

CHASS NEWS

Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

23 July 2009

A culture of open government

The Australian Government recently created the [Government 2.0 Taskforce](#) with a brief to build a culture of online innovation. It wants to ensure that Government is open to the possibilities of the new collaborative technologies in Web 2.0 channels, and uses them to improve the way it operates.

15 policy and technical experts and entrepreneurs from government, business, academia, and cultural institutions were [appointed to the taskforce](#), chaired by Dr Nicholas Gruen, an economist. It is actively seeking your input to build a new culture of openness - visit the website to read the [Issue Paper](#) and join the debate.

It won't be easy for governments to open up for a freer exchange of information, but this taskforce may help. The humanities, arts and social sciences will be major contributors to the creative exploration of the new networks. There are several members of the taskforce from collecting institutions, and people with experience in social innovation projects.

At the announcement of the taskforce the Minister for Finance and Deregulation, Lindsay Tanner, noted that this year an average of 800,000 visitors are using the main [Government website](#) each month. Four years ago the figure was 250,000 visitors a month. As the Minister said, this was basically usage based on Australians collecting information from web sites and filling in forms. It is when we come to wikis and collaborative debate that the business of Governments, and the citizens which deal with them, will truly change.

Along the way, new technologies pose a clear challenge to copyright held by creators (from academic researchers to artists and those contributing to public debate). Free access to information, analysis, research, has to be balanced with rewards for creation and distribution of new knowledge and creative work. The US based [National Humanities Alliance](#) recently completed a report which shows it cost nearly \$10,000 to publish an article in a humanities or social-science journal in 2007, more than three times the cost of publishing an article in a science, technical, or medical journal (the report will be available on the NHA website soon).

Elsewhere, CHASS has stated its concern that a drive to reduce protection for Australian publishing and writing must not damage the pressing need to build creative industries and to foster Australian story telling. It is clear we need a bold and innovative cultural policy to take us into the era of Web2.0 - one which also supports creative industries as a source of productivity growth.

Helen O'Neil
Executive Director
Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
23 July 2009



HASS on the Hill update

27 and 28 October, 2009.

[HOTH 2009](#) registration and program will be online in early August.

Design Dialogue

The [Design Dialogue](#) roundtable finished with strong consensus about the case for designers and design organisations as leaders in the innovation debate, and for better use of design knowledge and skills in meeting the challenges before Australia.

Communicating your research

The Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences will partner with the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations in hosting the 2009 CAPA Postgrad Roadshow [afternoon session](#); *Communicating your research to a public audience*.

ERA Initiative

Over the next few months, the Australia Research Council will finalise the incorporation of esteem factors and non-traditional publications into the Humanities and Creative Arts Cluster of Excellence in Research in Australia. CHASS is developing a paper documenting the consensus building in these two areas, and will present to the ARC a final recommendation for their inclusion.

Member Organisations' Survey

CHASS is actively seeking information about its member organisations' priorities to aid in planning Council's advocacy for improved policy settings and resources for the humanities, arts and social sciences. Email programs@chass.org.au if you have not received the survey and would like to participate.

HASS at a glance

Queensland University of Technology

You are [invited to participate](#) in *Finding Australia's Social Enterprise Sector* project which will map the range and scope of social enterprises in Australia.

Australian Academy of the Humanities

The Australian Academy of the Humanities [response](#) to Australian Universities Quality Agency discussion paper *Setting and Monitoring Academic Standards for Australian Higher Education*.

Music Council of Australia

Music Council of Australia featured in ABC's [background briefing](#) which pointed out the challenges for teacher training in incorporating arts skills and lack of access to arts education.

Research collaboration

Australian Business Foundation are [inviting partners](#) with exceptional vision and research capability to collaborate with on research projects that provide fresh intelligence to shape debate and incite practical action.

Closes 14 August

News at a glance

[Australian Policy Online](#)

Social media: tools for user-generated content - Axel Bruns and Mark Bahnisc

[Meanjin Quarterly](#)

Evolution and creation: Australia's funding bodies - Marcus Westbury

[Campus Review](#)

Indigenous training up, but other equity indicators down - John Ross

Events at a glance

- [CHASS events calendar](#)
- [HASS on the Hill](#)
- [Communicating your research](#)

- [DASSHing leadership](#)

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