing for ongoing maintenance and evolving access needs.

3. Greater transparency and adaptability in NRI funding processes to support novel humanities capabilities
Humanities research requires pathways for developing new types of research infrastructure that were not envisaged in earlier NRI/NCRIS funding rounds. Enhanced transparency in funding decisions and clearer mechanisms for proposing, piloting and maturing novel capabilities — including facilities, services and digital resources — will

enable growth in areas where humanities research infrastructure is emerging or rapidly evolving.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

1. Nationally coordinated, curated digital humanities data repositories

Humanities research increasingly depends on the availability of robust, well-managed and accessible digital datasets. Many primary sources remain locked in analogue form within smaller museums, galleries and historical societies, where limited resources prevent the use of standard metadata and digitisation tools. Even where digital repositories exist, they are often inconsistently curated, lack interoperability, or are not accessible at a national scale.

A major emerging priority is the development of standardised national data curation and metadata protocols, aligned with international exemplars such as Europeana. This should be coupled with a coordinated national digitisation program that provides shared infrastructure, workforce capability building, and tools for the digitisation and curation of objects, specimens and archival materials. Once analogue data is digitised, it becomes significantly more accessible for analysis using new methods — including AI-enabled OCR, ASR and other machine-assisted techniques — opening the door to entirely new research practices and cross-disciplinary insights.

2. Infrastructure for responsible, ethical and culturally safe use of Artificial Intelligence in humanities research

The rapid proliferation of AI — including generative models and large-scale pattern recognition tools — is creating new research possibilities as well as new cultural, ethical and regulatory challenges. Over the next 3–5 years, the humanities will require secure, culturally protected computational environments (such as ring-fenced or corralled infrastructures) that allow researchers to experiment with AI methods while safeguarding sensitive cultural data and maintaining compliance with community protocols and expectations.

Investment will also be needed to support the development of AI ethics frameworks, protocols for handling digital cultural materials, and mechanisms to ensure transparency, trust and accountability in the use of AI. Alongside this, there is a growing need for workforce upskilling so researchers from non-technical fields can meaningfully engage with AI and advanced digital methods. This includes training in programming, data stewardship, and ethical AI practices. Given the interdisciplinary nature of these challenges, strong cross-faculty and cross-institutional collaboration will be essential.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

We support a hybrid approach to developing a humanities-savvy RI workforce, combining generalist staff with sufficient humanities understanding to engage meaningfully with research questions, alongside specialised HASS RI staff with deep technical and domain expertise who can act as champions. This mix promotes diversity, transferable skills, and cross-domain awareness, supporting collaboration between HASS and STEM disciplines. Access to these complementary skillsets broadens perspective and enhances the ability to communicate across disciplines — a capability that is increasingly important across the entire research landscape. A hybrid workforce also strengthens cross-disciplinary problem-solving and methods development, enabling qualitative (HASS) and quantitative (STEM) expertise to be brought together in novel and productive ways.

A generalist workforce with humanities domain expertise offers agility and supports the exchange of insights across disciplines. It is well-placed to engage with the complex intersections of disciplines that sit at the forefront of major societal challenges. However, because much of the existing RI workforce has traditionally emerged from STEM backgrounds, a generalist model can unintentionally default to STEM ways of thinking. Without exposure to humanities approaches and requirements, generalists — especially those trained in STEM — may rely on familiar methods that do not fully account for humanities research contexts or domain needs. While HASS and STEM research often face similar challenges in data management and curated access, qualitative data such as media recordings, transcripts or textual corpora requires more careful curation and human custodianship than many large-scale scientific datasets. To work effectively across disciplines, a generalist workforce must therefore be supported to build awareness of humanities methods, ethical frameworks and domain knowledge.

By comparison, a specialised humanities RI workforce brings deep domain knowledge and lived experience of HASS research, which is crucial for developing high-quality research infrastructure. However, dedicated humanities infrastructure specialists can be difficult to recruit, particularly given the current STEM focus of many RI teams. It can also be challenging to fund and sustain a solely specialised humanities workforce in the current funding environment. If a specialised model is pursued, there will need to be strong support for domain-sharing and collaboration opportunities, ensuring that specialised HASS staff can meaningfully engage with STEM-focused and generalist RI staff, and strengthening links between HASS NRI facilities and STEM researchers.

Our experience with platforms such as the Melbourne Data Analytics Platform (MDAP) demonstrates that the most effective model is a blend of generalist RI staff with sufficient humanities understanding to work with HASS researchers, complemented by targeted specialist roles with deep domain knowledge. This combination provides the best foundation for bridging disciplines and producing positive, high-impact outcomes for researchers.

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Mon, Dec 1, 2025, 12:23 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Mr

First Name
Anthony

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Curro

Organisation
CRC for Developing NA

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Priority areas for humanities-oriented NRI include:
1. Place-based social and institutional observatories that track cultural, demographic and governance transitions across regions undergoing major economic and environmental change. These require longitudinal and integrated datasets capable of supporting community and policy decision-making.
2. Digitisation and interoperability of cultural and historical collections, addressing fragmentation across museums, archives, language centres, universities and community organisations. A coordinated national approach is essential to support research, cultural renewal and multidisciplinary analysis.
3. Culturally governed secure digital environments for sensitive humanities datasets including audio, video, language, oral histories and community narratives. These environments must embed Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles and support community-led stewardship, particularly in regions such as northern Australia where cultural protocols are central to research.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Emerging humanities research priorities include infrastructure for studying social transitions and community adaptation, particularly in regions experiencing rapid structural change. Longitudinal, place-based data will be needed to understand evolving livelihoods, governance arrangements and cultural continuity.
Second, the expansion of digital ethics, AI-governance and humanities-informed decision systems will require secure environments that support culturally governed data, ethical AI tools and community-controlled narratives. These capabilities are increasingly central to guiding responsible adoption of digital technologies.
Third, intergenerational capability and institutional change research will depend on integrated economic, social and cultural datasets. This area requires linked data under

culturally informed governance to understand how production, incomes, assets and cultural practices evolve together capability that the CNA can help interpret and translate for regional needs.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Australia should adopt a blended model, prioritising a generalist NRI workforce with strong humanities domain expertise while maintaining a cohort of specialist roles. Generalists ensure that cultural, ethical and social perspectives are embedded across NRI environments, while specialists bring deep expertise in key areas such as cultural data governance, Indigenous knowledge stewardship and ethical AI. This model supports interdisciplinary research and allows regional organisations like the CNA to retain culturally capable staff who can work across multiple domains.

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Mon, Dec 1, 2025, 12:19 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Mr

First Name
Nick

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Jenkins

Organisation
ARDC

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. A long term funding model which support archival infrastructure
2. Specific technical software support for humanities researchers
3. Broad upskilling of humanities researchers in technical skills

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
The economics of energy transition and an aging population, Urban planning, Social media culture and influence

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Both. Researchers in the field need to upskill (to become the specialist workforce) and generalist software engineering support with humanities experience is needed. The first is to explore the 'bleeding edge' of research in this area and to develop new tooling and methods. The second is to industrialise and disseminate those tools across the sector in a repeatable, secure way - while being cognisant of the particular ethical, social and cultural requirements of the sector.

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Sat, Nov 29, 2025, 06:05 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Dr

First Name
Tom

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Honeyman

Organisation
UNSW, Sydney

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
(1) A nationally coordinated cultural collections capability, addressing the long-standing disconnect between Commonwealth investment in collecting institutions and separate investment in research infrastructure, and requiring coordination above the NCRIS level (including the arts portfolio) to consolidate fragmented collections, improve interoperability and provide researchers with enabling services;
(2) A significant uplift in digital research capability, recognising that generative AI will drive rapid, low-cost experimentation with textual and visual materials, and that NRI must provide safe, governed environments that reduce risk while unlocking this potential for humanities researchers;
(3) A scaled national digital observability capability, transforming early efforts into a true national service that can counter the current power imbalance between researchers and digital platform providers, enabling independent, public-interest observation of tools, services, devices and the broader digital environment that increasingly shapes Australian society.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
The most significant emerging areas of humanities research requiring NRI investment in the next 3–5 years are: (1) Generative AI and computational humanities, which will need secure compute and storage environments, workforce and skills uplift, and a substantial enhancement of existing digital research capability to support safe, governed experimentation with multimodal AI models; (2) Research involving born-digital cultural materials, where new specialist platforms, co-designed governance mechanisms and major discovery, cataloguing and interoperability work will be essential as these materials become primary cultural sources; and (3) Digital platforms and society, which requires a major uplift of current capability, including specialist observatory tooling, secure environments, and strong co-design and governance frameworks to ensure trusted access

and analysis of platform data in a period of growing concern over data ownership and digital power.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Australia should focus on developing a generalist research infrastructure workforce with strong humanities domain expertise, rather than a narrow specialist humanities RI workforce. A generalist-with-humanities-fluency model is more sustainable, easier to resource and scale, and avoids the long-standing siloing of humanities research infrastructure. It also supports interdisciplinary bridging, enabling humanities researchers to connect into broader digital, computational and cross-cutting capabilities without being constrained by sub-disciplinary boundaries. By contrast, a specialist humanities RI workforce is difficult to sustain: skills are often concentrated in single individuals, roles are tied to short-term or precarious employment, and workforce members can become isolated or misaligned from large-scale digital transformation. In practice, many humanities organisations rely on short-term research assistants to deliver specialist capability, leading to workforce fragility and rapid loss of experience. A scalable generalist workforce—broadly pro-humanities but not bound to specific sub-disciplines—offers a far stronger foundation for national humanities research infrastructure.

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Fri, Nov 28, 2025, 09:19 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Other: "Coordinated response"

First Name
International Environment, Reef and Ocean Division

Last Name
DCCEEW

Organisation
DCCEEW - International Environment, Reef and Ocean Division

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Two key priorities are 1) building ocean literacy and 2) marine social sciences in support of Australia’s sustainable ocean economy.

The draft Sustainable Ocean Plan emphasises the importance of strengthening ocean literacy as a foundation for Australia’s blue economy. Similarly, the National Marine Science Committee’s "Strengthening Ocean Literacy: Marine Science Education and Training to ensure Australia's Blue Future" 2025 White Paper identifies ocean literacy as a key pillar to support ocean sustainability. Improving public understanding of the ocean and ocean economy supports effective policy development and investment, builds the skills pipeline needed for a growing ocean economy, and empowers communities to care for the ocean. NRI investment in the humanities should therefore consider supporting ocean literacy initiatives, including school and community educational programs, resources and educator development.

The National Marine Science Committee’s "Social Science for Meeting Australia’s Ocean Goals" 2025 White Paper highlights the essential role of marine social sciences in driving integration and innovation across the marine science agenda. Strengthening this capability will improve decision-making, systems thinking, co-design and knowledge translation to support future-focused ocean management. NRI investment in the humanities should consider targeted support for Australia’s marine social science capabilities.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
As above, ocean literacy and marine social sciences are two developing areas of humanities research that will require NRI investment in the next 3 to 5 years, to support achievement of the goals of the draft Sustainable Ocean Plan and National Marine Science

Committee 2025 white papers, and to help set targets and measure progress against social, economic and cultural indicators.

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Thu, Nov 27, 2025, 03:16 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Dr

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Christopher

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Adda

Organisation
La Trobe University

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
1. Capacity building and workforce development are critical for humanities researchers to develop the digital literacy and expertise to use AI and other digital tools.
2. Developing a nationally coordinated approach to enhancing NRI collections to simplify and enable access to cultural collections from the past and into the future.
3. Ensuring the availability of digital compute and storage infrastructure for sensitive data, especially if the CARE principles are to be supported for indigenous data.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
An emerging area is Digital Humanities and AI integration to enable analysis of cultural datasets. This includes:
• AI-driven text, image, and sentiment analysis including natural language processing for literary works, pattern identification, and automated classification.
• Development of robust research software engineering capabilities to support development of research software for HASS communities.
• Immersive VR/AR environments for experiential engagement with historical events, cultural artifacts, and digital libraries require advanced networking and visualization infrastructure.
• Cross-disciplinary neuro-humanities research is merging neuroimaging tools (fMRI, EEG) with literary, aesthetic, and linguistic analysis and relies on brain-scanning facilities and data integration systems

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Australia should focus on developing a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines.
Pros: The digital tools used across STEM and HASS disciplines are largely similar so there is significant benefit in integration and sharing of knowledge across disciplines rather than having a separate siloed approach. Humanities research should be considered equivalent and equally important as STEM research and should be integrated rather than an isolated 'special' case.
Cons: A perception that there is a lack of investment in HASS workforce development.

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Thu, Nov 27, 2025, 01:53 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Dr

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Tescari

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Melbourne Data Analytics Platform (MDAP), The University of Melbourne

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
• Growth and maintenance of a digitally literate humanities workforce, spanning researchers, curators, collection managers (i.e., via support for upskilling/training/engagement programs), as well as the research infrastructure workforce who maintain and enable access to digital cultural resources (i.e., via funding for programs that enable this workforce to be attracted and retained, and also to develop the critical networks that will enable coordination across NRI collections).
• Increased coordination and integration of digital cultural repositories held by diverse national institutions (i.e., beyond Trove). European initiatives such as Europeana Foundation (https://pro.europeana.eu/about-us/foundation) illustrate aspirational approaches.
• Identifying and growing translational opportunities for digital humanities research into industry/policy/practice (e.g., government, cultural, legal sectors, but also recognising and developing links to industry). This obviously sits adjacent to physical and workforce components of NRI; however, important for helping to grow opportunities for co-investment.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Secure infrastructure/environments to enable responsible use of generative artificial intelligence methods (such as large language models) to work with digital cultural data.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Overall, we think a generalist workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines offers the greatest opportunities:

Pros:
- Cross-transfer of expertise and insight between disciplines.
- Greater financial investment in STEM RI can help sustain a larger RI workforce, and hence broader expertise than a specialised workforce.
Cons:
- Depending on structure of RI support, a generalised workforce could end up focused on STEM without explicit remit to balance across humanities.
- A generalist workforce may not have capacity to develop deep humanities expertise and knowledge.

By comparison, for a specialised humanities workforce:
Pros:
- Greater focus on humanities, with potential for deeper expertise.
Cons:
- Historically, can be difficult to sustain dedicated humanities RI workforce.
- Potential missed opportunities for cross-domain sharing.
- Hard to find specialised humanities research infrastructure workforce.

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Thu, Nov 27, 2025, 01:36 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Prof

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Organisation
Australian Historical Association

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
(i) Investment in Archives and Libraries There needs to be greater investment in the accessibility of the records held by major public institutions, but especially the National Archives of Australia (NAA). This is not simply a matter of digitisation. Much of Australia's official record, still in paper form, remains practically sealed off to researchers because the system of clearing open-period documents overseen by the NAA tends to produce protracted processes and long waiting-times, sometimes extending over 5-10 years. This is largely the result of underfunding of the NAA and lack of investment in the document clearance process by the government agencies to which documents are referred for advice. As a result, there is a large gap in the research of the recent Australian past. For historians, as for some other humanities disciplines, libraries and archives play a similar role to laboratories for scientists. The creation of original knowledge in the humanities depends, to a great extent, on the discovery and analysis of new sources. Innovation in historical research, however, is currently hampered by standards of access to the documentary record that meet neither the legislated requirements nor international best practice.

(ii) Investment in conservation and collecting
While there have been emergency injections of funding in recent years, a great deal of Australia's audio-visual record, and some of its paper record, remain highly vulnerable and in danger of destruction. Public institutions have also lacked the resources to engage in systematic collecting of material. Systems are being developed for the preservation of born-digital documents in official contexts; it is less clear what is being done outside official contexts, to ensure that the papers of major organisations and significant individuals are being collected for the sake of future historical and other humanities scholarship. The maintenance of existing NRI in the humanities is an urgent priority.

(iii) Investment in workforce development through better targeted research support for Early Career Researchers
The decay of the humanities in Australia's universities is well enough known, and its drivers – national and global – are generally well understood. Its full consequences are less often discussed. In the most recent ARC DECRA round, the success rate was 13%, and very few of those successful projects were in the humanities. This is not a level of investment in the future of a humanities workforce that indicates any seriousness or system on the part of decision-makers about the future of the humanities in Australia. Meanwhile, universities continue to cut staffing levels in the humanities or, when they hire, recruit staff to teaching-intensive positions with little scope for research.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
We anticipate that the following new and emerging areas of humanities research, corresponding to matters of urgent national interest, will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years, which should include research personnel, access to documents and archives via digital infrastructure:
• Public health e.g., health systems policy, prevention, health promotion, supportive care
• Environment
• Democratic governance, civic society, social cohesion
• Intergenerational wealth inequality, including housing
• Impact of generative AI on education, social cohesion etc.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Universities are essential humanities research infrastructure: they provide essential support for humanities research through the provision of resources (such as libraries and archives) but they also employ researchers to teach and research in their discipline areas. Developing a humanities research infrastructure workforce requires ongoing investment in universities to build secure career paths for researchers, particularly through ongoing roles and balanced workloads with adequate time for research.

The AHA supports the development of a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce, as disciplinary specialists are more likely to drive innovative responses to complex questions in their own disciplines. A generalist research infrastructure workforce may mean that it is easier to disregard or dispose of discipline experts in humanities. We affirm the importance of discipline experts in devising and maintaining humanities research infrastructure, possibly through employing disciplinary experts as liaison officers to connect approaches across disciplines.

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Wed, Nov 26, 2025, 04:23 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
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Title
Prof

First Name
Kim

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Wilkins

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In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Priority 1: Infrastructure designed for complexity and evolution, not tidiness
The principle:
Humanities data is inherently complex, contextual, and evolving. Infrastructure designed on assumptions that data should be ‘clean’, ‘standardised’, and ‘stable’ fundamentally misunderstands humanities research and constrains what questions can be asked.
What this means in practice: - Storage and analytical systems that accommodate ambiguity, multiple interpretations, and changing understandings over time - Governance frameworks recognising that meaning is contextual - what’s appropriate access or use depends on who, when, why, and how - Infrastructure that supports ongoing curation and re-interpretation, not just preservation of fixed datasets - Recognition that ‘messiness’ isn’t a problem to be solved but reflects the actual nature of human cultural life
Concrete examples of what’s needed: - Systems for managing qualitative data where context determines meaning (interview transcripts, cultural materials, historical sources) - Infrastructure supporting Indigenous data governance where access and interpretation rights depend on relationality and cultural protocols - Platforms enabling communities to continuously engage with and recontextualise cultural materials, not just access static archives
Priority 2: Infrastructure enabling intersection and relationality
The principle:
Complex social and cultural questions cannot be addressed with siloed data sources. Infrastructure must enable humanities research to intersect with other disciplines while respecting different epistemologies. It must also accommodate Indigenous and other relational ways of knowing that don’t separate ‘environmental’, ‘cultural’, and ‘social’ data.
What this means in practice: - Technical interoperability allowing humanities researchers to connect their data with health, environmental, administrative, and other data sources - Governance frameworks enabling ethical integration of sensitive data from multiple

domains - Infrastructure supporting research about relationships - between humans, between humans and Country, between humans and other-than-human beings - Platforms where different disciplines can work together without forcing humanities data into STEM formats
Concrete examples of what's needed: - Capability to link language data with health outcomes, educational data, environmental monitoring - Infrastructure connecting cultural heritage collections with contemporary social analysis (synthesis of preservation and observation) - Systems supporting Indigenous knowledge about Country that integrate what Western frameworks separate into environmental/cultural/social categories - Collaborative platforms enabling policy-makers to access integrated humanities and social science insights
Priority 3: Workforce that embraces complexity and facilitates connection
The principle:
Infrastructure is only as good as the people who design, operate, and support it. Humanities needs workforce with deep domain expertise who understand why complexity matters and can facilitate connections across disciplines - not technicians trying to standardise everything.
What this means in practice: - Specialists who understand humanities epistemologies, research methods, and ethical requirements - Bridge roles connecting humanities with other disciplines and with technical infrastructure - Skills in facilitating collaboration, navigating ambiguity, and working with culturally sensitive materials - Recognition that the most valuable innovation happens at intersections, requiring people who can work across boundaries
Concrete examples of what's needed: - Infrastructure specialists with expertise in Indigenous data governance and cultural protocols - Roles explicitly designed to translate between humanities researchers and technical systems - Professional development supporting people to work across disciplinary and cultural boundaries - Career pathways valuing facilitation and connection-making, not just technical specialisation.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

1. Enhancement of mature cultural data assets
Australia has established cultural data assets that serve as leverageable national infrastructure. AustLit, widely known and respected across the sector for research engagement, exemplifies best practice with its sustainable business model and active research community. Investment is needed for enhancement activities including indexing, development of digital tools and technologies for query and data analysis. Building on proven models like AustLit provides foundation for developing other humanities data assets.
2. Infrastructure for data donation and crowdsourcing
New models of data collection including data donation and crowdsourcing are essential for observing social and cultural life in real-time, but require infrastructure that makes participation accessible and trustworthy. This includes systems to collect, audit, and analyse data from digital platforms, devices, and Internet of Things, built on networked open technology standards with public-interest governance frameworks that demonstrate clear community benefit and ethical use, encouraging participation through transparency and trust.
3. Cross-domain data integration infrastructure
Complex social and cultural questions require connecting humanities data with administrative, environmental, health, and educational data sources. Infrastructure enabling ethical integration across sectors is essential - for example, understanding

wellbeing outcomes requires linking social science, cultural, health, and educational data; climate responses require Indigenous ecological knowledge integrated with environmental monitoring.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Specialist humanities workforce:
Pros: Deep domain expertise in humanities epistemologies and research methods; credibility with humanities researchers; expertise in culturally sensitive governance; prevents infrastructure defaulting to STEM assumptions
Cons: Risk of siloing and disconnect from broader infrastructure ecosystem; may miss technical innovations from other domains; smaller talent pool
Generalist workforce with humanities domain expertise:
Pros: Facilitates knowledge transfer across disciplines; better positioned to leverage technical innovations; supports interdisciplinary research; easier to achieve critical mass
Cons: Risk of undervaluing humanities-specific expertise; may default to STEM-centric approaches; humanities researchers may not trust them to understand complex requirements
Australia needs both, working together in a hybrid model:
• Core specialist capability in areas unique to humanities (cultural protocols, Indigenous data governance, qualitative data, archival methods)
• Bridge roles explicitly designed to connect humanities with broader infrastructure ecosystem
• Investment in professional development enabling specialists to develop bridging skills and generalists to develop domain depth
• Career pathways valuing boundary-spanning work
The most valuable workforce capability combines deep domain expertise with ability to work across boundaries. Investment should focus on creating opportunities for specialists and generalists to collaborate on complex problems, because innovation happens at intersections.

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Wed, Nov 26, 2025, 10:13 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm395363c07d9c3527e7099]

Title
Prof

First Name
Kathryn

Last Name
McGrath

Organisation
The University of Technology Sydney

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
The top three priorities for National Research Infrastructure (NRI) investment in the humanities should focus on strengthening foundational and translational capabilities.

First, it is crucial to recognise archives and libraries as core humanities infrastructure, encompassing both physical and digital collections. As noted by UTS academic staff, “funding schemes to support the digitisation of paper archival holdings in collecting institutions would be particularly welcome and enable public access to collections.”

Second, existing digital infrastructures, such as TROVE – an online open-access research portal supported by the National Library of Australia and supported by the Australian Academy of the Humanities and the ARDC, are central to humanities research in Australia. These digital infrastructures require significant upgrading and sustained support to ensure continued accessibility and relevance.

Third, humanities research translation must be better supported through platforms like The Conversation and Impact Studies (ARC Data Portal), which bring academic work to broad public audiences as well as specifically targeted end-users. These non-commercialisable forms of translation are currently absent from national infrastructure schemes, yet they are essential for ensuring that humanities research informs public discourse and policy.

For UTS increased NRI investment in the humanities would deliver transformative benefits aligned with the university’s strategic priorities of creativity, innovation, and social impact. Enhanced infrastructure would amplify UTS’s capacity to lead interdisciplinary research tackling real-world challenges, particularly via the Faculty of Design and Society’s work on sustainability and urban resilience to cultural and media transitions. It would also strengthen flagship initiatives such as the Australian Centre for Public History

and the Centre for Media Transition, enabling UTS to advance globally impactful work that advances social justice and equity. By investing in humanities infrastructure, UTS can further its mission to deliver research with tangible benefits for communities, industry, and society.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?

Immersive Media and Extended Reality (XR) is being used to transform cultural research and storytelling through interactive environments and virtual experiences. UTS has demonstrated leadership through projects such as I Dream of Reality, an XR exhibition at Vivid Sydney that integrated generative AI, holographic interviews, and mixed reality headsets to explore climate narratives and cultural memory.
The UTS Data Arena, a 360-degree immersive visualisation facility, creates a fully immersive environment for big data exploration, virtual reality walkthroughs, and scientific visualisation. It has supported projects such as co-creation of climate futures using generative AI, the use of XR technologies to benefit diverse communities in a collaboration between UTS's Robotics Institute and the Centre for Inclusive Design, and how XR and digital twins can bridge physical environments and shared digital spaces.
These initiatives highlight the growing space of creative industries and immersive technologies. To scale nationally, infrastructure is needed for high-performance computing clusters to support real-time rendering, motion capture studios, and XR labs equipped with advanced headsets and spatial audio systems. Shared national platforms for XR content would enable collaboration across institutions and industries. These resources would position Australia as a leader in immersive cultural research.

Digital Humanities and AI-Driven Cultural Analysis apply computational methods to cultural research, enabling large-scale analysis of texts, images, and social data. UTS research through the Centre for Media Transition and the Visualisation Institute focuses on data-driven storytelling and critical visualisation, examining how algorithms and images shape cultural narratives.
National infrastructure should include secure repositories for cultural datasets, AI platforms for multimodal analysis, and high-performance computing for machine learning workflows. Such infrastructure would allow researchers to conduct advanced cultural analytics and develop new forms of digital scholarship.

Sustainable Design and Circular Economy Research is emerging as a global priority to address resource depletion and climate change through regenerative practices. UTS leads in this space through the Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Fashion + Textiles and the Material Ecologies Design Lab, which investigates ways to transition from petrochemical-based materials to regenerative systems.
National infrastructure to support these projects should include advanced fabrication labs for biomaterials, life-cycle analysis platforms, and testing facilities for sustainable composites. Shared digital platforms for circular design modelling and national repositories for material innovation would enable collaboration across sectors.
Hence, like the other areas of research, the humanities will be significantly advance for Australian benefit through enhanced digital capabilities which require advanced compute resources/time aligned to the specifics of digital humanities.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?

Australia should prioritise developing a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise, as this approach offers the flexibility and interdisciplinary capacity required to strengthen the national research ecosystem. The creative industries sit at the intersection of technology, design, culture, and human experience, and their success depends on professionals who can translate between disciplines, from data science to storytelling, from engineering to ethics, from material innovation to cultural meaning.

A workforce that bridges these domains will not only support humanities research but also enable collaboration across STEM and creative sectors, fostering innovation that reflects both technical advancement and cultural significance.
By cultivating generalists with deep humanities knowledge and cross-disciplinary fluency, Australia can ensure that research infrastructure serves as a connector rather than a silo. This model aligns with the growing demand for integrative solutions in areas such as digital heritage, ethical AI, and cultural analytics, where technical and humanistic perspectives must converge. Investing in such a workforce will position Australia to lead globally in research that is technologically robust and socially meaningful.

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Tue, Nov 25, 2025, 02:30 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm394f28aa2199066df3466]

Title
Dr

First Name
Elena

Last Name
Schaller

Organisation
Animal-Free Science Advocacy

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Public attitudes toward research ethics and practice represent a critical emerging area requiring humanities-focused NRI investment. Animal-Free Science Advocacy's national polling (2025) shows substantial shifts in community expectations, with 71% of Australian adults supporting the replacement of animals in research with scientific alternatives (up from 61% in 2018) and 71% supporting dedicated funding for developing these alternatives (up from 67% in 2018).

NRI investment should support:
-Social research infrastructure to track evolving public expectations around responsible science, ethical governance and research transparency. Longitudinal tools are needed to monitor attitudes toward emerging technologies, research methodologies and benefit-sharing frameworks, as well as cultural shifts toward new scientific approaches such as non-animal methodologies.
-Ethics and workforce wellbeing research that examines how research practices align with community values and how they affect those working within the system. Dedicated infrastructure should enable study of conscientious objection, moral distress and trauma among personnel exposed to invasive animal research models, including implications for workplace culture, retention and mental health.
-Digital humanities platforms to analyse public discourse on science and technology, including AI-assisted analysis of consultation responses, social media content and policy narratives related to research ethics, methodology choice and public trust.

This aligns with the Issues Paper's recognition that the humanities help us understand our place in the world and are essential for responding to global societal challenges. Understanding community perspectives, workforce experiences and cultural change in

research practice is foundational to maintaining social licence and ensuring Australia's research system remains responsible, trusted and aligned with contemporary values.

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Mon, Nov 24, 2025, 11:40 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm394bf9f867cafe81b2390]

Title
A/Prof

First Name
Brailey

Last Name
Sims

Organisation
University of Newcastle

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
No comment

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Fundamental philosophy, particularly as it relates to the human - machine symbiosis, or lack thereof and interface between.p

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
A generalist research infrastructure workforce embracing bridging of disciplines is more adaptable and time independent than specialisation based on currently perceived needs.

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Mon, Nov 24, 2025, 01:28 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm3949c9d9c4fb4628ece6c]

Title
Dr

First Name
Thomas

Last Name
Quella

Organisation
The University of Melbourne

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Not applicable for my submission

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Not applicable for my submission

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Not applicable for my submission

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Fri, Nov 21, 2025, 12:56 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm393a3917387157b62298e]

Title
Prof

First Name
Jeremy

Last Name
Mould

Organisation
Swinburne

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Research infrastructure is about infrastructure, not workforce, so no.

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Fri, Nov 21, 2025, 12:40 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm393a2ac774ce84b63b415]

Title
Dr

First Name
Saraid

Last Name
Billiards

Organisation
Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI)

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

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Tue, Nov 11, 2025, 09:26 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm39088c650c75a7ff001fa]

Title
Prof

First Name
Andy

Last Name
Hogg

Organisation
ACCESS-NRI

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
Endeavours in Humanities RI will benefit from existing skill sets across the RI landscape, particularly for underlying digital NRI needs such as compute and data platforms (i.e., HPC, cloud, repositories, analysis environments, AI, etc.). Thus, a generalist approach is preferable, noting that there will be specific exceptions where domain knowledge is needed.

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Thu, Nov 6, 2025, 08:06 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm38ebf07751ca113f4acc5]

Title
Mr

First Name
Stuart

Last Name
Milburn

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Support education for all ages from early childhood to adult including in remote locations. Open access data libraries. User-friendly data interface.

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
Climate change, preservation of environmental and cultural heritage

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
General research infrastructure with strong humanities expertise to enable collaboration, adaptability, and integration across disciplines.

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Wed, Nov 5, 2025, 10:18 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm38e742950dca162d5de4c]

Title
Prof

First Name
Sach

Last Name
Jayasinghe

Organisation
Academy for Collaborative Research Infrastructure

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
The NRI should focus on (and allocate national resources) to tackling the challenges and opportunities in developing the broader (generalist) research infrastructure workforce. Whilst there are undoubtedly unique attributes to humanities research infrastructure, by no means is it exclusive. There are nuanced challenges and opportunities related to many subsets of the research infrastructure workforce, for example, research software engineers. Rather than focussing in developing a singular subset of the research infrastructure workforce (at the risk of marginalising others), develop within and provide tools to the generalist research infrastructure workforce to effectively build cross-domain teams to deliver transdisciplinary outcomes.

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Tue, Nov 4, 2025, 05:37 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm38e3aeb8c4ac65ee79940]

Title
Prof

First Name
Sach

Last Name
Jayasinghe

Organisation
QCIF Digital Research

In what capacity are you responding?
A representative of an organisation or group

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Our observation is that investment in digital humanities is often driven by 5-10% leading academics. Ironically, these leaders are probably best placed to independently succeed even without NRI support, therefore a case of selective bias informing investment and priorities. We suggest a greater emphasis on training and upskilling the remaining 80% on data and digital for greater impact in humanities research.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
The NRI should focus on (and allocate national resources) to tackling the challenges and opportunities in developing the broader (generalist) research infrastructure workforce. Whilst there are undoubtedly unique attributes to humanities research infrastructure, by no means is it exclusive. There are nuanced challenges and opportunities related to many subsets of the research infrastructure workforce, for example, research software engineers. Rather than focussing in developing a singular subset of the research infrastructure workforce (at the risk of marginalising others), develop within and provide tools to the generalist research infrastructure workforce to effectively build cross-domain teams to deliver transdisciplinary outcomes.

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Mon, Oct 27, 2025, 11:39 AM Australian Eastern Daylight Time
[ID: sbm38b933a67166ffe17f291]

Title
A/Prof

First Name
Nick

Last Name
Thieberger

Organisation
UNiversity of Melbourne

In what capacity are you responding?
An individual

Q4. What are the current top 3 priorities for NRI investment for the humanities?
Digitisation of at-risk collections of analog primary data; proper curation of the resulting files, and born-digital files that are similarly at-risk of loss; guaranteed longevity of curated data

Q5. What new or emerging areas of humanities research will require NRI investment in the next 3-5 years?
As new ways of converting analog media to text (e.g., AI assisted OCR and ASR) become available, we need to have data in digital form to allow it to be treated by new tools. This then opens up vast new research practice by accessing newly accessible datasets.

Q6. Should Australia focus on developing a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce or a generalist research infrastructure workforce with humanities domain expertise and ability to bridge across disciplines?
There is a need for HASS researchers with technical understanding to act as champions. It is clear that STEM applications are quite different, even though the underlying issues of data management and curated access are largely the same for HASS and STEM. Dealing with qualitative data such as media recordings, transcripts, or textual corpora, require greater curation and acknowledgement of human custodianship than does curation of petabytes of astro-physical data. So, yes, there is a need for a specialist humanities research infrastructure workforce.