

# INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

## Overview

The Institute for Social Research (ISR) is one of the largest social sciences and humanities research centres in Australia, with an international reputation for independent, innovative and timely work. Staff work across disciplines including economics, statistics, sociology, history, media studies, and political science. The ISR has links with researchers and policy makers in North and South America, Europe and Asia.

ISR hosts nodes of the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence in Creative Industries and Innovation, the Cooperative Research Centre for Spatial Information, and the Swinburne-Monash Research Centre of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI). The Institute edits and publishes *Australian Policy Online*, *Creative Economy* and *Inside Story*.

## Research

ISR research makes connections across disciplines to address some of Australia's most significant social and economic problems.

Research is concentrated in four flagship areas:

- Communication and Creativity
- Sustainable Cities
- Democracy and Justice
- Technology, Economics and Society

Research staff at ISR command a strong profile in print and electronic media on issues including:

- Delivering sustainable and affordable housing and achieving social housing reform
- Finding solutions to youth and family homelessness
- Investigating the impact of broadband and internet use on social, cultural and economic life
- Refugee and immigration policy
- Electoral reform, democratic process and state politics

The institute's research is funded primarily by national competitive grants from the ARC.



## Recent projects

The ISR has recently been involved in the following projects:

- **Sustainability through socio-technical innovation:** Explores supply side solutions to sustainability in relation to water, energy, material use and urban transport
- **Counting the homeless:** Tracks the number and kinds of homeless people across Australia over time
- **Re-thinking housing submarkets:** Examines the policy instruments available to social housing agencies
- **Youthworx:** Examines the impact working as a producer in a youth-run community media station has on 'at risk' young people. Also looked at is the convergence between media diversity, innovation and new approaches to social problems
- **World internet project:** An international statistical study of patterns of internet use over time
- **The reinvention of Indigenous media:** Examines the activities of remote Indigenous media organisations, exploring how community-based media are assisting with communications uptake and use at the local level, as well as Indigenous content development
- **Social memory and historical justice:** How the victimisation of minorities is publicly and collectively remembered in countries including Australia, New Zealand, the Ukraine, Spain, Austria, Germany, Peru and Mexico
- **Migrant communities, security and policing:** Research on relations between community policing and Vietnamese, African and other immigrant groups
- **From research to manufacturing:** networks and knowledge diffusion in Australian nanotechnology – A CSIRO funded project

## Industry Involvement

The institute aims to meet the highest standards for research and scholarship, while working closely with partners in industry, the community and government at federal, state and local levels. Past and present clients include housing departments in all states and territories, Australian government departments (Education, Community and Family Services, Immigration), and agencies including the Australian Electoral Commission, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the CSIRO. The ISR has partnerships with the Victorian Parliament, Victoria Police, the State Library of Victoria and state departments including Human Services, Justice and Education. Partnerships from the non-profit and philanthropic sector include the Salvation Army, the Caledonia Institute, Anglicare, Melbourne City Mission, Hanover Welfare Services, Oxfam, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Tenants Union of Victoria and InfoXchange. International funders include the World Bank and the European Commission.

## Education

The ISR is a thriving centre of postgraduate research. ISR has many doctoral and masters by research students, who participate in a lively research culture of seminars, reading groups, workshops and mentoring. Many of these students co-write and co-research with senior scholars. ISR staff teach undergraduate and honours courses in the social sciences and media. The institute also offers Australia's only national program for housing practitioners – the postgraduate by coursework degree in Housing Management and Policy. Flexible delivery caters for part-time and distance students.

## Need to know more?

### Key contact

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