
AHURI funded research activities 2020

Policy Development Research Model

The AHURI Policy Development Research Model facilitates engagement between the research and policy communities. Policy development research integrates the traditionally separate processes of evidence building and policy development into one set of practices. The Policy Development Research Model demands a high degree of collaboration within and between the policy and research communities which occurs through specialised research vehicles developed by AHURI to integrate research and policy engagement.

Inquiries are the flagship of the AHURI Policy Development Research Model. AHURI Inquiries are focussed on a substantial and complex policy issue, engaging key experts in policy development. Each Inquiry is guided by a panel of experts who are informed by an integrated suite of Inquiry research projects. These Inquiry research projects build the knowledge and new ideas critical to addressing the policy question.

Stand-alone projects are a key research vehicle forming a complementary stream of research to the Inquiries addressing specific issues. They respond rapidly to policy community considerations and issues in public discourse. AHURI research also includes Investigative Panels, which bring together experts from the research and policy communities as well as practitioners from industry and community sectors to interrogate a specific policy or practice question.

Funded Evidence-Based Policy Inquiries

Inquiry into population growth in Australia's smaller cities

(led by Professor Andrew Beer at the University of South Australia)

Australia's smaller cities may have the capacity to grow and accommodate more migrants, but population movements continue to direct people to the capitals. This Inquiry will use quantitative and qualitative analysis to provide insights into the policies and programs needed to grow Australia's second-tier cities.

This Inquiry is supported by research projects on:

The economic dynamics and population change of Australia's regional cities

(led by Professor Jago Dodson at RMIT University)

This project will investigate the economic dynamics of Australia's regional cities; assess links between economic change and population change; and appraise how migration influences city economies and population.

Understanding what attracts new residents to smaller cities

(led by Dr Akshay Vij at the University of South Australia)

This project will examine current mobility and settlement patterns across Australian metropolitan and regional areas; identify key drivers of population mobility to/from both metropolitan and regional areas; and measure the relative influence of different factors (e.g. employment, infrastructure) that support migration to regional areas.

Understanding the perceived benefits of living in regional cities

(led by Dr Laura Crommelin at the University of New South Wales)

This project aims to identify the key factors shaping the lived experience of residents in regional cities, and how these experiences contribute to resident retention, to inform future policies supporting sustainable long-term regional growth.

Inquiry into housing policies and practices for precariously housed older Australians

(led by Dr Debbie Faulkner at the University of South Australia)

This Inquiry will investigate how to provide a more differentiated and diversified housing system that better caters to the needs of precariously housed, older individuals. Drawing on national and international evidence and through broad consultation with the sector and older people, this project will help inform policy and practice.

This Inquiry is supported by research projects on:

Mapping where older low-income renters live

(led by Dr Helen Barrie at the University of South Australia)

This project will map the size and location of the cohorts of retired/retiring renters with low-incomes in Australia using census data and data on current and future pensioner income and wealth, with population projections to 2027. It will produce an online tool geographically locating the 'at risk' population.

Housing models for precariously housed older Australians

(led by Dr Selina Tually at the University of South Australia)

This project will identify appropriate housing models for precariously housed pre-retirement and retired households informed by developers, providers, planners and architects.

Housing aspirations for precariously housed older Australians

(led by Associate Dr Amity James at Curtin University)

This research will survey lower-income older households' preferences for alternative housing models and the supporting structures required to navigate their housing options. It will provide policy makers with an evidence base for innovative new housing models and reducing gaps in services delivery for older Australians.

Funded stand-alone research projects

How many in a crowd? Assessing overcrowding measures in Australian housing

(led by Dr Michael Dockery at Curtin University)

This project will use mixed-methods to reassess overcrowding measures for Australian households. Rich panel data and an advanced econometric approach will be used to establish thresholds at which various density measures impact negatively upon occupants' wellbeing, complemented by qualitative interviews and a focus on gender and cultural differences.

Estimating the population at risk of homelessness in small areas, 2016

(led by Associate Professor Christian Nygaard at Swinburne University)

This research aims to produce small area estimates of the 'at risk of homelessness' population in Australia in order to assist policy makers and stakeholders at local and regional levels in developing homelessness prevention strategies. It combines HILDA and Census 2016 data to produce a new, user customisable data set.

Measuring neighbourhood change through residential mobility and employment

(led by Dr Somwrita Sarkar at Sydney University)

The project will draw on internal migration and journey-to-work data from the 2011 and 2016 Census to compute indices of neighbourhood change, identifying and focussing on deprived/affluent neighbourhoods based on residential mobility and employment connectivity. It will use this neighbourhood-change index to develop a neighbourhood-level measure of housing displacement/exclusion.

Modelling sustainable regional and remote Indigenous housing

(led by Associate Professor Tess Lea at Sydney University)

This project explores ways to most effectively plan, resource, and target Indigenous housing interventions to generate diverse and sustainable benefits. It reviews representative regional/remote repair and maintenance approaches; models context-appropriate housing design; identifies opportunities for resilient locally-led employment; and adopts a lifecycle perspective for cost modelling.

Precarious housing, housing assistance and wellbeing: a multi-dimensional investigation

(led by Professor Rachel Ong at Curtin University)

This project will generate a comprehensive, up-to-date and national evidence base on the links between multiple dimensions of housing precariousness and wellbeing. The project will support housing policy development by uncovering the extent to which housing interventions might be effective in counteracting the negative impacts of precarious housing on wellbeing.

Housing key workers: scoping challenges, aspirations and policy responses for Australian cities

(led by Dr Catherine Gilbert at Sydney University)

Amidst growing concern about the retention of key workers in high cost metropolitan areas, this scoping project will investigate evidence of housing affordability, housing choices, commuting patterns and residential moves amongst Sydney and Melbourne's key workers to identify approaches that could support key workers to live near and access their jobs.

Developing an Australian Social Housing Advanced Asset Management (ASHAAM) framework

(led by Dr Andrea Sharam at RMIT University)

This research will a) investigate Australian social housing asset management practices and b) develop an Advanced Asset Management framework suitable for Australian social housing managers. It will utilise quantitative (a national survey) and qualitative (interviews and workshops) methodologies and incorporate a review of literature.

Accommodating adults with disabilities and high support needs

(led by Emeritus Professor Errol Cocks at Curtin University)

Individual supported living (ISL) enables adults with disabilities to live in their own homes. This study, based on established ISL research, will identify and examine housing strategies for adults with disability and high support needs, focussing on the range of tenures and support models that provide positive outcomes.

Understanding how policy settings affect developers' decisions

(led by Professor Steven Rowley at Curtin University)

The viability of development schemes is critical to housing supply, yet little is known about how developers assess such viability. This research will unpick the process and examine the potential of various policy settings and alternative construction technologies to impact development project viability and deliver improved affordability outcomes.

Modelling a Filtering Process in Expanding Affordable Rental Supply

(led by Associate Professor Chyi Lin Lee at University of New South Wales)

This project explores the opportunity of an innovative market driven mechanism (i.e. filtering process) to expand the supply of affordable rental properties that are affordable to low- and moderate-income households and contribute towards meeting Australia's housing needs. The project will be guided by ongoing input from Australian and international stakeholders.

Filtering as a source of low-income housing in Australia: conceptualisation and testing

(led by Associate Professor Christian Nygaard at Swinburne University)

This project conceptualises how filtering can contribute to the provision of market-based low-income housing in Australia and explores different methodological approaches to empirically test for evidence of filtering in Melbourne and Sydney.

Understanding discrimination effects in private rental housing

(led by Dr Sophia Maalsen at Sydney University)

This project investigates types and impacts of prejudicial discrimination in the private rental housing sector. Highlighting intersections of age, race, gender, sexuality and technology, the project will deliver an international research evidence review and scope a research and policy agenda with housing practitioners from urban and regional Australia.