Swinburne Research Institutes
Application Form for Round 1: Commencing in 2017
Swinburne Research Closing date: 27 April 2017
Closing date to send to Department Chair / Centre Director: 26 April 2017

To be completed after applicants have read the SRI-Seed Guidelines and supporting documentation on the at Swinburne Research Institutes Seed Grants Round 1 web page. It is strongly recommended that proposed applicants discuss their project with the relevant Institute contact as detailed in the Guidelines.

Submission Instructions: Submit to resgrants@swin.edu.au. **Subject** header format: Institute Seed Grant – [name of Institute], [surname of Lead CI]

SUMMARY DETAILS		

Proposal Title

News Savvy Seniors: Enhancing social inclusion through digital stories and social media participation

Contact: The Lead Chief Investigator, who will be the primary contact for this research proposal.

Name	Dr Anthony McCosker
Department/Centre/ Faculty	Dept. Media & Communication, ASSH, FHAD, Social Innovation Institute (FoR: 2001)

Project State/ End Details

Proposed start date (earliest start date is 16 May/ June 2017):	16 May 2017
Proposed end date:	30 March 2018

Team members:

Name	Proposed EFT commitment during project	Primary FoR Code of researcher	ECR (yes / no)	Dept/ Centre	Email
Dr Diana Bossio		1903	No	Dept. Media & Communication FHAD	amccosker@swin.edu.au
Dr Hilary Davis		0806	No	Social Innovation Institute	hdavis@swin.edu.au
Dr Max Schleser		1902	No	Dept. Film and Animation	mschleser@swin.edu.au

Institute Alignment

	Primary Alignment	Other relevant	Contact consulted
Iverson Health Innovations	☐	☐	☐
Swinburne Manufacturing Futures	☐	☐	☐
Swinburne Smart Cities	☐	☐	☐
Swinburne Social Innovation	☒	☐	☒
Swinburne Data Science	☐	☐	☐

1.	Project Summary

This project develops and evaluates a community-based intervention addressing the difficulties in sustaining digital skills development and social inclusion among older Australians. Partnering with Telstra and two local Melbourne Councils, the project team will develop and evaluate a workshop series and skills development model involving seniors in digital storytelling and social media. The model has dual aims: a) to empower seniors to connect with each other, participate in local community and feed-back to local government using digital devices and social media platforms, and b) to embed sustainable digital engagement practices into existing localised training processes to improve digital inclusion outcomes.

2.	Alignment with Institute themes and priorities: (10 lines maximum)

The News Savvy Seniors project aligns with the 'Participation and Inclusion' theme within the Social Innovation Institute, and places an emphasis on issues related to the social impact of digital technologies and the internet on vulnerable populations. The goal of this research theme is to improve participation of digitally disengaged seniors in institutions that promote local community, democracy and citizenship. The project will present a model for enhancing the visibility, voice and participation of seniors in local community, and enhance their ability to engage more directly with local councils and services.

The project tests the potential of social media and digital storytelling for both building sustainable digital abilities, and engaging older Australians with local council to foster sustainable participation and inclusion. As a novel approach, we are testing the potential of social media and digital stories as channels for social participation and exchange that are able to build individual and community capacity.

3.	Proposed research activities and outcomes (1.5 pages maximum)

3.1 Project Scope, Research Challenge and Nature of Project Innovation

Overview: This project develops and tests a model that aims to empower seniors to engage with each other, with local news and events, and with council activities, with the aim of fostering sustained participation, inclusion and digital skills development. The team will work with Telstra, two local councils and seniors willing to co-create solutions to digital disengagement. City of Knox and City of Boroondara local council areas have been identified as sites and partners for the pilot intervention. If successful, Telstra's national Tech Savvy Seniors program offers a pathway for the project to be scaled up with national application and impact.

Through a series of co-designed workshops, participating seniors will be supported to interact through social media (Facebook, Instagram: closed Group, potentially: council Pages, Telstra Page) and develop and share digital stories using mobile devices (smartphone, tablet, mobile photography and video). Participants will engage with each other and with community and council activities (on themes such as: local events, local news and information (in conjunction with councils' activities), personal or local histories, sport, information about local services and venues) . Evaluation of the workshops will establish the relative benefits of the approach, and describe a replicable model for wider application by Telstra and local councils. This will include the development of workshop design instructions.

Research Challenge and Process: While some older Australians are embracing digital life through online engagement, there is a disproportionate number who do not have an understanding of, access to, or experience with, newer digital and online technologies. As such, many are not able to participate in the education, health, social and financial benefits of digital inclusion. A digital inclusion and participation gap has been identified for older and Australians in particular (Digital Inclusion Index, 2016). While we increasingly understand the challenges of digital inclusion and participation at the population level, there is a need for further research that can understand local the experiences, challenges and potential for seniors to engage through social media and digital stories. By putting social media activities and digital storytelling up front, the pilot aims to build a model that will overcome many of the key barriers to effective social and digital participation for seniors.

Research question: How can participatory and social media tools be co-created with digitally excluded seniors to generate relevant and sustainable improvements in digital inclusion and community participation?

Research process: With 2 groups of 6 seniors, over 3 workshops delivered one month apart, the research team will support participants to recognise, document (using digital photography, video and audio) and engage with and inform on local issues of concern and interest (through digital stories, social media): e.g. generate and circulate local news and information. These stories will then be shared through public social media platforms through local councils, and other social media channels. In this way, seniors will engage in co-creative activity, leverage existing social connections and inform local community, leading to sustainable digital literacy and community participation. Focus group interviews at each workshop will provide evaluation data; and social media data on interactions, posts, reach and engagement will be analysed at three points during the project pilot.

3.2 Research Framework and rationale for an interdisciplinary team-based approach

The project brings together social media practice and analysis, mobile media making expertise, news and digital storytelling expertise and digital literacies evaluation expertise to address an entrenched problem with a highly localised model of intervention. Using an *action research framework*, we draw upon the particular skillsets and expertise of experienced researchers including journalistic techniques (CI1, DB), media and social media (CI2, AM), experience with marginalized and diverse community members, including seniors (CI3, HD), and mobile digital story training techniques (CI4, MS). This expertise will be harnessed to develop a model that will be ready to expand to a wider range of sites through development of training materials, activities schedule and workshop method.

3.3 Key Activities and Timelines

The project will involve two groups of seniors participating in three co-creation social media and digital storytelling workshops (two local council sites: City of Knox, City of Boroondara), along with focus group interviews.

May-June: Scoping of research literature; ethics application and approval; contract management; location and equipment management; co-design of workshops (Telstra and Council input); recruitment
June, Workshop 1: Co-creation digital inclusion, participation activities, social media groups, and digital storytelling activities. Focus group interview to establish baseline needs and guide digital participation and storytelling activities.
July, Workshop 2: Checking in with participants. Focus group interview to establish challenges, barriers and discoveries and feedback.
August, Workshop 3: Co-creative editing work, and in-group presentation of videos, discussion of social media activities. Final focus group interview reflecting on processes, skills development, community participation, ongoing challenges and sustained digital practices.
September: Project communication: Sharing of social media (e.g. digital stories, photos etc.) at community events e.g. board meetings, open days, library events. Reporting of events on local website and in other media. Analysis, report writing, publication.
December-February 2018: Report, publications, project end.

3.4 Expected Research Results and Outcomes

a) Report prepared for project partners, including scoping and recommendations for future work and workshop design materials (Workshop Instruction Booklet and Video Instruction Resource) for integration into the Tech Savvy Seniors program nationally
b) Co-creative video content (digital stories), social media content and local exhibition events
c) Scoping and funding will be sought for phase 2 of the project, which would involve further resource development, wider rollout, and evaluation processes, Partners: Councils, VIC government and Telstra
d) Exploration of potential ARC Linkage project around questions of digital inclusion and participation in relation to the use of social media and digital storytelling among older Australians
e) Academic presentations and journal articles

4. Role of personnel

LCI McCosker will lead the project overall, overseeing team members, milestones and meetings with partners, including supervising RAs. He will develop and deliver the social media components of the workshops, and coordinate analysis of social media activity data. CI2 Bossio will collaborate with local councils on social media participation relevant to local news and information production. She will contribute to project evaluation and the production of the workshop instruction booklet. CI3 Davis will oversee all elements of working with seniors, and evaluation processes (focus groups and qualitative data analysis). CI4 Schleser will supervise the video production and editing RA, and lead the development and delivery of the digital storytelling aspects of the workshops.

5. External Partners

Organisation Name	Contact Name and Position	Estimate of in-kind commitment of external partner.	Details of new cash contributions provided by external partners	Letter of Support attached at Attachment 1?
Telstra	Heather Rea, Nancie-Lee Robinson, Jason Laird	Staff meetings Co-design planning	$22,000	Yes
Knox City Council	Teresa Donegan	Staff meetings Co-design planning		Yes
Boroondara City Council	Wendy Smith	Staff meetings Co-design planning		Yes

How will the external partners be actively involved in the proposed project?

Project partners will be actively involved in the project through a co-design process. Input will be provided from members of the Sustainability Office at Telstra, and staff members of Knox City Council and Boroodara City Council in the process of designing the workshop activities.

A member of Telstra's social media communications team will provide assistance with social media analysis and with integrating workshop material into Telstra's social media content schedule.

Local Councils will assist with recruitment of appropriate seniors for workshop and focus group activities, and provide support with venues and afternoon teas.

6. Budget justification

6.1 Budget summary table.

Item Requested	Details	$ Value Requested from Seed-Fund	Cash contribution: $22,000 Telstra	In-kind contribution: Knox, Boroondara Councils	Other contributions (if relevant)
Staff	Research Assistant for conducting workshops: RA2 x $36.76 x 8 hr workdays x 6 workshops [on costs, Faculty Levy, GST: 46.04%]	$2,576.85		$2,200 (in-kind) (Council staff time for recruitment, meeting and other involvement)	
	Research assistant pre-workshop preparation: RA2 x $36.76, 3x hrs x 6 workshops	$966.24			
	Production Assistant for editing video 1 full day pre-production and planning 6 days filming at workshops 2 days post-production editing RA2 x $36.76 x 8 hr work days x 9 days	$3,865.23			
	Research Assistant for literature review, data analysis, project administration RA3 x $36.76 x 8 hr days x 29 days	$12,454.63			

	Time in workload for LCI McCosker, CI Bossio, CI Davis, CI Schleser to conduct meetings, reporting, media consultation, negotiating access, materials development for Telstra: Level C x $1500pd x 2.5 days each		$15,000		
Travel	Petrol x 3 workshops $100 per workshop Swinburne Car hire to Knox .70c per kilometer from Hawthorn to Knox (70kms return) $42 x 3		$300 $150		
Accommodation	Indoor space to host workshops x 6 workshops x 8 hrs ($30 per hour) Indoor space at to host premiere of videos and conclusion of project x 5 hrs			$1,440 (in-kind) Council spaces for 6 workshops, & premiere	
Consumables	Catering Provisions for workshops Charge for catering $120 per workshop x 6 ($60 per workshop x 6 – morning teas) Catering for premiere and conclusion of project Equipment Hire for workshops 6 x iPhone 7 32GB in silver 6 iPads for duration of project 6 x 32GB with Wifi+ Cellular Project HD Card to archive videos	$130	$720 $150 $1,640 $1,640 $300	$360 (in-kind)	(Swinburne in-kind): 2 Video Cameras and voice recorders provided by Swinburne Media and Communication department
Other	Marketing: Open day and exhibition posters and advertising materials Posters and publishing/design - $500 Social media paid posts $300 per post x 3 posts Report publishing Incentives for focus group participation 12 x $50 vouchers		$1,500 $600		
Total request		**$19,992.95**	**$22,000 (excl. GST)**	**$4,000 (in-kind)**	**Total: $45,992.95**

6.2 Justification

Staff: Each investigator will contribute to the workshops based on their particular research expertise, including journalism, social media, health and media production, and experience working with *seniors with low levels of digital literacy*, or socially isolated seniors. Contribution to commercial research, including stakeholder meetings, community engagement and creation of materials will be funded by the industry partner, Telstra, capped at 2.5 days for each investigator at Level C academic commercial research rates ($1,500 pd).

One research assistant with appropriate skills and capacities (RA2) for research support and project management, will be required to prepare and co- ordinate each of the digital literacies workshops, as well as contribute to the literature review, focus groups and data analysis for the research reports and other outcomes. Given the relatively short timeline (Before January 2018) for completion of the project, RA hours have been allocated to manage the project and achieve the objectives within schedule requested by Telstra.

One research assistant with digital media skills and capabilities associated with RA2 will assist with pre- and post- production of the video content, and advising seniors on basic digital literacies, specific to video. The research assistant will be required to attend and contribute to all workshops (6), one pre-production planning meeting and two days of post-production work to edit video content and optimize for social media distribution.

Travel: Travel will be required for the research assistant to complete the workshops in Knox according to the research design, with oversight by the investigators. Car travel will be required for the three workshops to talk to participants and trouble shoot any issues occurring, transfer of equipment and Partner engagement (meetings, events).

Trip One: Workshop introducing the project and the framework for participation. Teaching the first of the digital skills;

Trip Two: Focus group and discussion of participation and techniques used to enable storytelling. Trouble shooting and solutions.

Trip Three: Focus group reflection and plan for further social media engagement and skills.

Trip Four: One trip to Knox will be required to attend the exhibition premiere for the project videos.

Consumables: The digital storytelling component of the project requires specialist technologies that provide optimal video experience and ease of use for elderly, low-skilled users.

The technology hire is required to ensure consistent application of the research framework to the project. The participants may not have access to technology needed for the project, thus requiring us to supply standardised, and optimal technology for the duration of the project.

Other: A marketing budget is required to ensure that the project attracts a minimum number of participants in the initial stages of the project.

Social media post boosts will also engage community members and services to participate in and engage with the project, and achieve the goal of reaching more members of each local community.

Publication of the workshop materials and final report will be required as an outcome for Telstra as industry partner

7. Expected Research outputs, impact and future plans

	Details
Publications	Presentation at: 'Digital participation: Engaging diverse and marginalized communities' event, OzCHI, 2017, Brisbane. https://digitalparticipationhci.wordpress.com/, http://www.ozchi.org/2017/. Papers invited to contribute to journal special issue.
	Journal article targeting Q1: *Information, Communication and Society*.
	Stakeholder evaluation Report; Workshop Instruction Booklet; Video Instruction Booklet
Future funding opportunities	Telstra have expressed interest in a wider rollout of the project if the pilot is successful, through the networks and partnerships with local councils already established by the Tech Savvy Seniors program. This would include broader and more detailed evaluation, and resource production and training. Direct funding to be negotiated at that point.
	Local Council Partners are interested in pursuing Victorian Government funding to expand programs and resources; and a State-wide partnership is to be pursued for future research.
Research impact	The project has potential for significant social impact, by providing a model that can be adapted and adopted by local council across Australia as well as internationally. In Australia this impact is plausible if the project can be incorporated into Telstra's Tech Savvy Seniors program. That program delivers digital skills training to seniors at more than 237 locations across Victoria, NSW and Queensland.
	In addition to the access to public communication this partnership provides, the project involves targeted screenings and exhibitions at the local Council areas. Because the project activities are targeted at generating engaging social media content, the Council Facebook Pages and Telstra's Facebook Page will be key channels for communicating the activities and outcomes produced through the project.