

Research Agenda

Research Agenda 2005

**Australian Housing and
Urban Research Institute**

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PURPOSE

Research Agenda 2005 details the research funding priorities of AHURI in 2005. The research funding priorities for Collaborative Research Ventures (CRVs) are detailed in Part A and the research funding priorities for research projects in Part B.

THE AHURI RESEARCH PROGRAM

The AHURI Research Program invests \$2.6 million annually in housing and urban policy research through a range of activities.

- collaborative research ventures (CRVs)
- research projects
- research capacity building
- research dissemination.

CRVs typically comprise suites of projects that extend over 3 years and are designed to answer research questions that are complex and/or longitudinal in nature and require a long term funding commitment. CRVs are not funded via a competitive funding round but are developed collaboratively across the Institute through a process of negotiation with AHURI Research Centre Directors. AHURI will have three CRVs underway in the 2004-05 financial year.

Research projects are the backbone of AHURI's Research Program and consume the largest single share of annual research funding. Research projects typically comprise single, less complex research questions. They are funded through an annual competitive funding round and by inviting tender responses to research briefs issued throughout the year. Research projects may vary in length from a few weeks to a few years and range across discrete secondary data analysis to significant primary data collection exercises.

Research capacity building aims to develop the skills and resources of the housing and urban research community in Australia. Research capacity building is funded through the conduct of CRVs and research projects as well as by discrete activities such as the AHURI postgraduate top-up scholarship program, post-doctoral fellowships, and the annual postgraduate symposium.

Research dissemination is central to AHURI's aim of providing an evidence base for policy development. Research dissemination is generally funded separately by AHURI. AHURI publishes reports from CRVs and research projects on the AHURI web site. Research and Policy Bulletins are also published by AHURI to summarise the key findings from completed research and to develop the implications of the research findings for policy development. Seminars and conferences are also supported by AHURI including the biennial National Housing Conference.

PART A: COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH VENTURE (CRV) FUNDING PRIORITIES

CRVs are designed to anticipate and respond to the fundamental housing and urban research priorities of government that require longer term funding. CRVs typically comprise integrated suites of projects that extend over 3 years, and are designed to tackle research questions that are complex and/or longitudinal in nature.

Each CRV is structured to reflect the information needs of a particular policy research question and can include a mix of research, policy and program analysis, intervention studies with control and comparison groups, the development of evaluation frameworks, information dissemination and capacity building. Approximately \$750,000 is available to support each CRV.

CRVs are not funded via a competitive funding round but are developed collaboratively across the Institute through a process of negotiation with AHURI Research Centre Directors. Through these consultations a CRV Director is appointed. The Director will be a leader in the field and have a depth of research and publishing experience related to the focus of the CRV. The CRV Director will then, typically, establish a small team of colleagues, across a number of AHURI Research Centres, to assist in the development of the CRV Plan. A Draft and then Full Plan is developed by the research team in consultation with a User Group that includes senior members of the policy community. The Plan includes key research questions, the broad research design; the people and skills being brought together; the broad timeframe for undertaking different phases of the research; and a budget. Deliverables from the suite of projects within a CRV are scheduled throughout the course of the program. Milestones are scheduled for completion within 'date windows' that seek to coincide with key policy development cycles.

The Draft and Full Plans are considered by the Board of AHURI Ltd to gain funding approval.

Each CRV:

- is managed by a pre-eminent academic and/or experienced project manager as program director
- is collaborative across multiple (at least 3) AHURI Research Centres
- is collaborative with external partners (industry, community, international researchers)
- has funding of up to \$750,000 over 3 years
- is nationally focussed
- has a program of dissemination events
- includes structured engagement with policy makers
- has explicit research capacity building measures.

CRV1 Housing Assistance and Non-Shelter Outcomes

The CRV aims to answer the overarching research question: how do housing assistance programs impact on economic participation outcomes (e.g. employment, retirement, education, training) once we control for the mediating effects of intermediary variables such as 'health' and 'neighbourhood'?

There are three key stages of work in the CRV. Stage one aims to identify: the number and socio-demographic characteristics of Australians in the labour force and in receipt of housing assistance; the range of factors shaping the economic participation decisions of housing assistance recipients; and how particular aspects of housing assistance programs

affect economic participation decisions. Building upon the first stage findings, stage two will develop the detailed research designs to analyse the causal relationships between housing assistance and economic participation outcomes. The aim of stage three is to explain: how housing assistance programs impact upon economic participation; how housing assistance programs can be reformed to promote economic participation; and the nature of the trade-offs between improved economic participation and housing policy goals.

CRV2 21st Century Housing Careers and Australia's Housing Futures

The CRV seeks to answer the overarching question: how are housing careers changing in Australia and what are the implications of change for government-provided housing assistance and housing policy?

This CRV advances the evidence base around 21st Century housing careers in Australia and sheds light on how shifts in household structure, the labour market, fertility patterns, attitudes to home ownership and government assistance, will influence the demand for government interventions in housing markets over the next 10, 20 and 30 years.

The CRV comprises three stages. Stage one includes:

- a comprehensive review of the literature relating to 21st Century housing careers in Australia and internationally;
- a review and analysis of existing data sets for insights into 21st Century housing careers. These data sets will form a benchmark against which we can measure change captured in our own data collection; and
- a qualitative analysis of the housing preferences and consumption patterns of key consumer groups such as early retirees, 25 to 34 year olds, and youth.

The results from stage one are to be used in stage two to frame a major data collection exercise – the *Housing 21 Survey* - alongside a process of consultation with key stakeholders about the stage one findings. Stage two consists of the design, development, implementation and subsequent iterative analysis of this data set.

In stage three further qualitative analysis is undertaken. This additional stage uses a range of qualitative methods to investigate in greater depth some of the key issues and findings emerging from the *Housing 21 Survey*.

CRV3 Housing Affordability for Lower-Income Australians

This CRV seeks to provide the evidence needed to answer the overarching question: how do we assess and address housing affordability for lower income households in Australia?

The CRV breaks this question down into six logically connected, researchable areas:

- 1) How is the problem conceptualised?
- 2) What are the drivers of affordability problems?
- 3) Why does affordability matter?
- 4) Who has an affordability problem? How has this changed over time?
- 5) What are projected affordability problems into the future?
- 6) How do we assess policies intended to improve affordability?

The CRV will be conducted in three stages. Stage one develops the background material and conceptual framework for the CRV. Stage two, through the analysis of Census data and new survey data examines the drivers and effects of housing affordability. Stage three looks forward to project the extent of housing affordability problems in coming years.

PART B: RESEARCH PROJECT FUNDING PRIORITIES

Research projects typically consider single research questions. They are funded through an annual competitive funding round and by inviting tender responses to research briefs issued throughout the year. Research projects may vary in length from a few weeks to a few years and range across discrete secondary data analysis to significant primary data collection exercises.

Approximately \$1 million is available in 2005 to fund research projects to be undertaken by AHURI Research Centres. There is one funding round in 2005 to support research projects. AHURI funds small projects (\$50,000), medium projects (up to \$125,000) and large projects (up to \$250,000).

2005 Research Project Funding Application Opening and Closing Dates

	Opening	Closing
Research Project Funding	30/08/04	22/10/03

The key housing and urban policy issues to be examined by research projects through 2005 will relate to the following policy themes and research areas:

1. Housing Assistance Programs 1.1. Housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes 1.2. Housing assistance and shelter outcomes 1.3. Housing management practice
2. Housing Futures 2.1. The future environment for housing policy 2.2. Ageing and housing
3. Program Integration and Housing Assistance 3.1. Housing assistance linkages
4. Affordable Housing 4.1. The supply of affordable housing
5. Urban Management and Infrastructure 5.1 Housing and sustainable urban development
6. <i>Place holder only</i> ¹
7. Indigenous Housing 7.1. Housing futures, needs and aspirations 7.2. The housing system 7.3. Housing and non-shelter outcomes 7.4. Sustainability 7.5. Homelessness and marginal housing
8. Homelessness and Marginal Housing
9. The Housing System 9.1. The dynamics and drivers of supply and demand 9.2. Housing, housing markets and non-shelter outcomes
10. The Policy Horizon

¹ The research theme Transforming Communities has been withdrawn from *Research Agenda 2005* as each of the three current CRVs inform upon aspects of this theme.

Project funding applications must not duplicate existing research from AHURI or elsewhere. It is therefore vital that all applicants familiarise themselves with the findings, aims and foci of completed and current projects. Summaries of AHURI research to date have been integrated with each research area below. Further details can be found in the document *AHURI Research Projects 2000-2004* at:

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/global/docs/doc706.pdf>

Project funding applications should identify which research area their proposal primarily addresses. The **policy research aim** of each research area is quite distinctive and applicants must ensure that it is clear how their proposed project will contribute to addressing the policy research aim.

For each research area a description of the policy issues to be investigated and a summary of relevant completed and current AHURI research are provided. The latter provides guidance about the extent to which each research area is being addressed. Some research projects will be most appropriately funded once the findings from current projects are known.

In each research area there is then a list of the research questions that AHURI seeks to answer in relation to such policy issues. Our aim is to invite research proposals that advance understanding of the identified policy issues and researchers are encouraged to be creative in designing research projects that will assist policy understanding and development.

Indigenous Housing Research

On the basis of consultations with the Housing Ministers' Advisory Committee Standing Committee on Indigenous Housing, and Indigenous community leaders, research project funding priorities relating to Indigenous housing policy issues have been identified and are specified in section (7) *Indigenous Housing*. This includes five research areas: (7.1) *Housing futures, needs and aspirations*; (7.2) *The housing system*; (7.3) *Housing and non-shelter outcomes*; (7.4) *Sustainability*; (7.5) *Homelessness – place, house, and home*.

In the year 2005 approximately \$200,000 can be dedicated to Indigenous-specific housing policy research. However, to promote research relevant to Indigenous housing issues to be undertaken in all AHURI research projects, AHURI expects research project proposals to include a focus on Indigenous people wherever appropriate. Where it is not appropriate to include a focus on Indigenous people in a research project, the responsibility rests with applicants to explain in their application why this is not appropriate.

All research projects must adhere to appropriate principles and protocols as specified in the *Guidelines for Applicants*. Research projects that include a focus on Indigenous housing issues must adhere to appropriate research ethics as specified in *Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Indigenous Research* (<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/global/docs/doc711.pdf>). These principles and protocols apply to all stages of the research - including development of the proposal, assessment of the proposal, conduct of the research, and dissemination of the research findings. An important element is the need for consultation with Indigenous people at key stages of the project. This can be done efficiently, since the Housing Ministers' Advisory Committee Standing Committee on Indigenous Housing (SCIH) is a mechanism through which consultation can take place. The SCIH has offered and is committed to providing a forum for consultation and facilitating communication with relevant communities.

Applying for research project funding

All research project funding applications must be submitted using the AHURI research project funding pro-forma. This pro-forma is used for automatic data entry. It is available on our web site at <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/global/docs/doc710.doc>.

Strict word limits apply to all research project funding applications. See the Guidelines for Applicants <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/global/docs/doc708.pdf> for details. Any application that does not fall within these word limits will not be accepted for consideration.

An AHURI Research Centre Director must submit all research project funding applications. A submission form signed by an AHURI Research Centre Director must accompany each application. Details of all AHURI Research Centre Directors can be found at <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/display/index.cfm?action=viewUsers>

For further details about how to apply for AHURI research funds see the *Guidelines for Applicants*, available at <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/global/docs/doc708.pdf>

(1) HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Research Area (1.1) Housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes

Policy Research Aim

To understand the attributes of housing assistance which make a difference (positive and negative) to the non-shelter outcomes of individuals, households and communities.

Policy Context

Housing assistance interventions not only aim to meet housing needs, they also contribute to higher level outcomes, such as improved social and economic well being for individuals, families and communities.

Government is seeking to better appreciate how housing assistance interventions improve people's lives. There is a need for government to more fully understand:

- the role that housing assistance plays in the lives of individuals, households and communities;
- which attributes of housing assistance make a difference to the quality of people's lives, and;
- how to design housing assistance interventions that support communities in the ways that they most need assistance.

Where changes are made to housing assistance there are likely to be flow-on effects, not just for individuals, but also for the breadth of government programs that help to meet their needs. Given this, there is a need to understand the government-wide fiscal implications (monetary and other costs and benefits) of possible changes in housing assistance.

Key findings from completed projects on housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
10001	Housing and its association with other life outcomes	The study draws two main conclusions: firstly that changes in housing circumstances have little impact on the wellbeing of Australians in general, as the analysis shows that most such changes represent movement from a relatively good situation to a better one; and secondly, that further analyses of the relationship between shelter and non-shelter outcomes consider not only changes in circumstances, but also the timing of such changes relative to each other. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=17
10002	Do housing conditions impact on health inequalities between Australia's rich and poor?	Public and private renters are more likely than home owners to report fair or poor health. The direction of causality is not understood and it is unclear whether renting makes people unwell or if sick people are more likely to be renting. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=20
10003	The whole of government lifetime benefits of investment in housing	Where housing assistance results in increased labour market activity and improved education, projected lifetime benefits could amount to \$85 000 for an individual and \$103 000 for government. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=21

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
20004	An empirical examination of the relationship between housing systems and non-housing outcomes	<p>Public housing tenants and low-income private tenants who receive government assistance have comparatively poor non-shelter outcomes when compared to private tenants who are not receiving government assistance and to other groups. However public housing tenants experienced stronger levels of community well being.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=5</p>
40005	Linkages among housing assistance, residential (re)location, and use of community health and social care by old-old adults: shelter and non-shelter implications	<p>The influence of housing on well-being is largely psychological, affecting areas such as companionship, happiness, depression, morale and ability to cope with life. Well-being varies with the type of housing tenure. This reflects marked demographic differences between people in public rental, private rental and home ownership, but the particular characteristics of the home and its social and economic environment are also important.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=22</p>
50007	Rent assistance and young people's decision making	<p>CRA has a positive impact upon educational participation – an important non-shelter outcome of this form of housing assistance. Seventy per cent of recipients stated CRA had been a factor in their decision to study. CRA was particularly important for the educational participation of two groups: those from remote or rural centres with 40 per cent reporting it as a major factor; and secondary students in independent living, with over half claiming it was of major significance.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=24</p>
60008	Housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes	<p>There are significant non-shelter outcomes that are associated with moving to public housing, including: changed use of health services and health improvements; increased perceptions of safety; and importantly, children of school age performing significantly better at school. Moving into public housing can have a mixed impact on employment outcomes, with some people feeling less need to work, and others feeling more able to do so.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=25</p>
80188	Systematic Review on Housing Assistance and Non-Shelter Outcomes	<p>A systematic review of the evidence base reveals limited conceptual work on the connections between housing assistance and a range of non-shelter outcomes, but a significant body of empirical work demonstrating a series of positive and negative connections between different forms and aspects of housing assistance and a range of non-shelter outcomes including employment, education and health.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=79</p>

Key findings from current projects on housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes

Project Code	Project Title
70073	Housing costs, housing assistance and work disincentives: attitudes to work and employment decisions http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=9
60203	An analysis of the determinants of the labour market activities of housing assistance recipients http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=82

Research Questions

Projects in this research area must build upon completed and current projects (see above) and must extend the work of CRV1 *Housing Assistance and Non-Shelter Outcomes*. CRV1 focuses upon education and employment outcomes in particular and will analyse the effects of different forms of housing assistance (e.g. public housing, rent assistance in the private rental market) as well as different aspects of housing assistance (e.g. affordability, security of tenure, location).

Research Questions

- 1) What is the nature of the relationship between different forms of housing assistance (public housing, co-operative housing associations, private market rent assistance) and key measures of social cohesion such as family and community well being?
- 2) What is the nature of the relationship between different aspects of different forms of housing assistance (e.g. affordability, security of tenure, location and associated access to services) and key measures of social cohesion such as family and community well being?
- 3) How is the nature of the relationship between different forms and aspects of housing assistance and family and community well being mediated by use of key services such as child care and health services?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research Area (1.2) Housing assistance and shelter outcomes

Policy Research Aim

To understand the effectiveness of current and future ways of delivering housing assistance that helps secure different shelter outcomes (affordability, security, adequacy, appropriateness) for a range of population groups in different housing market settings (urban, regional, rural and remote).

Policy Context

Government needs to fully understand the most effective ways that housing assistance can be delivered. Government requires assessments of how different forms of housing assistance meet the differing needs of a range of population groups, and an understanding of the shelter related effects of specific forms of government funded housing assistance.

Also the forms of housing assistance required by households in rural and remote regions are likely to vary significantly from those in urban and metropolitan areas. Population size and geographic distance combine to create quite particular housing policy and service

delivery issues and the behaviour and performance of housing markets in rural and remote areas is likely to be quite different from those in cities and regional centres.

The different housing assistance needs of different household types in different locations leads to government needing to understand, for example, whether families with children in particular require housing assistance that will provide security of tenure, and how particular forms of assistance deliver this in different locations and housing market settings.

In this policy context the effectiveness of housing assistance refers specifically to a variety of shelter outcomes such as affordability, appropriateness and adequacy. Measurement of these shelter outcomes is now being standardised across Australia through the work of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Productivity Commission.

Key findings from completed projects on housing assistance and shelter outcomes

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
40006	The housing and other service needs of recently arrived immigrants	The research found that recent immigrants made considerable use of government and other services, with more than 250,000 uses of services reported over the three waves. The use of services varied considerably by tenure, with home-owners and home purchasers having the least recourse to assistance, and public and private tenants the greatest. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=23
50011	The location and housing needs of sole parents	There are relatively high concentrations of sole parents relative to other families in areas where housing prices and rental costs are low as a result of underlying poor economic conditions rather than the location of public housing. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=27
50012	Sole parents, social well being and housing assistance	Sole parents in receipt of CRA and in public housing are quite different in socio-demographic profile. The fact that CRA and public housing provide very different forms of housing assistance leads to problems of high mobility rates and housing affordability difficulties for private renters, whilst access to employment opportunities is more problematic for public tenants. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=28
40028	Community development and the delivery of housing assistance in non-metropolitan Australia (South Australia)	Projects 28, 29 and 31 investigate the integration of housing assistance and regional development programmes. The case studies identify significant opportunities for the development of such integration although found no evidence of formal co-ordination. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=52
60029	Housing assistance and regional disadvantage (New South Wales)	See above http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=53
80031	Rural housing, regional development and policy integration (Western Australia)	See above http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publish/page.cfm?contentID=30&projectid=55

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
70030	Responding to regional disadvantage: what can be learned from international experience?	<p>Identifies three key features of policy frameworks that support the development of a co-ordinated approach: recognition that housing assistance can be productive, rather than unprofitable, for regional wellbeing; recognition that universal programmes which provide the same assistance to all regional areas need to give way to greater targeting of programmes to regions which have the greatest need; emphasising regional cohesion rather than trying to prioritise the needs of rural areas over cities or vice versa.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=54</p>
20033	Tenure security and its impact on private renters in Queensland	<p>Private tenants surveyed gave higher priority to greater flexibility and choice in their living conditions, than to a longer-term lease.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=30</p>
50049	Demand subsidies for private renters: a comparative review	<p>Demand side subsidies in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States, whilst varying in detail are typically embedded in income support systems, and thereby driven by reform of welfare programs broadly, rather than a housing policy logic.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=4</p>
80088	A micro-simulation model of the Australian housing market with applications to Commonwealth and State policy initiatives	<p>The project develops a micro-simulation policy tool for the Australian housing market. The First Home Owners Grant (at \$14,000) is found to sharply reduce borrowing constraints but to primarily attract into home ownership private tenants who would eventually have done so without the FHOG. Investors in the private rental market are found to face high effective tax rates. A Low Income Tax Credit is demonstrated to be more effective at promoting supply of low-cost private rental dwellings than the current Building Write-off Allowance</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=15</p>
60098	A distributional analysis of the impact of direct and indirect housing assistance	<p>Home ownership in Australia is exempt from capital gains tax and other income taxes. The value of these indirect subsidies to owner-occupiers in 2001 was estimated to amount to \$21 billion. Breaking this down by type of indirect subsidy, direct subsidies to first homebuyers – the First Home Owners Grant (FHOG) amounted to \$1 billion in 2001; the tax concession to owner-occupiers of not taxing capital gains was estimated to be \$13 billion in 2001, and; the tax concession to owner-occupiers of not taxing imputed rent was estimated to be a net value of \$8 billion.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=10</p>

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
50107	Analysis of expenditure patterns and levels of household indebtedness of public and private rental households, 1975-99	<p>The budget standard measure of wellbeing shows that substantial proportions and absolute numbers of low -income tenants, both public and private, cannot live at an adequate standard even after receiving a rebated rent or rent assistance. The housing affordability benchmark (30% of income of the bottom 40% of the income distribution) is found to be an unreliable indicator of housing affordability when consideration is given to the resources required for other basic living expenses. While the bulk of public tenants (79.0 per cent) and of low-income private tenants (62.0 per cent) had no formal debt, a sizeable minority did so, and this was at a level which could trigger arrears and perhaps loss of tenancy.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=13</p>
30096	Risk management and efficient housing assistance: a new methodology	<p>This study concludes that there are significant efficiency gains to be had, in relation to the current housing assistance regime, by mixing and matching the policy options to the particular set of risks characterizing each regional housing market. The optimal housing assistance policy mix will <i>not</i> be the same, for example, in Sydney and Adelaide.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=14</p>
80038	Residential location outcomes of assisted home purchasers compared with public and private renters	<p>Evaluation of the locational amenity outcomes of three housing assistance programs (public housing, Commonwealth Rent Assistance, mortgage assistance) showed significant differences both across programs and across target groups. In terms of providing amenity, Public housing provided the highest levels of locational amenity followed by Rent Assistance and then Keystart. The comparison is not straight forward, however, given the different levels of financial commitment required from the household by the different forms of assistance, the spatial patterns of house prices, and the different housing outcomes that the different forms of assistance provide.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=29</p>
30154	Operating deficits and public housing: policy options for reversing the trend	<p>The 1996 Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) constrained income for State Housing Authorities (SHAs) from government grants and rents from tenants <i>and</i> moved to target available public housing on low income households with multiple and complex needs. Six out of nine State Housing Authorities in Australasia are now running operating deficits that are not financially sustainable. By funding the implied community service obligation (the difference between market rent on public dwellings and the rebated rent paid by eligible public tenants), as happens in New Zealand, all housing authorities bar one would be returned to operating surpluses.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=67</p>

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
30204	Risk management and efficient housing assistance provision: A new methodology: Stage 2	Housing market conditions vary across capital cities and demand different mixes of housing assistance response. Significant efficiency gains can be achieved by tailoring packages of housing assistance options to local housing markets, and the various risks that characterise each market. A general approach of 'horses for courses' rather than 'one size fits all' will stretch available subsidy dollars furthest. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=83

Current projects on housing assistance and shelter outcomes

Project Code	Project Title
80087	Falling through the net? A risk management model for home ownership support schemes http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=12
30147	Regional impact of Commonwealth Rent Assistance http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publish/page.cfm?contentID=30&projectid=10
40194	A review of private rental support programs and their effectiveness in assisting tenants on low incomes http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publish/page.cfm?contentID=30&projectid=84

Research Questions

- 1) To complement the *Housing 21 Survey* being conducted in *CRV2 21st Century Housing Careers and Australia's Housing Future*, which will focus on the housing and location preferences of Australian households in general, in-depth qualitative work is sought to answer the question: what are the priority housing assistance needs of particular groups in receipt of housing assistance (eg sole parents, older people and Indigenous households) that means they prioritise certain shelter outcomes (affordability, security, adequacy, locational access) above others, and what housing assistance arrangements could most effectively deliver those particular shelter goods?
- 2) Project 50049 'Demand subsidies for private renters: a comparative review' (see above), compares Commonwealth Rent Assistance with private rental market subsidies in New Zealand, Canada and the USA. Its findings compare the policy frameworks associated with the provision of assistance to households in the private rental market and whether particular shelter outcomes are sought through such policies. A project extending this work is sought to answer the research question: reviewing the available international evidence, to what extent are a range of shelter outcomes **achieved** by private renter households in receipt of demand subsidies?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research Area (1.3) Housing management practice

Policy Research Aim

To understand the nature, costs and benefits of the range of different housing management models and practices.

Policy Context

Where housing assistance continues to take the form of in-kind provision there is an overarching question about the nature of housing management practices. Housing management practices vary across states and territories, and vary between the public housing and community housing sectors. Differences are apparent, for example, in allocations policies, rent setting, stock transfers to housing associations, asset management practices, and sales policies. As governments strive to promote the supply of affordable housing and explore the most effective ways of providing housing assistance as one part of a package of meeting complex needs, there is a need to understand the nature, costs and benefits of different types of housing management practice.

The Federal Government's welfare reform agenda has highlighted the possibility of more individualised service delivery, rather than 'one size fits all' approaches. The implications of this for housing management and program delivery need to be understood.

Key findings from completed projects on housing management practice

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
60025	Community housing management and stronger communities'	Community strengthening is an important and implicit objective underpinning community housing provision, however, there are few explicit strategies in place to achieve this goal. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=49
70026	Resident participation, social cohesion and sustainability in neighbourhood renewal: developing best practice models	The key factors in promoting resident participation in renewal are community development approaches that start with local people, identify local issues and give residents the confidence and skills to influence their communities. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=50
20094	Tenancy databases in the context of tenure management: risk minimisation and tenant outcomes in the private rental sector	Variable data quality standards and less than transparent listing procedures in tenancy databases limits the effectiveness of them as a risk management resource and results in private renters and potentially the public housing system bearing the risk associated with private tenancies. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=16
60118	Stakeholder requirements for enabling regulatory arrangements for community housing in Australia	Regulation of community housing has the potential to improve outcomes for tenants, provide greater assurance for government and enable new financing and business opportunities with financiers, developers, local government and churches. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=3

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
50138	Independent living units provided for not-for-profit organizations: clarifying their current and future role as an affordable housing option for older people with low assets and low incomes	<p>Independent Living Units (ILUs) are a housing option for older persons with relatively low assets and incomes. With 34,700 units Australia-wide, ILUs provide approximately 27 per cent of social housing for older persons. Yet, ILU stock is ageing and may no longer meet older persons' needs and expectations, and some organisations have withdrawn from providing ILUs. An extensive reduction of ILUs in the future is likely to have a substantial impact on the housing options of age pensioners; outcomes for the delivery of community aged care services, and; the capacity of State Housing Authorities to meet future demand for social housing from older persons.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectid=100</p>
50142	Entering Rental Housing	<p>There are a sizable minority of Rent Assistance recipients who are not on the waiting list, appear potentially eligible and see the value of public housing, but do not apply because of perceived disadvantages of this form of tenure or because they are unaware of this form of tenure. Security of tenure is an important factor for those putting themselves on waiting lists, and for many they would forego a low paid job to retain it. Affordability is not always an overriding consideration when applying for public housing – between 70 and 85 per cent of waiting list applicants were willing to pay more for certain amenities such as better location, quality, safety or size.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectid=1</p>
40163	Developing effective housing management policies to address problems of anti-social behaviour	<p>Many tenants expect housing managers to play a significant role in addressing anti-social behaviours on public housing estates, but policies that include a mix of preventative strategies and sanctions are most effective when there is cross-agency support.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectid=71</p>
70110	The benefits of tenure diversification	<p>Concentrations of public housing tenants fell significantly in those areas where renewal had been undertaken and the proportion of economically active people had increased in these areas at a rate above local metropolitan averages. The evidence for tenure diversification and greater social mix leading to greater social cohesion was mixed at best. While some tenants felt that community 'spirit' had improved as a result of renewal, there was little evidence that social networks between tenants and new owners had developed. Indeed, social networks on the renewal estates had been considerably disrupted through the redevelopment process.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectid=11</p>

Current projects on housing management practice

Project Code	Project Title
50141	Allocating social housing http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=2
40192	Evictions and housing management: toward more effective strategies http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=80
40200	Developing appropriate exit strategies for housing regeneration/renewal programs http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=94
50226	Rental systems in Australia http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=84
40253	A review of housing management tenant incentive schemes http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=110

Research Questions

- 1) Housing registers (waiting lists) that are common to different social housing providers (e.g. public housing authorities and community housing associations) are in use overseas and have been trialled in Australia. What are the advantages and disadvantages of these common registers for social housing applicants and how feasible is it to fully implement such common registers in Australia? The research should include a focus on Indigenous specific housing provision.

Budget

Medium and/or small projects may be funded.

(2) HOUSING FUTURES

Research area (2.1) The future environment for housing policy

Policy Research Aim

To understand future scenarios for housing assistance delivery, housing policy and broader public policy in a context of population ageing and socio-economic change.

Policy Context

Changes in the demographic, economic, social and institutional environments present a continuing challenge for housing policy. A crucial component of government planning and policy development around housing assistance delivery involves understanding what is likely to occur in the future in terms of need and demand for housing assistance. Housing policy also must adapt to developments in other policy areas. This process of adaptation is easier and more successful when housing policy makers can anticipate rather than respond to a changed environment. A view of the future environment is a valuable, if not essential, input for policy development. This is particularly the case with housing policy where housing has lifetime impacts and today's bricks and mortar decisions have a major impact on the scope and demands of the policy response in future years.

Key findings from completed projects on the future environment for housing policy

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
10014	Medium and long term projections of housing needs in Australia	Demand for new dwellings in Australia is expected to remain high until 2011, particularly in the outer regions of the major capital cities, driven by changing household size and an ageing population. Housing demand projections are provided for 71 regions to 2011 and for State and Territory regions to 2031. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=32
70015	Deinstitutionalisation and housing futures'	Whilst there remain a significant number of people who could be deinstitutionalised, the rate of deinstitutionalisation is slowing across most jurisdictions in Australia, with the exception of New South Wales and Victoria. In New South Wales, almost 2,500 people are planned to move into community based housing over the next ten years. Another 900, according to reports from other states, will make this move by 2011. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=33
10081	Explanations of changes in housing tenure in Australia	More than any other factor, trends in home ownership rates among Australians aged less than 35 years relate to changes in relationship status and living arrangements. This analysis predicts falls in home ownership to be related to the proportion of people who never marry across their lifetime. On the other hand, as people have fewer children, home ownership rates may increase. Changing affordability across birth cohorts has not been a major determinant of rates of home ownership in Australia up to the year 2000. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=31
10187	Medium term projections of housing demand in Australia	This project evaluates the validity of assumptions used in earlier medium-term projections of housing demand in Australia at a regional level. Overall, the projections have a high degree of reliability and provide accurate information concerning the future demand for housing at a regional level. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=19

Current projects on the future environment for housing policy

Project Code	Project Title
30205	Baseline small area projections of the demand for housing assistance http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=85
50225	Long-term housing futures for Australia – using ‘foresight’ to explore alternative visions and choices http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=86

Research Questions

- 1) What will be the future (10 and 20 year time horizons) level and cost of health and aged support needs associated with current and projected declining rates of home ownership?
- 2) What will be the future (10 and 20 year time horizons) level and cost of health and aged support needs associated with current and projected increasing rates of home ownership amongst Indigenous people?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research area (2.2) Ageing and housing

Policy Research Aim

To understand the implications of demographic ageing and the housing needs, aspirations and preferences of older population cohorts, for the housing market, the housing stock, and housing assistance measures.

Policy Context

The ageing of the Australian population is one of the most significant policy challenges of the 21st Century. As the population ages there will be a decrease in the ratio of working to non-working persons and an increase in the demand for pensions, health care, housing assistance and other social services. The nature of people’s decisions concerning housing, retirement and personal savings and their consequent need for income and other forms of support during retirement will be an important component of the future policy environment. Such decisions will affect the extent of the financial load on those in the labour force and the magnitude of the income tax required to assist both the old and the young.

As the population ages, more care will need to be provided to older people in their own homes, particularly in a context of deinstitutionalisation. Where older people live has implications for their access to services and for those who care for them. Planning for transportation, community and health services in conjunction with housing development and housing assistance will be essential. In this context it is important to understand the structural dimensions of population ageing and the demands it will place upon the housing system. As well, the housing intentions and actual housing outcomes of older cohort will have important ramifications for the generations that follow.

Current projects on ageing and housing

Project Code	Project Title
20170	Rental housing for lower-income older Australians: scoping the issues, clarifying the policy choices and developing a program of research http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=73
70223	Ageing in place: intergenerational and interfamilial housing transfers and shifts in later life http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=87

Research Questions

- 1) What are the costs and benefits to individuals and governments of using housing (the home) to deliver non-shelter services such as health care?
- 2) The death of a partner for a couple in receipt of income support in the private rental market typically leads to a reduction in the amount of income support received, but no comparable reduction in rent.
 - Empirically how widespread is this experience in the private rental market?
 - What is the geography of this experience relative to the residential distribution of Commonwealth Rent Assistance Recipients?
 - What are the implications of this experience for older people in the private rental market?
 - What impact does such an experience have upon residential mobility and what are the geographic outcomes of such residential mobility?
 - On the basis of the research findings what are the implications for policy?
- 3) Through a desk-based international comparative review of available evidence what is the range of housing, accommodation, care and other service program options for older people? The review should develop a typology of the program options, and an analysis of which of these programs is most effective and why.

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

(3) PROGRAM INTEGRATION AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Research area (3.1) Housing assistance linkages

Policy Research Aim

To understand how to integrate housing assistance with other government assistance programs, to improve overall outcomes.

Policy Context

Changes in government policy in non-housing areas have had a significant impact on the management of social housing and its tenants. For example, deinstitutionalisation in the mental health sector has led to increased demand for housing support for people with varying kinds of mental illness. Other groups with significant health or related problems are also increasingly accommodated in social housing. These people require particular forms of support that require close integration between housing and other service providers.

Within government the complexity of these and other housing and social issues has been recognised by the need for 'joined-up solutions to joined-up problems'. One strategic response has been the creation of departments that integrate housing assistance with other human services. The Department of Family and Community Services, within which the function of housing assistance sits at the Commonwealth level, has three key strategic objectives: to strengthen families, strengthen communities, and increase economic and social participation. At the State government level housing assistance functions are being co-located with other human service functions and to varying degrees integrated with the delivery of such services.

One operational response to the need for 'joined-up solutions to joined-up problems' has been to use 'place management' as a means of integrating a range of government programs and services. The urban and community renewal activities of housing departments and the Council of Australian Government (COAG) trials focussed upon Indigenous communities are two important examples.

As a part of this move to integrate at the policy/portfolio and program/service levels is a need to understand how housing assistance programs might more effectively link with other types of programs (for example welfare services, disability support services and income support) be this for a particular location or for a particular population group. There is a need to understand not only how to create positive synergies between programs, but also whether and how current forms of (dis)-integration generate negative outcomes.

Key findings from completed projects on housing assistance linkages

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
60019	Housing and care for older and younger adults with disabilities	Two-thirds of those with a significant disability reside in some form of cared accommodation setting, mainly aged care nursing homes. It is also the case that one-third of older adults (60+) with disabilities live alone, adding further complexity to the integration of housing and support services in order to successfully facilitate ageing in place. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=39

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
50018 <i>and</i>	Effective program linkages: an examination of current knowledge with a particular emphasis on people with mental illness.	With appropriate housing and support people with significant psychiatric disabilities can maintain stable housing in the community. These projects identify the success factors for housing and service supports that lead to these positive outcomes. Assistance of the Psychiatric Disabilities Support Workers was of primary importance and was facilitated through the pro-active identification of risks and the implementation of risk management strategies by the support services and the individuals. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=38
50102	Linkages between housing and support: what is important from the perspective of people living with a mental illness	http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=37

Current projects on housing assistance linkages

Project Code	Project Title
70020	Evaluating the Miller foyer pilot project http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=40
70111	Linkages between housing, policing and other interventions for crime and harassment reduction on public housing estates http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=36

Research Questions

- 1) AHURI seeks to conduct a systematic review of the evidence base to answer the research question: what are the costs and benefits of linked and unlinked (or integrated and unintegrated) housing and support models, which approaches provide the best outcomes for different client groups and why?
- 2) What are the alternative models (Australia and overseas) for seamless on-the-ground delivery of housing and other human services that sustain tenancies for people with complex needs, including assessment of their costs and outcomes? For example, what are the most effective means of managing tenancies at risk because of periodic mental illness, or of managing neighbourhood relations?
- 3) For those people who require support in the transition to work, what are the alternative models for the delivery of housing and other human services, what are their costs and benefits, and how effective are they?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

(4) AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Research area (4.1) The supply of affordable housing

Policy Research Aim

To understand how government's use housing assistance and other policy levers can increase the supply of affordable housing.

Policy Context

From the mid 1940s to the mid 1980s Australia's housing market and housing policy settings were characterised by growing home ownership and reasonable levels of housing affordability. Numerous economic and social benefits associated with these housing outcomes underpinned these housing policy settings. The benefits were recognised to include: poverty alleviation, asset appreciation for households, reduced retirement pension outlays for government, better housing standards and health benefits for workers, and a foundation for neighbourhood attachment and social cohesion.

These economic and social benefits are less obvious today due to changes in the nature of the labour market, the volatility of housing market booms and slumps, and policy changes since the mid 1980s. As a result there has been an erosion of housing affordability, limited government or private sector investment in lower cost housing stock, falling home ownership rates amongst younger households, and increased numbers of homeless people.

Housing affordability is also shaped by policy settings beyond housing portfolios – taxation and urban planning being key. For example, metropolitan planning policies have sought to increase housing densities within metropolitan areas to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and enhance environmental sustainability, and the cost of available, serviced land at the urban fringe has increased.

It is in this context that Principle Eleven of the 2003-08 CSHA recognises the importance of promoting a national, strategic, integrated and long term vision for affordable housing in Australia through a comprehensive approach by all levels of government. Government needs to understand the range of factors shaping the supply of affordable housing and what policy responses across housing, planning, taxation and other portfolios might effectively improve affordable housing outcomes.

Key findings from completed projects on the supply of affordable housing

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
30021	New approaches to expanding the supply of affordable housing in Australia: an increasing role for the private sector	Identifies the barriers to private sector financing of affordable housing and specifies the options for institutional investment in affordable housing - each requires a level of government subsidy to make it feasible. Leveraging private investment was found to allow the maximum expansion of the affordable housing stock for any given commitment of government subsidy funds. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=42

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
50022	A private investment vehicle for the community housing sector	<p>Identifies options for retail investment in affordable housing – again requires a level of government subsidy to make it feasible. The most cost-effective schemes for attracting private sector investment are likely to be those that most closely approximate the existing private rental market. A 'pooled fund' is a specific vehicle that could be used to facilitate investment in community housing by social investors (as distinct from retail investors).</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=43</p>
80023	Fundamental tax reform and its impacts on alternative providers of rental housing	<p>In favourable economic conditions the impact of the new tax system upon boarding house rents and caravan site fees is estimated to be an increase of 5% to 6%. Those cities with higher capital gains on property values may be able to hold rent and site fee increases lower. As tenants living in boarding houses and caravan parks are on very low incomes, proprietors could find it difficult to pass on any cost increases, making it more economic for them to exit the business.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=44</p>
30063	Policy options for stimulating private sector involvement in affordable housing	<p>Provides a framework that identifies the ways in which different forms of government support can be delivered and combined with alternative forms of private financing to expand affordable housing supply in Australia.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=41</p>
60099	Policy options for stimulating private sector involvement in affordable housing across Australia: operationalising and implementing viable new options	<p>Develops a 'how to' manual for housing departments with regard to implementing favoured affordable housing finance options. The manual is to be used by State Housing Authorities seeking to raise amounts of more than \$30m for non-grant funding or equity participation to provide additional social rental housing. It provides structured generic assistance to housing officers considering the process of raising non-grant funding or equity participation.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=41</p>
20180	Boarding houses: supply side issues	<p>Boarding houses in cities across Australia are being demolished or replaced, leading to a serious decline in the stock of this form of the low-cost accommodation. Interventions aimed at reducing this decline include demolition/redevelopment controls, financial and other support for achieving minimum fire and safety standards, land tax and rates and charges exemptions or reductions, encouraging new development, and some direct construction of stock. Where participation levels in these programs by boarding house owners can be determined, it is often low.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=76</p>

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
60191	A practical framework for expanding affordable housing services in Australia: learning from experience	<p>Affordable housing schemes involve non-government organisations developing and managing housing that is affordable for lower income households using one or more forms of government assistance – such as planning benefits, tax incentives or financial subsidies. The Australian affordable housing sector remains small with the 7 largest providers managing little over 1200 housing units. While existing providers are found to be sustainable, they are relatively undifferentiated in the services they offer and further measures would be required to entice further investment into this industry.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=89</p>

Current projects on the supply of affordable housing

Project Code	Project Title
30206	Financing affordable housing: a critical comparative review of the United Kingdom and Australia http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=92

Research Questions

- 1) Economic, social and demographic trends, as well as a wide range of government interventions (e.g. urban planning and land release, transport, incomes and welfare policy, taxation), affect housing markets and, hence, affordability. These can have different impacts in different sub-markets and groups of the population, and can also differ between locations and over time. Based upon a review of available evidence what have been the key macro-level drivers of housing affordability in Australia since the late 1980s and how have these impacts varied by time, geography and social group?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

(5) URBAN MANAGEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Research area (5.1) Sustainability - housing and urban development

Policy Research Aim

To understand how infrastructure, land and environmental resource pressures associated with urban management impact upon local housing markets and sustainable housing outcomes.

Policy Context

Australia is a highly urbanised country. This context has considerable implications for housing policy making and housing assistance delivery.

Assessment of the costs and benefits of urban development is increasingly being undertaken using the 'triple bottom line' approach of examining economic, environmental and social outcomes. This recognises that not only is each dimension central to overall sustainability but that each sphere is critically related to the others.

Housing assistance has traditionally pursued social objectives but there is now a need to understand the impact of housing assistance measures within a sustainable urban development context. For example, how might it be possible for public housing provision to embrace environmentally sound principles of building and design whilst not undermining the urgent need to house people? Moreover, how do program-specific concerns about sustainable housing assistance become integrated with sustainability of other aspects of urban development such as land-use planning and transport systems? What demands will the current generation of metropolitan strategies place upon the overall housing system and upon forms of housing assistance?

The Australian social preference for a detached dwelling and large garden is renowned, and has indeed been supported by housing policy measures over time. Yet, the size and form of our cities intensifies negative environmental outcomes, due to reliance on private transport and long work and recreational trips. The low-density environment, and associated commuting patterns, also impact negatively upon the quality of social relations in our neighbourhoods, with high levels of social isolation and loneliness in outer suburban developments, particularly for women.

Key findings from completed projects on sustainability - housing and urban development

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
60132	Housing policy and sustainable urban development, evaluates the use of local government housing strategies in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria	<p>Local housing strategies (which analyse housing demand and supply, identify groups in housing need, and recommend future actions) have helped councils co-ordinate their activities, but implementation experiences have been varied.</p> <p>The main constraints to local government involvement in housing are: lack of community (and political) support; insufficient financial resources and staff expertise; legal uncertainty and barriers to using local planning mechanisms for affordable or more diverse housing types; poor state / local government collaboration.</p> <p>http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=7</p>

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
70137	Affordability and sustainability outcomes of 'greenfield' suburban development and master planned communities	The greatest potential of the Triple Bottom Line technique lies in monitoring the condition of our towns and cities. It is an activity rarely carried out formally in Australia but it could be linked beneficially with state of the environment reporting. If indicator suites are constructed to include core indicators this will facilitate monitoring and comparability across different jurisdictions. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=45

Current projects on sustainability - housing and urban development

Project Code	Project Title
50224	Housing and community in the compact city http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=95

Research Questions

- 1) By way of a desk-based review, how is the concept of 'sustainability' interpreted in current housing policy and what program interventions are put into practical effect to achieve 'sustainability', including Indigenous housing policy and programs?

Budget

Small projects may be funded.

(7) INDIGENOUS HOUSING

Introduction

In December 1992, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. When Commonwealth, State and Territory Housing Ministers met in 1996 and 1997 they supported this commitment which included giving priority to health-related aspects of Indigenous housing such as water and waste disposal, and improving program administration and data collection to ensure future funds are targeted to areas of greatest housing need. The Ministers established the Commonwealth State Working Group on Indigenous Housing (CSWGIH) to advance this work (now the Standing Committee on Indigenous Housing, SCIH).

In May 2001 the Commonwealth, State and Territory Housing Ministers adopted a new policy *Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010*. The new policy of 'safe, healthy and sustainable housing for Indigenous Australians' aims to provide better housing and housing-related infrastructure, to secure improved environmental health outcomes for Indigenous people.

There are four objectives in this new policy:

- Identify and address unmet housing needs of Indigenous people
- Improve the capacity of Indigenous community housing organizations and involve Indigenous people in planning and service delivery
- Achieve safe, healthy and sustainable housing
- Coordinate program administration

These four objectives give rise to a number of key information and research needs that are organised under the headings detailed below.

In the conduct of research relating to Indigenous housing issues it is expected that the research process and project deliverables will explicitly and critically reflect upon the research methods in an attempt to continuously improve research effort in accordance with Recommendation 51 of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Research area (7.1) Housing futures, needs and aspirations

Policy Research Aim

To understand how housing need is shaped by subjective aspirations and preferences and by trends in family and household formation, labour market participation and residential mobility.

Policy Context

Surveys and censuses over the past decade have shown that Indigenous households are about twice as likely as other Australian households to be in need of housing assistance. The data also show that Indigenous people experience high rates of both before and after housing poverty and homelessness, and are more likely to live in overcrowded housing. The impact and extent of Indigenous housing need vary considerably, depending on the location and circumstances of the people.

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to develop a multi-measure approach to determining Indigenous housing need. This approach to quantifying Indigenous housing need is undergoing refinement, particularly with regard to data accuracy and this work is being undertaken by the housing jurisdictions. Further work is required to test the assumptions and values implicit within this measurement approach so that culturally appropriate measures of housing need are developed.

To fully understand the measurement of Indigenous housing need, we must also understand the context that shapes it. Housing need is at one level shaped by subjective aspirations and preferences and at another level by trends in family and household formation, labour market participation and residential mobility. In contrast to the population at large the Indigenous population is young and growing, which places particular pressures upon housing policy and housing assistance.

Current projects on housing futures, needs and aspirations

Project Code	Project Title
80125	The effects of New Living on Indigenous community well being: a case study on urban regeneration http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=64
40184	Best practice models for effective consultation towards improving built environment outcomes for remote Indigenous communities http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=77
80234	Indigenous access to mainstream public and community housing http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=112
30235	Framework for evaluating 'Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010' http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=113
20260	Indigenous mobility in discrete and rural settlements http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=108

Research Questions

- 1) How are the housing-related meanings of 'stability', 'security', 'control' and 'home' understood by different Australian Indigenous cultural groups, how do these meanings vary by gender and family life-stage, and how do these different meanings shape people's housing aspirations?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research area (7.2) The housing system

Policy Research Aim

To understand the dynamic interrelationships between the different tenures, their associated forms of housing assistance and their role and function in the overall housing system.

Policy Context

Indigenous housing policy and housing assistance cannot be planned in isolation from other elements of the housing system. Indigenous people live in a wide variety of housing tenure circumstances and receive a variety of forms of housing assistance: home owners 32 per cent; private renters 26 per cent; public renters 24 per cent; community renters 11 per cent; and other 8 per cent. There is a need to understand the role and function of these different housing tenures, and their associated forms of housing assistance, for Indigenous people. The extent to which the 'market' parts of this housing system are able to house Indigenous people will have an impact upon the levels and locations of housing assistance demand.

To understand the capacity of the housing system to meet the needs of Indigenous people we need to know more about the nature of Indigenous housing need and demand and also about the capacity of the housing system's supply-side to respond to these needs. The costs of land, building materials, labour, finance, exchange, and government regulation, all impact upon the eventual price of housing, upon housing affordability and upon the demand and need for housing assistance. Each of these cost items in the supply chain is part of a broader industry. For example, mortgage finance is simply one part of the very large financial services industry. Such industries are themselves undergoing significant change and restructuring that will impact upon the housing system and the demand for housing assistance. Policy makers require a detailed understanding of how the various elements within the housing system are changing so that decisions about housing assistance policy making are informed by this broader systemic view.

The dynamic nature of housing supply and demand, the housing system, sits within a broader context of economic, social, political, cultural, environmental and demographic change. There is a need to have a linked understanding of how the nature of change in the housing system is affected by changes in labour markets, family and community life, cultural values and aspirations, environmental sustainability, etc.

Current projects on the housing system

Project Code	Project Title
80124	Indigenous housing and governance: lessons from case studies of remote communities in WA and NT http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=63

Research Questions

- 1) Through a desk-based literature and policy review (international and Australian), what are the alternative housing service delivery models (across all tenures) for Indigenous people, designed to meet a range of shelter and non-shelter outcomes?
- 2) With regard to the payment of Commonwealth Rent Assistance to Indigenous persons, to what extent are the meeting of eligibility requirements and the amount of CRA received affected by the lower rents in the Indigenous community housing sector, and by the complex household-income unit structures in Indigenous communities?
- 3) What are the structural and individual factors that contribute to the varied rates of Indigenous home ownership between regions and jurisdictions? How do these factors affect the representation of Indigenous peoples in state, federal and private home ownership schemes, and how have these relationships changed over time?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research area (7.3) Housing and non-shelter outcomes

Policy Research Aim

To understand how housing policy and housing assistance might be designed to assist the development of better environmental health, education and employment outcomes for Indigenous people.

Policy Context

A central aim of housing policy for Indigenous people is to provide better housing and better housing-related infrastructure so that environmental health outcomes for Indigenous people might improve. This priority was a key outcome of the meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory Housing Ministers in May 2001.

The quantity and standard of housing for Indigenous people is often very poor. The environmental health of Indigenous people remains a major concern, with life expectancy for Indigenous people 14 to 19 years below that of other Australians. Education and labour force participation levels are also significantly below that of other Australians so there is a need to understand how housing policy and housing assistance might be designed to assist the development of better education and employment outcomes for Indigenous people.

Completed projects on housing and non-shelter outcomes

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
80037	Investigating appropriate evaluation methods and indicators for Indigenous housing programs	Develops appropriate evaluation methods and social indicators to measure and assess the effectiveness and impacts of specific initiatives within a policy framework of sustainable community development. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=65

Research Questions

No current priority questions.

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research area (7.4) Sustainability

Policy Research Aim

To understand the longer term economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes of current housing policies and programs.

Policy context

The housing needs of Indigenous people are in many ways urgent and complex. This context shapes decisions about the design of housing assistance measures, the implementation of housing management programs and the design of the housing stock and associated infrastructure. Effective policy-making, however, also needs to understand the longer-term consequences of this decision-making focussed on immediate need. Governments need to understand what the longer term economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes of the current policies and programs are.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the long-term outcomes of housing upgrade and maintenance programs in Indigenous communities and what are the implications of these for the sustainability of Indigenous housing organisations?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research area (7.5) Homelessness – place, house and home

Policy Research Aim

To understand the ‘place, house and home’ needs of Indigenous peoples and how to address these needs through housing and other service responses that secure sustainable solutions and support stable life conditions.

Policy Context

Indigenous ‘homelessness’ needs to be understood and defined quite differently from non-Indigenous homelessness. The distinctions between ‘public’ and ‘private’ places that underpin mainstream definitions of homelessness are less easily drawn when analysing Indigenous experiences, though this also differs across urban, regional and remote settings.

The way Indigenous ‘homelessness’ is defined or categorised influences the types of response strategies that are implemented by Indigenous organisations, both government and non-government and these responses may or may not be primarily about housing and accommodation.

Government needs to understand the differing home, house and place needs of Indigenous peoples in different locations and how housing assistance can link with other service agencies to provide sustainable solutions that meet the needs of Indigenous peoples.

Completed projects on homelessness and marginal housing

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
20168	Categories of Indigenous homeless people and good practice responses to their needs	Mainstream concepts of ‘homelessness’ do not serve Indigenous people well. Those designing policies or programs for Indigenous homeless people may need to re-think or change their concepts of ‘homeless’ in order to adequately understand and respond to the needs of this group of people. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=72

Current projects on homelessness and marginal housing

Project Code	Project Title
40158	Sustainable tenancy for Indigenous families: what services and policy supports are needed? http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=69

Research Questions

No current priority questions.

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

(8) HOMELESSNESS AND MARGINAL HOUSING

Research area (8.1) Homelessness and marginal housing

Policy Research Aim

To understand how to prevent homelessness, how to address the needs of those in housing crisis or at immediate risk of homelessness, and how to assist the homeless to secure sustainable housing solutions as a basis for supporting stable life conditions.

Policy Context

Homelessness has been a growing problem in Australia for many years with serious consequences for those affected by it. Demand on existing services is increasing and becoming more complex as the homeless population undergoes change. The factors driving change in the profile of homeless people include:

- Increased family breakdown;
- The deinstitutionalisation of people with mental illness, physical and intellectual disabilities;
- An increase in women and children fleeing domestic violence;
- A decrease in rooming house and low-cost accommodation options;
- Shifts in patterns of substance abuse and the availability of illicit drugs; and
- Changes to the structure and nature of the labour market.

The homeless population today has increasing numbers of single women, families and young people. Single adult males remain a significant group amongst the homeless population and Indigenous Australians are over represented.

Considerable research has been undertaken upon the risk factors associated with homelessness and upon enumerating the homeless, but there remain significant knowledge gaps. The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program data collections may be of value to much of the research in this area.

Key findings from completed projects homelessness and marginal housing

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
30056	Heroin users, housing and social participation: attacking social exclusion through better housing	Demonstrates empirically how affordable and appropriate housing can improve the well being of heroin users and prevent homelessness. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=61
70068 and 70176	Ex-prisoners and accommodation: what bearing do different forms of housing have on social reintegration?	Half of the people studied in this project exited prison to homelessness or transience. The two strongest predictors of return to prison were lack of appropriate accommodation (indicated by moving two or more times in a three month period) and drug use. The study found that a case worker needs to be assigned to every prisoner pre release to establish housing and support requirements. This case worker would continue to coordinate housing and support needs post release to ensure that common problems for ex-prisoners, such as drug use, unsatisfactory housing arrangements, and difficulties negotiating complex bureaucratic procedures for public housing were avoided. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=60

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
70072	Predictors of housing vulnerability and incipient homelessness: the case of psychiatric patients living in the community	Some people with a mental illness experience cycles or iterations of homelessness where they move chaotically through various forms of tenuous housing and periods living on the street. They do not undergo a steady decline from a more stable to a less stable housing situation. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=59
70109	On the Margins? Housing risk among caravan park residents	According to the 2001 Census, approximately 61,463 persons reside in caravan parks, an increase of about 6,263 persons compared to the 1996 ABS Census. Three distinct sub-groups can be identified as using caravan parks: older people who have chosen caravan park living as their primary form of housing for a range of reasons that suit their lifestyle; people who have to travel with work and do not wish to tie themselves to any one residency; people who have few alternatives available to them. The latter includes people on low incomes and others who for various reasons are unable to access other forms of housing either in the private, public or community housing sectors. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=62
70135	Housing options and independent living: sustainable outcomes for older people who are homeless	Two key themes were found to underlie the housing preferences of older homeless people: the need for security and the desire for independent living. In relation to these needs, the location of housing close to familiar social networks and amenities was more important than housing design. The overwhelming preference of clients and agencies was for public housing as it was seen to be affordable, accessible and to offer security of tenure. The least preferred option was private rental as it generally lacked these qualities. The support services regarded as most effective were those assisting clients to obtain services from other agencies followed by those assisting with establishing and maintaining a tenancy. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=57

Current projects on homelessness and marginal housing

Project Code	Project Title
40048	A comparative study of housing needs and provisions for recently-arrived refugees http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=58
30156	The development of prevention and early intervention services for homeless youth: intervening successfully http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=68
40160	Developing models of good practice in meeting the needs of homeless young people in rural areas http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=70

Research Questions

- 1) What are the whole of government costs and benefits of not preventing homelessness, including, for example, in relation to health, crisis accommodation, policing, criminal justice, and housing assistance?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

(9) THE HOUSING SYSTEM

Research area (9.1) The dynamics and drivers of supply and demand

Policy Research Aim

To understand the dynamics of the housing system in Australia in particular the interrelationship between the different tenures and their role and function in the overall housing system; and the impacts of different forms of housing assistance upon the balance of supply and demand across different tenures.

Policy Context

Supply, demand and regulation in the overall housing system fundamentally affect the demand for and cost of housing assistance. Policy makers require a detailed understanding of how the various elements within the housing system are changing so that decisions about housing assistance policy making are informed by this broader systemic view.

In relation to the demand for particular tenures, for example, we might surmise that any factors reducing either the ability or the willingness of households to enter or remain in home ownership will put increased pressure on the private rental market. To the extent that lower income households are affected by these trends, the cost of Commonwealth Rent Assistance would then increase correspondingly. Without an appropriate supply response in the private rental sector, the demand for social housing would be likely to increase. If this increased demand cannot be met then its impact would be felt in the homeless services sector. The interrelationships between the different tenures are complex and vary over time and by location.

This research area seeks to develop a contemporary understanding of the dynamic interrelationships between the different tenures and their role and function in the overall housing system. This information is required to understand the system-wide impacts of the various forms of housing assistance and to what extent they support the balancing of supply and demand across the tenures.

A range of supply-side factors also shapes the price of housing. The costs of land, building materials, labour, finance, exchange, and government regulation, all impact upon the eventual price of housing, and thus on housing affordability and therefore on the demand and need for housing assistance. Each of these cost items in the supply chain is part of a broader industry. For example, mortgage finance is simply one part of the very large financial services industry. Such industries are themselves undergoing significant change and restructuring that will impact upon the housing system and the demand for housing assistance.

There is also an important geography to the dynamics and drivers of housing supply and demand. The behaviour and performance of housing markets in rural and remote areas is likely to be quite different from those in cities and regional centres. There is considerable spatial unevenness in population, employment and housing circumstances. If some communities are experiencing decline, others, even in the same region, can be experiencing growth. The latter are often coastal communities or inland centres with particular lifestyle advantages, buoyed by a population that has sought early retirement and/or is disaffected with urban living. Some regional centres are experiencing growth linked to highly casualised primary production and processing, however, housing investment does not always follow employment opportunities.

The housing policy issues facing non-metropolitan Australia have their own particular dynamic as population size and geographic distance combine to create quite particular housing policy and service delivery issues. Questions arise about the best ways of attracting and retaining housing investment and/or of delivering assistance to people living in non-metropolitan communities.

Key findings from completed projects on the dynamics and drivers of supply and demand

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
40010	The implications of changes in the labour market for the ownership aspirations, housing opportunities and characteristics of first home buyers	For 60% of households job security concerns made them deliberately more cautious in their home buying: looking in a lower price range; buying a cheaper home; and/or borrowed less. There is more of a relationship between price and employment category than between price and household income. Those in less secure employment are buying cheaper homes while those on higher incomes are not necessarily buying more expensive homes http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=26
60064	A spatial analysis of trends in housing markets and changing patterns of households structure and income	Australia's home ownership rate fell 2.2 percentage points from 68.2% to 66% between 1986 and 1996, mainly due to a decline in the percentage of home purchasers. In metropolitan areas across Australia the home ownership rate for households in the 25-44 year old age group declined by 6.7 percentage points, more than twice the decline in non-metropolitan regions and more than three times the decline in the aggregate homeownership rate. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=6
60190	Changes in the supply of and need for low rent dwellings in the private rental market	In 2001, there was an overall shortage in affordable and available housing suitable for low income households (defined to receive less than \$335 per week) equal to 134,000 dwellings. Shortages were especially acute in cities such as Sydney, Darwin, Canberra and Melbourne. Only 39 per cent of low rent dwellings were occupied by households with low incomes, but 60 per cent of private renters on low incomes were paying rents above the lowest rent segment. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=96

Current projects on the dynamics and drivers of supply and demand

Project Code	Project Title
80151	What drives housing outcomes in Australia? Understanding the role of aspirations, household formation, economic incentives and labour market interaction http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=66
70217	Rent assistance and the spatial concentration of low income households in metropolitan Australia http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=97
50264	Trends in Australian Non-metropolitan housing markets, 1991-2001 http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=111

Research Questions

- 1) What impact did the recent surge of investment into the private rental market having upon pricing, vacancy rates and access to home ownership in each Australian capital city? How does this recent market cycle and its associated outcomes compare with other recent cycles in the housing market?
- 2) In the context of housing market cycles, what is the effect (short and medium term) of recent changes to stamp duty and land tax regimes across different States and Territories on first home ownership, investment in the private rental market and labour mobility?

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

Research area (9.2) Housing, housing markets and non-shelter outcomes

Policy Research Aim

To understand how housing (tenure, type, price, location, density) and housing markets make a difference (positive and negative) to the non-shelter outcomes of households, communities, economies and societies and the implications of these for housing policy.

Policy Context

Shelter is widely regarded as one of the essentials of life. Affordable, appropriate, and adequate housing is argued to be, amongst many other things, important for people's health and a stable base for family life.

At another level 'good' housing, it is said, underpins an array of broader social and economic benefits. By strengthening neighbourhood attachment, home ownership, it has long been thought, contributes to social cohesion. Similarly, as housing is the most important asset behind household wealth, the continuing healthy performance of housing markets underpins the consumption of goods and services in the economy at large.

Research area 1.1 *Housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes* (see above) seeks to understand how housing assistance interventions improve peoples' lives. Yet, there are aspects of housing distinct from direct housing assistance interventions (for example, dwelling type, dwelling density, control over the physical fabric of the home, asset appreciation, and location) that may also contribute to higher-level outcomes for individuals and households.

Additionally, whereas research area 1.1 focuses upon the links between housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes, this research area is concerned with the performance of housing markets and various macro-level non-shelter outcomes.

There is a need for government to more fully understand the relationships between these aspects of housing and a range of non-shelter outcomes for individuals and households so that it can design housing assistance interventions that build upon these positive links. Government also needs to understand the consequences of poor or inadequate housing in terms of undesirable social and economic outcomes, as well as the consequences of rising and falling housing markets for the economy at large. The role of housing, housing markets and the housing system in macro-level social and economic outcomes can provide important rationales for government interventions and/or non-intervention in these markets.

Research Questions

- 1) Since the late 1980s, various States in Australia have implemented low-income home ownership support programs (both mainstream and Indigenous specific).
 - How does the design of these various programs compare and how do they compare with contemporary international programs?
 - How have changing economic circumstances in Australia affected the performance and outcomes of such programs?
 - What advantages and disadvantages do recipients of home ownership assistance identify?
 - What forms of government action and subsidy most effectively support low-income households' access to and maintenance of home ownership?
- 2) One of the long-running justifications for government support for home ownership is the link between home ownership and social cohesion. A systematic review is sought of the international and Australian evidence for the links between homeownership, and constituent aspects thereof, and various aspects of social cohesion.

Budget

Large, medium and/or small projects may be funded.

(10) THE POLICY HORIZON

Policy Research Aim

To understand key concepts that provide the foundations of housing studies and their relationship to housing policy making and housing program implementation.

Policy Context

This research area aims to identify the issues 'at the policy horizon'. Research projects in this research area are not guided by today's Research Agenda, but aim to shape the Research Agenda of tomorrow. Of a conceptual orientation this research area explores the foundations of housing studies. Applications are invited that will extend the knowledge base of housing studies and advance understanding of the links between housing studies, housing policy making and housing program implementation. Policy Horizon projects are not expected to include any primary data collection.

Completed projects on the policy horizon

Project Code	Project Title	Key Findings
40185	A critical review of intervention studies and evidence based policy	The project analyses debates in the literature about whether evidence-based policy making is better than or substantially different from other approaches to policy making. The focus of evidence based policy making upon what works and why is particularly complex in the housing field as it is recognised that it is difficult to specifically isolate the outcomes of interventions in housing and urban issues from wider social processes. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=78
40199	Social exclusion and housing	The concept of social exclusion is no more useful than the widely used concepts of poverty and inequality when exploring issues of disadvantage and housing. But it is potentially helpful to focus attention on the role that both individual agency and structural factors play in determining poverty and inequality. http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=98

Current projects on the policy horizon

Project Code	Project Title
20216	Understanding and enhancing research-policy linkages in Australian housing with particular reference to AHURI http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/project/display/dspProject.cfm?projectId=99

Research Questions

- 1) A desk-based international review of available evidence is required to assess how different aspects of housing, housing tenure, private property rights, and housing assistance contribute (positively and negatively) to social capital?

Budget

Small projects may be funded.

AHURI Research Centres

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