



Critical research infrastructure at risk

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The Australian Academy of the Humanities today warned that the capacity of Australian researchers to contribute to national innovation is at risk through a funding crisis threatening critical research infrastructure.

“The National Library of Australia’s ‘Trove’ is an outstanding example of Australian ingenuity which has transformed the research system,” said Professor John Fitzgerald FAHA, President of the Academy.

Trove provides a single access point for over 471 million online resources from libraries, museums, galleries and archives across Australia.

“This is a major digital innovation in the nation’s research system, the kind of development that is central to the spirit of the ‘Ideas Boom’,” said Professor Fitzgerald. “It has proven capacity to dramatically reduce research costs across the sector and enormous potential to further meet researcher needs.”

Australian historian and ARC Laureate Fellow, Professor Mark Finnane FAHA FASSA, agrees: “Trove enables researchers to access information that would take potentially months of searching – whether bibliographic or original data,” he said. “For researchers, the word ‘Trove’ is rapidly becoming something like ‘Google’ is to the internet generally.”

“These institutions are critical research data repositories”, said Professor Fitzgerald, “but they are much more than that: they are custodians of the nation’s history, identity and culture.”

Despite its nation-building contribution to research infrastructure development, Trove has received no funding under a succession of Federal Government National Research Infrastructure initiatives.

Funded from within the National Library of Australia’s operating budget, the imposition of ongoing ‘efficiency dividends’ mean Trove can no longer support vital collaborations which have transformed access to the collections of the nation’s cultural institutions.

“The galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) sector have lent their collective voice to support the funding of Trove to enable it to [fulfil its promise as the discovery site for all Australian cultural content](#),” said Professor Fitzgerald.

“The Academy will continue to champion Trove as fundamental research infrastructure and calls on the Government to address this funding crisis as a matter of urgency.”

About the [Australian Academy of the Humanities](#)

One of Australia’s four learned academies, the Australian Academy of the Humanities advances knowledge of, and the pursuit of excellence in, the humanities in Australia for the benefit of the nation. Established by Royal Charter in 1969, its elected Fellows are leaders and experts in the broad disciplinary groups which share a common and central concern with human behaviour and culture.

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