Joint Response from the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) to the Draft National Digital Research Infrastructure Strategy Consultation

*Please note: This submission was made using the online questionnaire to respond to [Consultation on Draft National Digital Research Infrastructure Strategy](#). Questions and answers have been reproduced below, with answers for multiple choice indicated in blue. Answers to questions were limited by tight word limits.

NDRI Strategy Section-specific Responses

Please provide your view on the following statements.

Vision for future NDRI ecosystem A user-centric design (outlined in the "Vision for future NDRI ecosystem" section) is an appropriate foundation for Australia's NDRI ecosystem over the next 10-15 years.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

The six Outcomes (identified in the "Outcomes" section) adequately capture the priority features of an Australian NDRI ecosystem that will meet the Vision (described in the "Vision for future NDRI ecosystem" section).

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments relating to the "Outcomes" section of the Draft NDRI Strategy? Max 1000 characters.

Point 3 (consistent in its standards for data collection, curation and access) should include digital preservation – see notes under Outcome 3.

The identified Challenges (outlined under the headings for Outcome 1 to 6) adequately describe the major issues facing the Australian NDRI ecosystem over the next 10-15 years.

[They are:

Australia's NDRI cannot reach its true potential for impact without access to a suitably skilled workforce by digitally skilled researchers and other users.

Rapid technological advances and societal shifts can quickly lead to obsolete and ineffective digital resources.

Rapidly increasing rates and volumes of data are being generated across all research fields in formats that are not findable, accessible, interoperable or (re)usable.

Research communities and other NDRI users have varying and rapidly expanding computing, data and software demands but may lack the expertise to identify suitable resources, leading to inefficient and ineffective use.

Cybersecurity threats are becoming increasingly sophisticated while the sensitivity of research data is increasing.

Software is critically important for impactful research, but its place in the NDRI system is not well defined.]

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Outcome 1. Underpinned by training frameworks for researchers and NRI workforce

The content in the "Underpinned by training frameworks for researchers and NRI workforce" section adequately presents the high-level information expected for this section of the NDRI Strategy.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments relating to the "Underpinned by training frameworks for researchers and NRI workforce" section? Max 1000 characters.

This section notes "NDRI investments to support sustainable career pathways should also consider complementary education and training qualifications that already exist". We would reiterate that in addition to stand-alone qualifications, training can and must be embedded into a wide range of industry qualifications. ALIA's framework of skills, knowledge and ethics for the library and information services workforce provides an excellent example of how this can work. Here, 'Technologies' is listed as one of eight recognised professional knowledge domains for the sector. Qualifications in this area, when added to training in three core domains (including respect and recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, cultures and Country; LIS environments and contexts; and ethics and values), will be recognised across the LIS sector.

Outcome 2. Responsive to disruptive technological and societal shifts

The content in the "Responsive to disruptive technological and societal shifts" section adequately presents the high-level information expected for this section of the NDRI Strategy.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments relating to the "Responsive to disruptive technological and societal shifts" section? Max 1000 characters.

Outcome 3. Consistent in its standards for data collection, curation and access

The content in the "Consistent in its standards for data collection, curation and access" section adequately presents the high-level information expected for this section of the NDRI Strategy.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments relating to the "Consistent in its standards for data collection, curation and access" section? Max 1000 characters.

This section would not be complete without the addition of standards in digital preservation, which underpins curation and access as part of the data lifecycle: essential for long-term archiving and storage.

Systems and standards for digital preservation have long been a shared concern of libraries and cultural institutions in Australia, and this continues to be an underdeveloped and under-resourced field within the sector. The most critical, internationally consistent body of work in this area comes from the Digital Preservation Coalition.

To references on Indigenous data sovereignty we would add four recent (2021-23) comprehensive referencing and ICIP guidelines produced by the library sector with a focus on reparative description – word count precludes listing here but details can readily be provided.

Finally, in addition to FAIR principles, we urge a commitment to open access, including open access research outputs, as well as the access to open research tools in part 6.

Outcome 4. Integrated across levels of computing and data

The content in the "Integrated across levels of computing and data" section adequately presents the high-level information expected for this section of the NDRI Strategy.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments relating to the "Integrated across levels of computing and data" section? Max 1000 characters.

Outcome 5. Cybersecure, particularly for national-scale data and computing

The content in the "Cybersecure, particularly for national-scale data and computing" section adequately presents the high-level information expected for this section of the NDRI Strategy.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments relating to the "Cybersecure, particularly for national-scale data and computing" section? Max 1000 characters.

We would again add digital preservation to this section as an under-recognised component of cybersecurity, noting the very real risk posed by vandalism/alteration of born digital research data. Effective digital preservation practices can mitigate this risk by detecting high-level errors arising during data transmission or storage.

Outcome 6. Maximised by openly available research software tools

The content in the "Maximised by openly available research software tools" section adequately presents the high-level information expected for this section of the NDRI Strategy.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments relating to the "Maximised by openly available research software tools" section? Max 1000 characters.

NDRI Strategy Overall Response

Overall, the presented NDRI Strategy will help shape a future Australian NDRI ecosystem that meets the rapidly growing demands of researchers and other users for increasingly complex digital tools and services.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please write any additional comments or feedback that you may have relating to NDRI

Overall the draft NDRI strategy has a very strong focus on science and science data. The words 'social science' or 'humanities' do not appear in the draft at all. An absence of this data in our national digital research infrastructure would mean a vast and detrimental gap in collective knowledge-sharing. The collections of Trove alone, as a collaboration between the NLA and hundreds of partner organisations, include billions of pieces of information gathered from archived websites, newspapers, maps, photographs, music, interviews, manuscripts, magazines, books and journals.

The NDRI plan must address the incorporation of the thousands of terabytes of library collections representing current and potential research data already stored, preserved and made accessible via a complex infrastructure network. We commend the work of the Academy of Social Sciences in producing its own decadal plan and urge the NRI to work with this body in refining a draft NDRI strategy for Australia.