



Draft 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap

ALIA comments on the Draft 2016 Roadmap

As the peak body for library and information professionals, the Australian Library and Information Association welcomes the Draft 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap.

1. Platforms for HASS

We thank the Expert Working Group (EWG) for listening to the case put forward by humanities, arts and cultural organisations, and for including Platforms for Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences as one of its recommended nine focus areas. We are also pleased to see the National Library of Australia's Trove identified, with others, as an existing national research infrastructure asset.

When the EWG puts forward its "guidance to the Government on priorities and possible allocation of operating funding under NCRIS" (page 6), we anticipate that investment in HASS research infrastructure will feature in its proposals.

2. Explicit reference to the role of library and information professionals

Digital data and research platforms are rightly positioned as a focus area that underpins all National Science and Research Priorities. Libraries, particularly those in university and research settings, play an important part in establishing and managing digital repositories. They make data discoverable by aggregating information; using existing, and creating new platforms; adding and harvesting metadata. They help researchers find the information they need.

In our original submission, we noted that the 2015 international accord on *Open Data in a Big Data World*, the International Council for Science, InterAcademy Partnership, The World Academy of Sciences and the International Social Science Council, representing the global scientific community, referred directly to libraries as having "a responsibility for the development and provision of services and technical standards for data to ensure that data are available to those who wish to use them and that data are accessible over the long term."¹

We asked the EWG to make explicit reference to the important role of Australian library and information professionals in making data more accessible and discoverable for science and humanities researchers, and we reiterate this request for consideration for the final version of the Roadmap.

¹ <http://www.icsu.org/science-international/accord/open-data-in-a-big-data-world-short>

3. Representation on a National Advisory Group

Also in our original submission, we described the library network as “a valuable, yet rarely acknowledged element of our national research infrastructure, comprising physical spaces, extensive print and digital resources, and information services delivered by expert professionals”.

If a Research Infrastructure National Advisory Group were to be formed, we would urge the Government to include a representative from the library and information sector in order to take full advantage of the knowledge and skills of the professionals we represent.

4. Access

While the Draft Roadmap includes principles describing access to equipment and facilities for researchers, there are only two glancing references to open data (page 30) and open access (page 44).

From our original submission, “library and information professionals have long been advocates for open access, making research funded by government freely available to the taxpayers who paid for it. While the Australian Government Public Data Policy Statement² of December 2015 is a welcome move towards open access principles, we would like to see experiments with open access models in Australia to identify ways of sharing important findings with the broader research community”.

It would be helpful for the Roadmap to include a statement, perhaps as one of the National Research Infrastructure Principles. For example: “Access guidelines should ensure that there are as few barriers as possible to accessing major infrastructure for those undertaking meritorious research and that the data generated using Government-funded facilities are made open access”.

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https://www.dPMC.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/aust_govt_public_data_policy_statement_1.pdf