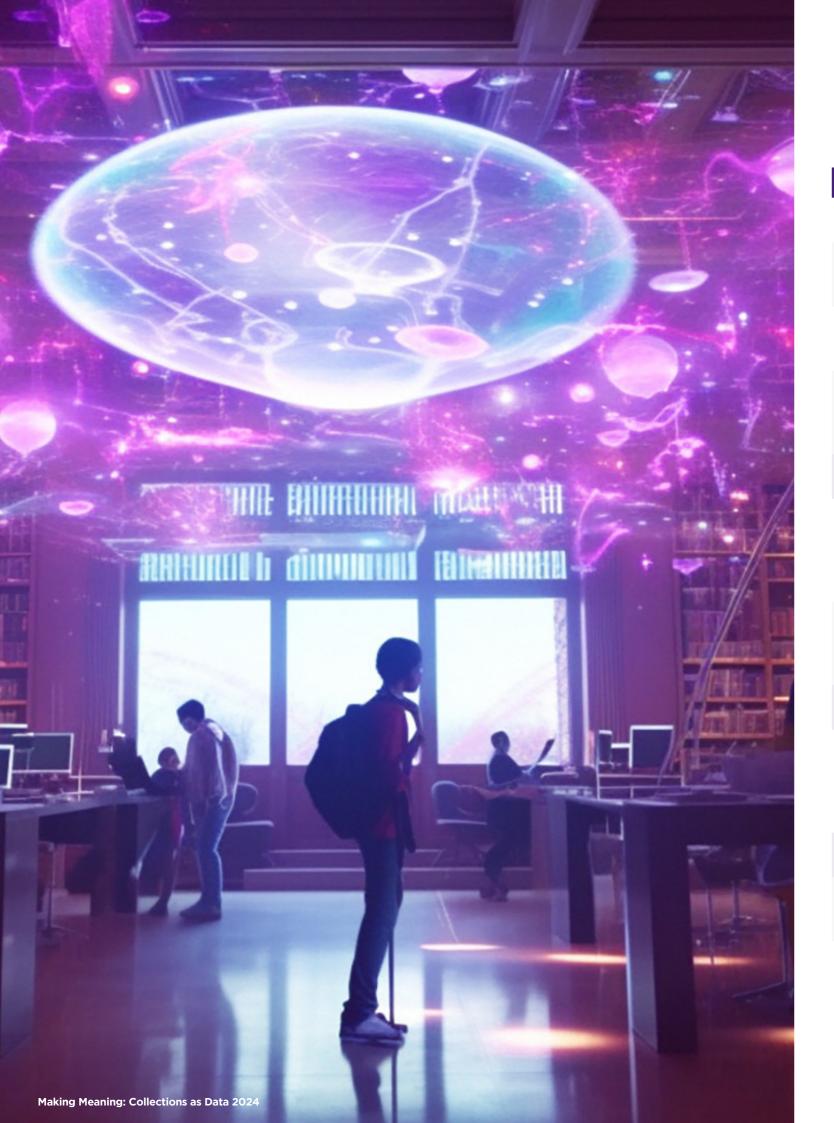# MAKING MEANING

Collections as data symposium

Friday 8 March 2024 | State Library of Queensland

Program

PROGRAM

Start	Finish	Session
8.45 am	9.00 am	**Coffee and check in**
9.00 am	10.00 am	**Welcome address and Acknowledgement of Country** Vicki McDonald AM FALIA, State Librarian and Chief Executive Officer, State Library
9.20 am	10.05 am	**Keynote 1** Mia Ridge, British Library (United Kingdom)
10.05 am	10.45 am	**Panel Discussion— The future of collections as data** Mia Ridge (British Library), Robert McLellan (UQ), Morgan Strong (QAGOMA) Distinguished Professor Jean Burgess (QUT—Moderator)
10.45 am	11.15 am	**Morning tea**
11.15 am	12.00 pm	**Lightning Talks session 1** Presented by Data Discovery and Open Data Sotirios Alpanis (State Library of Victoria) , Assoc Prof Mark Lauchs (QUT), Dr Sam Hames and Dr Naomi Barnes (UQ), Dr Frederico Fialho Teixeira (UQ), Julian Mazuera (Data Discovery and Open Data—Moderator)
12.00 pm	12.45 pm	**Keynote 2** Robert McLellan, Language Data Commons of Australia / UQ (Queensland)
12.45 pm	1.45 pm	**Lunch break**
1.45 pm	2.30 pm	**Lightning Talk session 2** Presented by AARNET Tom Honeyman (ARDC), Andrei Maberley (Queensland Museum), Fiannuala Morgan (University of Melbourne), Xavier Ho (Monash University), Adam Bell (AARNET—Moderator)
2.30 pm	2.45 pm	**Afternoon break**
2.45 pm	3.30 pm	**Keynote 3** Andrea Lau and Jack Zhao, Small Multiples (New South Wales)
3.30 pm	3.45 pm	**Closing Remarks** Margaret Warren, Director, Content Management, State Library

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Mia Ridge
Digital Curator for Western Heritage Collections
British Library

United Kingdom

Evolutionary Innovations: Collections as Data in the AI era

'Collections as data' describes the movement to publish open data from museum, library and archive collections that began in the noughties. The benefits of machine learning for better discoverability and research with digitised/born digital collections are alluring. And the popularity of generative AI - and an increased awareness of the biases it reinscribes - has focused attention on responsible computational access to collections - but what does this mean in practical terms? Mia will share examples from the British Library and the Living with Machines data science project.

Robert McLellan
Program Manager, Language Data Commons of Australia
University of Queensland

Queensland

Digital data for HASS and Indigenous researchers: 'people' behind the data

Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) research data plays a crucial role in advancing our comprehension of culture, society, and human well-being. In 2020, the HASS and Indigenous Research Data Commons (HASS and I RDC) Program was established with the objective of establishing a comprehensive digital research infrastructure for HASS and Indigenous researchers and communities.

This presentation will anthropomorphise the condition of digital HASS data to highlight the individuals, families and cultural groups represented within 'people' data. The audience will gain insights into the challenges associated with reclaiming cultural heritage, achieved through rigorous exploration of Aboriginal languages, stories, art, and identity. Additionally, we will explore the recontextualization of historic research within a contemporary framework.

Andrea Lau and Jack Zhao
Co-founders and Directors
Small Multiples

New South Wales

Beyond the Noise: Data Visualisation's Role in Shaping Tomorrow

In this era of post-scarcity where the volume of data across the world doubles in size every two years and everything is one ChatGPT prompt away, the question arises: How do we channel this abundance into innovation and creativity? Andrea Lau delves into the evolution of data visualisation over the past decade, examining its trajectory through the interplay of data, people, and purpose. This exploration aims to equip the audience with practical strategies to foster innovation.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Join us for a thought-provoking panel discussion exploring the future of Collections-as-Data.
This session will delve into the ethical, technological, and community considerations shaping the accessibility and fairness of making Collections as Data. Panellists will discuss the challenges and opportunities of ensuring transparent, inclusive, and responsible use of technology in this evolving landscape.

**Distinguished Professor
Jean Burgess (Moderator)**
Associate Director | QUT Node Convenor | ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society (ADM+S)
QUT

Queensland

Morgan Strong
Digital Transformation Manager
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art

Queensland

Mia Ridge
Digital Curator for Western Heritage Collections
British Library

United Kingdom

Robert McLellan
Program Manager, Language Data Commons of Australia
University of Queensland

Queensland

Jean Burgess is Professor of Digital Media in the Digital Media Research Centre (DMRC) and School of Communication. After serving as the DMRC's founding Centre Director from 2015-2020, she became Associate Director of the national ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society, as well as Convenor of its QUT node, in August 2020. Her research focuses on the social implications of digital media technologies, platforms, and cultures, as well as new and innovative digital methods for studying them.

Morgan Strong is the Digital Transformation Manager at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art.

Morgan has been working with technology in the Gallery, Museum, Archive and Museum (GLAM) sector for nearly 15 years and collaborating with institutes across Australia.

Morgan's work focuses leveraging technology to create meaning from Collection data, and improve the way museums can embrace digital to improve the way they do their work.

Dr Mia Ridge is the British Library's Digital Curator for Western Heritage Collections. As part of the Library's Digital Scholarship team, she helps enable innovative research based on the British Library's digital collections, offering support, training and guidance on applying computational research methods to historical collections.

Mia has published, taught and presented widely on her key areas of interest including: user experience design and human-computer interaction, open cultural data, digital history, and audience engagement and participation in the cultural heritage sector.

Robert dhurwain McLellan is a proud Gooreng Gooreng descendant of the Wide Bay region, a community researcher, and an experienced Director, governance and engagement practitioner. A strong advocate for truth telling and speaking up for Aboriginal people's rights and justice, economic advancement, and to ensure First Nations voices are authentically valued and embraced across all levels of society, Robert is passionate about revitalising Indigenous languages and building culturally inclusive, honourable, and cohesive communities.

Dr. Sam Hames
Post-doctural
Research Fellow
University of Queensland

Queensland

Dr. Naomi Barnes
Senior Lecturer
University of Queensland

Queensland

Sotirios Alpanis
Senior Data Engineer
State Library Victoria

Victoria

Assoc Prof Mark Lauchs
Associate Lecturer
QUT

Queensland

Dr Frederico Fialho Teixeira
Senior Lecturer in design
University of Queensland

Queensland

Hacking GLAM Collections

I will be sharing my experiences 'hacking' data from GLAM institutions. This practice involves taking an experimental and playful approach to engaging with this data. The talk will include examples from my colleagues and myself that help to demonstrate how this practice can produce surprising, thought-provoking, and fun outcomes. I will talk about some of the practicalities of including this approach in your everyday work, and hopefully persuade you that hacking is something you should try for yourself.

Mark joined the School of Justice Studies as an Associate Lecturer in 2004. He previously worked in the Queensland state government in policy and project roles associated with accountability and the justice system. He completed a PhD on the history of public sector ethics and accountability in Queensland through Queensland University of Technology. Mark is the Coordinator of the Graduate Certificate in Policy and Governance. Most of Mark's current research focuses on Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs. He is the former host of the New Books in Terrorism and Organised Crime podcast and the recipient of the 2021 John Oxley Library Honorary Fellowship.

What do you do with a billion words from Hansard?

The transcribed and digitised Proceedings of Federal Parliament consist of nearly a billion words recorded since 1901. The structure of the proceedings make it easy to find some specific things such as the second reading speeches for a specific bill, or the speeches by a particular person, but the very specificity of these affordances can obscure both the bigger picture of change over time, but also the smaller picture such as incidental references to local electorate matters. In this talk we will look at our work in progress examining how we can use computational methods on the proceedings-as-data to create more generous search interfaces that encourage generative exploration as well as the construction of more specific and useful search queries. We will show our in progress case study looking at the evolving nature of educational policy discussions in Australia in the last twenty years.

Digital Twins and the future of the Built Environment

The concept of 'Digital Twins' in the context of the built environment represents a paradigm shift in how we conceive, construct, and interact with our physical surroundings. A digital twin, in essence, is a dynamic, virtual representation of a physical object or system, mirroring real-world conditions, processes, and life cycles. This presentation explores the transformative impact of digital twin technology on the field of architecture and urban design, focusing on its potential to revolutionize design methodologies, construction processes, and the ongoing management of built environments.

Tom Honeyman
Solutions Architect, Hass & Indigenous Research Data Commons (HASS&I RDC)
Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC)

New South Wales

Andrei Maberley
Staff Digital Collections Catalyst 2023
Queensland Museum

Queensland

Fiannuala Morgan
Lecturer in Publishing and Editing
University of Melbourne

Victoria

Dr Xavier Ho
Lecturer in Interaction Design
Monash University

Victoria

The ARDC Community Data Lab

The ARDC Community Data Lab is a program of work from the Australian Research Data Commons, a federally funded national digital research infrastructure facility. The Community Data Lab is a cornerstone in our emerging Humanities, Arts, Social Science and Indigenous Research Data Commons (HASS and Indigenous RDC), which is seeking to cohere communities of researchers around commons ways of working on digital collections as data held by the GLAM sector, and to connect them with modern, iterable ways of discovering, interpreting and building upon those collections. In this lightning talk we'll cover the work done in the first phase of the program centering on the Trove API, and explore the next phase of the program. The second phase seeks to extend beyond collections not currently harvested by Trove as well as the community of contributors to the program. We'll explain how an intentional process of co-design has brought together researchers, GLAM and digital research practitioners. We'll also detail how you can be involved as well.

Voices from the Collection

A practical exploration of the potential for AI dataset and model creation from State Library of Queensland's unique oral history collection items, with a lightning overview of how to identify and evaluate state-of-the-art free and open-source Machine Learning software and leveraging LLMs to create a pipeline from collection items, to datasets, to generative speech models.

Historical Fires Near Me: (Re)Constructing Colonial Ecological Records

Borrowing from the identifiable and culturally resonant imagery of the Fires Near Me app, in this lightning talk I present my work in progress on an experimental interface that seeks to produce a cultural, and historical map of colonial Australian bushfires between 1850 and 1900. Drawing on over 110,000 newspaper articles and comprised of nearly half a million entries; this lightning talk summarises the workflow, tools and processes employed in the creation and curation of this dataset as well as exploring both the practical and ethical challenges of (re)constructing colonial data.

Finding Queerness in the Making of Infinite Colours

What does it mean to draw from games to create art? My latest work 'Infinite Colours' draws data from 2,499 queer independent games. Each game adds a unique shape and colour onto the canvas, and plays a unique string of notes. Over 8 hours, the canvas celebrates LGBTQIA+ independent videogames. In this talk I will present the motivation for creating 'Infinite Colours', and how to find meaning in a large collection.

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