



Australia's most trusted  
online panel



Life in  
Australia™

Introduction	2
Ideal for a range of surveys	3
Life in Australia™ is unique	5
Life in Australia™ is our panellists	6
What our panellists are saying	8
Life in Australia™ is for you	9
What you can expect	10
About the Social Research Centre	11
Our commitment to innovation	13
Our commitment to quality	14
The story of Life in Australia™	15
Meet the team	17
Contact us	18

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this publication may contain images of deceased persons.



**Life in Australia™ was established in 2016 and is the highest quality online panel in Australia. In fact, it is one of few probability-based online panels available globally.**

Probability-based online panels emerged internationally in the face of declining telephone response rates. They provide the perfect balance between the **speed** and **cost effectiveness** of online opt-in panels and the **quality** of probability-based telephone or address-based surveys.

What makes Life in Australia™ distinct from other online panels is considered, **rigorous** procedures used to recruit and maintain the panel.

Results from research conducted on the panel are truly **generalisable** to the Australian population. This means research conducted using Life in Australia™ provides robust estimates that will withstand scrutiny and can be published with **confidence**.

Owned and managed by the Social Research Centre, part of the Australian National University, the panel provides a **trusted** source of methodologically rigorous survey data for academia, government, not-for-profits and mission-aligned commercial clients.



# Ideal for a range of surveys

With 10,000 panellists nationally, we can achieve up to 7,500 completed surveys at any given time.

The average length of surveys conducted on the panel is around 15 minutes. However, the panel can be used for a range of survey lengths and types. These include:

- Cross-sectional surveys
- Omnibus questions
- Longitudinal research
- Experimental designs

Many clients have also opted to conduct surveys with sub-samples based on state, age, education, parenthood status, or other cohorts of interest.

Life in Australia™ is often used in conjunction with a range of complimentary methods to fulfil client-specific research requirements.

Examples include top-ups of hard-to-reach respondent groups through opt-in panels, translated surveys in languages other than English, qualitative research to inform survey design or explore findings in greater depth and calibration or blending of non-probability samples.

A benefit of being owned by the Social Research Centre is that all Life in Australia™ projects are managed by experienced social researchers. Our researchers provide advice on questionnaire design, sampling and weighting procedures and have access to our in-house methodologists and statisticians.

Being a full-service agency, we routinely go beyond delivering data. We prepare high quality analytical and technical reports, infographics, dashboards, informational videos, microsites and presentations. Final deliverables are produced by our in-house branding, communications and marketing team to ensure they are fully accessible and of publication standard.





**Life in Australia™ has over  
10,000 panellists and hosts  
multiple surveys per month.**

# Life in Australia™ is unique

## Excellent coverage

Unlike other commercially available online panels in Australia, Life in Australia™ includes adult Australians with and without internet access. Those without internet access or with limited computer literacy are able to complete surveys via telephone.

## Scientifically sampled

Life in Australia™ is recruiting using probability-based sampling methods. This means every Australian has a chance of being invited to the panel. Our statisticians use advanced methods and tools to calculate sampling errors and confidence intervals that truly reflect the precision of estimates generated from the panel.

## Transparent

The methods used to recruit, conduct and maintain the panel, as well as techniques used in data processing and producing survey estimates, are available to clients and are shared publicly. Life in Australia™ data is regularly made available on the Australian Data Archives (ADA).



## Expertly curated

The panel is used exclusively for the purpose of social and health research. All Life in Australia™ surveys are reviewed by our expert team of survey researchers and methodologists and programmed in-house. This allows us to monitor the quality of surveys conducted on the panel to ensure a consistent experience for our panellists.

# Our panellists are the heart of Life in Australia™

## Invitation-only

Only selected and invited individuals can join Life in Australia™. Like traditional high quality surveys, panellists are randomly selected and invited to take part in the study on an ongoing basis. Our panellists join because they want to share their voice on important topics impacting Australians.

## Valued panellists

As a gesture of appreciation, Life in Australia™ panellists are rewarded for joining the panel and for every survey they complete. We give panellists \$10 for each 15 minute survey completed, with the amount increasing at intervals connected to the survey length. We respect our panellists' time and ongoing commitment so we ask them to complete a few surveys per month at most. We also share the results of previous studies with them at regular intervals.

## Committed panellists

Some of our panellists have been with us since we built Life in Australia™ in 2016. In contrast to many other online panels, we actively manage panel retention through a range of engagement and retention strategies. As a result, the panel has very low attrition (drop-outs) and records high completion rates for each survey.

## Perfect for longitudinal studies

The long-term commitment of our panellists, and the fact that they complete surveys regularly rather than intermittently, makes Life in Australia™ well suited to longitudinal studies. This means attitudes, beliefs and behaviours can be tracked over time using the panel.



**“I want to have a voice  
and make a difference  
to improve the quality  
of life in Australia for all  
Australians.”**



# What our panellists are saying

*“Life in Australia™ allows me, as an individual, to gauge the **important questions** concerning our country today. Through this survey it also allows me to **understand my own morals and ethics** in a better capacity.”*

Male 20, New South Wales

*“I find the questions **thought provoking** and I like the idea of my opinions and beliefs **being heard**.”*

Female 25, New South Wales

*“I feel that it is my chance to **voice my opinion and concerns** about topics that may affect me, my family and Australia. I don’t believe that many Australians are given the opportunity to voice their worries and concerns so I take these monthly surveys as a **serious responsibility** as I feel privileged to be given the opportunity.”*

Female 40, Victoria

*“I want to **have a voice** and **make a difference** to improve the quality of life in Australia for all Australians. I want Australia to be a leader and I believe Australia can be an exemplar for better quality of life for humans globally.”*

Male 41, Western Australia

*“Well, I started from day one, done every one. Important for the public of Australia to **get their views across** and for a subsection of Australia to **understand these issues**. I just hope the findings make it better for everyone.”*

Male 63, South Australia

*“Honoured to be part of a **shared voice** and shared conversation about living in Australia, which will hopefully positively **influence decision making and policy directions** into the future.”*

Female 64, New South Wales

*“Your surveys make me **stop and think** about various aspects of living in Australia. I appreciate that **my opinions may have some value** to government departments/large organisations when gathering information for statistics/planning purposes.”*

Female 71, Victoria

*“I believe the surveys I have experienced, and there have been many, have been on **important issues**. I think the way they are presented give participants like me a very good opportunity to **express my opinion** and point of view. I think it is important for all of our society to be able to provide the information, to the community, about important issues.”*

Male 92, Victoria

# Life in Australia™ is for you

## When you want reliable results

Results obtained from Life in Australia™ can be relied upon to inform decisions and be published with confidence. This is thanks to the near-full population coverage, everyone having a chance of being invited and the transparency of the methods.

## When you want fast results

Data collection is undertaken over a two-week period, with multiple reminders sent across different media to encourage participation and maximise response. This data collection period is much faster than address-based samples allow while being long enough to obtain high response rates. Data preparation, weighting and technical reporting are standardised to expedite delivery of outputs.



## Because it's cost-effective

Most panellists complete surveys online, making the panel much more affordable than other probability-based methods. Because panellists answer a set of profile questions when they enrol, and every year thereafter, a range of up-to-date profile variables are available to append to the data. This means that standard demographic questions do not need to be asked, reducing the costs associated with questionnaire length.

# What you can expect

Whether you commission a full survey or omnibus questions on Life in Australia™, you can expect to receive your questions in a data set with supporting data documentation.

The data can be provided in SPSS, Excel or another compatible format, and will include weighting and profile variables.

The panel profile demographic variables that will be included with the data set include:

- age group
- citizenship
- country of birth
- gender
- geography
- highest level of education
- household structure
- Indigenous status
- languages other than English
- region
- socio-economic disadvantage
- state.

We provide technical information in the form of a methodological report for full surveys and a technical summary for omnibus questions. This will include details related to contact methods, weighting and outcomes reporting to American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standards. The report will comply with reporting requirements of The Research Society, ESOMAR and ISO 20252.

We support our clients lodging Life in Australia™ data with the Australian Data Archive (ADA). As an example of the cross-sectional and longitudinal data available on the ADA, refer to the ANUpoll data series produced by the Australian National University (ANU).

The ANUpoll website also provides reports prepared by the Centre for Social Research Methods (CSRM) drawn from previous Life in Australia™ data.

[csmr.cass.anu.edu.au/research/surveys/anupoll](https://csmr.cass.anu.edu.au/research/surveys/anupoll)

# About the Social Research Centre

The Social Research Centre provides the Australian research and evaluation community with access to world-class research services and a full range of survey design, survey data management, statistical consulting, analytical thinking and qualitative skills. Our motivation stems from the desire to collect data of the highest quality, undertake research and evaluation in the public good, enhance knowledge and contribute to improved service delivery and informed decision-making.

The Social Research Centre is Australia's largest dedicated full-service social research and evaluation agency. The rationale behind the establishment of a dedicated social research company arose from a consideration of the discipline required for high quality government and social research. By specialising purely in social research, we believe we are well placed to better understand the demands of such research and to strive to continuously improve methodology.

The Social Research Centre has acknowledged experience and expertise in:

- attitudinal and behavioural research
- customer satisfaction research
- large-scale surveys
- longitudinal surveys
- population health research
- program evaluation research
- research amongst persons of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- research into contemporary social issues
- social marketing and health promotion research.

We operate a 150-station remote Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) call centre with staff located across Australia. We employ 120 permanent staff, including 95 research and analytical staff, and approximately 300 telephone interviewers and support staff.





Social  
Research  
Centre

The Social Research Centre is owned by the Australian National University (ANU) and is co-founder of the Centre for Social Research and Methods (CSRM), based in the Research School of Social Sciences at the ANU in Canberra. Our CEO, Diane Herz, is a member of the Advisory Board and several other members of our Executive team hold Centre Visitor status.

**Our goal is to be  
internationally  
acknowledged  
as a 'centre for  
excellence' in  
social research.**



# Our commitment to innovation

**The Social Research Centre has led high-quality research and methodological innovation in survey research in Australia for over a decade. Innovations and learnings emerging from Life in Australia™ are no exception.**

Extensive literature reviews, external consultation and experimental designs informed our approach to designing Life in Australia™ and its initial recruitment phase. The methods paper detailing the technical elements involved in building the panel, *Building a probability-based online panel: Life in Australia™*, is publicly available via the Social Research Centre website.

In addition to the innovations informing panel development, the Life in Australia™ team regularly review processes, procedures and analytical methods as part of our continuous improvement ethos. Examples of how we have used emerging methods include:

- **Recruitment** – Short message service (SMS) push-to-web has recently been added as a recruitment strategy for Life in Australia™ due to its effectiveness in boosting the youth contingent of the panel.
- **Blending and calibration** – We developed sample blending and calibration techniques to improve non-probability sample estimates. This method is also used to boost overall sample sizes or the size of specific population groups.

We regularly publish methods papers, host informative workshops and present at conferences to share developments in the administration and management of the panel. Each year, the Social Research Centre supports staff presenting at the following conferences:

- American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR)
- Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research (ACSPRI)
- Australian Statistical Conference (ASC)
- Current Innovations in Probability-based Household Internet Panel Research (CIPHER)
- European Survey Research Association (ESRA).

# Our commitment to quality

The Social Research Centre is accredited under the ISO 20252:2019 scheme (certification number MSR 20015, first issued by SAI Global, on 11 December 2007 and recertified in 2022). All aspects of our research are undertaken in accordance with the Research Society Code of Professional Practice, ISO 20252:2019 standards, the Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy (Market and Social Research) Code 2021.

Our data security protocols are articulated in a Secure Information Policy. The Social Research Centre has been accredited to ISO 27001:2013 certification and hosts web applications at Amazon Web Services in Sydney (AWS), a cloud service provider that is certified by the ASD on the Certified Cloud Services List (CCSL).

All senior staff are full members of the Research Society. The Social Research Centre is also a member of the Australian Data and Insights Association (ADIA) and is bound by the Market and Social Research Privacy Principles/Code.



# The story of Life in Australia™



**Darren Pennay**  
Founder  
Social Research Centre

The Social Research Centre was founded by Darren Pennay at a time when the research industry was dominated by market research. Darren's dedication to social research stemmed from both the desire to undertake high quality research that informs decision-making and to advance our understanding of Australian society to achieve positive social impact.

**In 2000, Darren formed the Social Research Centre to develop a 'centre for excellence' in government and social research and to offer government and academic researchers the choice of working with a company specialising in social research.**

Darren grew the Social Research Centre, with business partner Graham Challice, through an unwavering focus on best practices in the collection of high quality data. He achieved this

by keeping abreast of industry developments internationally, while implementing and improving practices through experimentation and data-driven evaluation.

His leadership in the field of social research is evidenced by many achievements and innovations shared with the industry. Examples include:

- advocating for the replacement of electronic White Pages samples by random digit dialling (RDD)
- introducing dual-frame (landline and mobile) RDD to Australia
- introducing address-based sampling and push-to-web methods
- co-founding the ANU Centre for Social Research & Methods.

The viability of a probability-based online panel in Australia was first raised by Dr Paul J Lavrakas in a series of discussions with Darren in 2013. These discussions led to Dr Lavrakas being commissioned by the Social Research Centre to write an internal white paper exploring this issue: *Establishing and maintaining a probability-sample internet panel for the Australian general adult population.*



Darren's motivation for introducing Life in Australia™ was to 'future-proof' data collection in Australia against ever-falling telephone response rates. Darren aimed to tackle the increasing financial barriers this placed on conducting high quality research. The cost savings associated with using Life in Australia™ come from interviewing the same respondents for different surveys and using a web survey mode for most interviews.

The viability of Australia having a probability-based online panel was demonstrated by the 2015 Australian Online Panels Benchmarking Study (OPBS; Pennay et al. 2018). The OPBS comprised eight national surveys and showed that surveys fielded on non-probability online panels were less accurate, on average, than probability sample surveys. The non-probability surveys also produced results that were more variable from each other than the results from probability surveys.

**In 2016, the Social Research Centre established Life in Australia™ with an initial panel size of 3,000 Australians. At the time of writing, the panel size has grown to 10,000 people nationally.**

Darren Pennay holds a B.A. (Hons.) from the University of Melbourne and is a Qualified Professional Researcher of The Research Society. He has received numerous awards for his work. He was appointed a Fellow of the Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS; now The Research Society) in 2015 and was winner of the inaugural Jayne Van Souwe Research Industry Leadership Award of the Association of Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO; now Australian Data and Insights Association) in 2019. Other awards include the 2014 RICA Research Effectiveness Award for Innovation in Methodology, 2018 AMSRS National Conference Best Paper Award (with Stephen Prendergast) and 2015 VicHealth 'Research into Action' Health Promotion Award for the National Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women Survey (with others).

Pennay D, Neiger D, Lavrakas PJ and Borg K (2018). *The Online Panels Benchmarking Study: a total survey error comparison of findings from probability-based surveys and nonprobability online panel surveys in Australia*, CSRM and SRC Methods Paper 2/2018, ANU CSRM, Canberra.

# Meet the team



Dale VanderGert, Dina Neiger, Sam Slamowicz, Anna Lethborg, Benjamin Phillips

Life in Australia™ is led by an interdisciplinary team of experts at the Social Research Centre, all of whom are committed to continuously improving and expanding the panel.

The Life in Australia™ management and delivery team includes experts in statistics, survey methodology, research and operations.

The team is fully supported by the Social Research Centre's host of staff and resources.

## Contact us

### **Anna Lethborg**

Research Director, Life in Australia™  
[anna.lethborg@srcentre.com.au](mailto:anna.lethborg@srcentre.com.au)

### **Benjamin Phillips**

Operations Director, Life in Australia™  
[benjamin.phillips@srcentre.com.au](mailto:benjamin.phillips@srcentre.com.au)

### **Dale VanderGert**

Research and Operations Manager,  
Life in Australia™  
[dale.vandergert@srcentre.com.au](mailto:dale.vandergert@srcentre.com.au)

## We'd love to hear from you

To enquire about commissioning a survey using Life in Australia™, please contact:

**Life in Australia™**

**Social Research Centre**

**+61 3 9236 8500 (9:00am – 5:00pm AEST)**

**[info@srcentre.com.au](mailto:info@srcentre.com.au)**

## Further information on Life in Australia™

For more information about the benefits of using Life in Australia™ for your research, please visit: **[srcentre.com.au/our-research/life-in-australia-panel](http://srcentre.com.au/our-research/life-in-australia-panel)**



**Life in  
Australia™**







Level 5, 350 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC 3000  
Locked Bag 13800, Law Courts VIC 8010  
(61 3) 9236 8500 | [info@srcentre.com.au](mailto:info@srcentre.com.au)  
[srcentre.com.au](http://srcentre.com.au)



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