



# TECH CAPABLE 2025

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## **Social and Community Services 4.0**

In Social and Community Services 4.0, technology, automation, data analytics and AI are driving rapid change, will you be ready?

# **We're here to support social and community services to integrate new technologies with caring practice.**

**This briefing is for boards and senior leaders, government, advocates and thought leaders. It was co-created with sector leaders during February to June 2020, following Swinburne's Society 4.0 Forum in Nov 2019.**

First came Industry 4.0 'the fourth industrial revolution'. It transformed industries through automation, monitoring, and smart machines that make decisions without human intervention. Next was Society 4.0 or how to live, work and play in Industry 4.0. Here, we examine Social and Community Services 4.0.

## **Social and community services**

Social and community services address lifelong social and economic inclusion via healthcare, social assistance, welfare, charity and social purpose work.

## **Our vision**

Social and community services powered by adaptive people applying useful technologies.



*use this document to...*

**READ, REFLECT, SHARE, DISCUSS & ACT**



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**Would like to thank all of our  
contributors:**



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**ROWBOAT** 3

# Have you seen the news *headlines* ?

Social and Community Services 4.0 is creating hype at the moment.

## Living freely with technology

“Adam, who has Down’s syndrome, lives independently in a tech-filled home he shares with housemates.

The house is part of a project which uses smart devices, sensors and bespoke applications to enable people with learning disabilities to live without in-home carers”.

(BBC News, 2019)

## Robots that care

“Robots providing physical assistance have been developed to perform tasks such as lifting and carrying. Robots have also been developed to assist with tasks like feeding, washing, and walking, and are being developed to support physiotherapy”

(UK Houses of Parliament, 2018)

## Bots for high volume requests

“WHO built [a bot on WhatsApp](#) called the WHO Health Alert to share information related to the pandemic. The WHO Health Alert bot helps people protect themselves from infection, offers travel advice, and busts myths about the Coronavirus.”

(Manychat, 2020)



## Person-centred data

“FACS (NSW) needed an information system that could support decision-making and improve collaboration among the network of family, caregivers, caseworkers and service providers. ChildStory replaces 14 disparate FACS legacy systems with a single cloud-based platform. It merges data to provide a holistic, single view of every young person under care.”

(EY, 2018)

## AI replacing repetitive tasks

“Bradford Council, UK is pioneering Adult Social Care using AI. Using AI technologies will take the pressure off front line Access Services. The aim of the Digital Navigation Tool is to enhance the delivery of best practice human centred services, not to detract from or replace them, the council said.”

(Govt. Computing, 2018)

## Digital platform nurtures social gig economy

“Australian federal government awards a \$5.77 million contract to an aged-care staffing app for “surge workforce” in nursing homes affected by Covid-19 infections”

(Morton, 2020)

A smart speaker with a grey fabric mesh cover is positioned on the left. To its right is a white book with a large grey letter 'C' on the cover. A green leaf is visible in the bottom right corner. A red speech bubble points from the speaker towards the book.

**I'm sorry, I  
can't answer  
that just yet.**

**Hey Google,  
what does the  
future hold?**

**Google can't predict the future (yet),  
so we've put together a list of the  
biggest trends you should be aware of.**

**- READ, REFLECT, SHARE, DISCUSS & ACT -**

# **BIG** trends you should be on the lookout for.

## **Uneven digital literacy and inclusion**

For end-users and workers this discrepancy results in divides in enablement and capacity to thrive in an increasingly digital environment.

## **Funding increasingly linked to outcomes measurement**

This requires the capability to manage and analyse data safely and ethically - navigating funders' and end-users' differing perspectives of useful outcomes.

## **Workers as flexible, home-working individuals, perhaps in 'gig' teams**

Enabled by tech, the gig economy has implications for security and identity, requiring new management skills to operate with dispersed teams.

## **Funding prioritises efficiency**

This makes it difficult to give users a personal experience while providing efficient services at scale - ultimately having the potential to lead to corporate domination.

## **Relentless entry of new technologies**

With never ending new tech, there is a need to see through the hype when deciding what to invest in, what to leave alone, and how to identify appropriately 'tech for good' as well as necessary risks.

## **Mid-level jobs driven out in new models**

'Close to client' workers will need to juggle end user expectations for holistic care with monitoring payment by episode. Whilst the leadership level will be caught between drive for efficiency and their motivation for social value.

## **Rise of disruptive tech-driven models and gig economy startups**

Driven by disruptive technology innovation, new service models run by Millennial entrepreneurs prioritising social value are beginning to emerge.

## **'Next gen' end-users have new needs and requirements**

Due to multiple climate, health and social crises, including a rise in social isolation, precarity and uncertainty are part of the 'new normal'.

## **Automation of basic tasks**

With the rise of chatbots and robots entering basic service spaces there are real implications for work allocation and team formations.

## **Individualised funding drives growth in tailored packages**

Over time, competition for clients will drive the creation and marketing of novel service packages

# What will 2025 look like?

**Here is your sneak peek into the future.**

What 2025 will look like is a huge question. This is exactly why we asked many people to be a part of this conversation.

We've spoken to established NGOs, new disruptive social startups and the best industry analysts we could find.



# Established NGOs said

## In 2025 we will see...

### Service users

- New cohorts accessing services who have not sought support before
- A digital divide regarding 'digital intelligence' and data affordability
- Embracing digital tech but still wanting personal interaction
- Individualised funding driving new service needs
- 24/7 access to services being sought

### Workers

- Unstable employment
- Generational divides in aptitudes and drivers
- Changing relationships between leaders and frontline workers
- Mobile and flexible, yet monitored workforce
- Identifying with the need for caring, holistic supports for end-users
- Mindset shift to hybrid delivery involving tech and face-to-face
- An increased role in helping to keep end-users safe online

### Organisations

- Rapid sector changes in unstable and unpredictable funding context
- Increased corporatisation
- Data driven service planning and monitoring
- Increased automation of basic tasks
- Increased compliance demands and scrutiny from funders
- Requirement for trusted partnerships to fill expertise gaps (e.g. around emerging techs)

### Our biggest tech-related challenge will be...

Keeping quality service for end-users while integrating new technology

# Social Startups said

## In 2025 we will see...

### Service users

- Challenges in retaining loyalty when end-users become active agents who move between suppliers
- Need for 'digital intelligence', tech confidence and agency
- Diverse demand that drives development of portfolios of service package options

### Workers

- Challenges in maintaining connection, shared organisational identity and values
- Desire for meaningful, secure work
- Rise of new training and development options
- Moves to care work as an attractive career choice
- Choice of multiple work opportunities

### Organisations

- Need to manage industrial relations in a gig economy
- Need to be a good employer, whilst also highly efficient
- Building out of wider service value beyond user-worker relationships
- Use of data analytics and customer insights
- Rise in accountability and regulation
- Major sectoral shifts - including mergers, new entrants, closures
- Need for aspirational, courageous leadership
- Ways to find, pilot and embrace the right tech

### **Our biggest tech-related challenge will be...**

Keeping care personal while being highly efficient

# Industry Analysts said

## In 2025 we will see...

### Service users

- End-users will quickly (be forced to) become digitally literate, but 'digital intelligence' is also required
- Gaps in knowledge about data privacy and ownership
- Personalisation driving service to what individuals want for themselves
- Social interaction becoming a priority as automation builds
- Moves to user-allocated outcome measures

### Workers

- Gig economy will continue to grow
- Work from home, mobility and flexibility will continue to grow
- Work will be atomised, with specific skills needed
- Loss of middle management roles
- Workers rights and meaningful work will be sought

### Organisations

- New organisational forms will emerge
- A small number of big winners
- Diversified portfolios beyond traditional sector services
- With recession, funds will reduce
- With reduced funds, risk aversion will be high, but risk-taking will be needed
- Challenges in maintaining quality where there is loss of direct contact with gig economy end-workers
- Accelerated diffusion of tech and datafication into practice
- Challenges in maintaining duty of care while remaining viable businesses

### Our biggest tech-related challenge will be...

Navigating values of care during a period of radical change to technology and corporatisation

# Stay ahead of the pack. Act today.

**Collaborate**

**Embrace new technology**

**Focus on the End User**

**Create a great work culture**

## Educate and support your End-Users to be...

**Digitally and data 'intelligent', with access to appropriate technology**

**Empowered and involved in shaping services**

**Enabled to use technology mediated support**

**Skilled, confident service and system navigators**

## Lead and upskill your Employees towards being...

**Resilient and adaptive, with access to social connection and wellbeing resources**

**Able to navigate organisational factors that impact on their wellbeing**

**Able to navigate their own career development**

**Able to work in hybridity involving automation techs, like robots and chatbots**

**Adaptive to technology and able to support users with tech and data intelligence**

**Skilled in personalising care and adapting to user wants**

**Skilled service and system navigators**

**Able to deal with ambiguity, curious and collaborative**



# You make some **right** moves, then what happens?

## Disruptive startups

Partner with and learn from disrupters, for innovation

### “How?”

- ❑ Keep alert to emerging social start-ups and interact.
- ❑ Choose between approaches: adopt as partner, ‘copy’ some practices, or decide their ideas are irrelevant to strategy.

## Funding

Have diverse and sustainable revenue sources

### “How?”:

- ❑ Use data to respond to or pre-empt user demand and market needs; and to demonstrate return on investment for outcomes based funding.

## User needs and expectations

Build end-user capacity and skills

### “How?”:

- ❑ Consider peer coaching to help build end-user digital intelligence.
- ❑ Collaborate with carers, volunteers and community groups.

## New tech

Make good calls about tech investments that support service quality

### “How?”

- ❑ Forge relationships with useful partners for emerging evidence.
- ❑ Consider collaborating around tech and data.
- ❑ Understand privacy, data use and ownership.
- ❑ Pilot test.

## Workforce quality

Commit to caring relationships with workers

### ““How?”:

- ❑ Build commitment to worker development, job satisfaction and identity given revised organisation of work.
- ❑ Pay attention to culture.
- ❑ Grow and support courageous leaders.



# You make some **wrong** moves, then what happens?

## Disruptive startups

Lack of attention to start-up models and lack of engagement with innovations

### Risks:

- Miss out on ideas and partnerships.
- Start-ups increasingly grow their market share and become corporates, in turn.

## New tech

Decide that only large corporates can afford tech investment

### Risks:

- Smaller, place-based and diverse providers are driven out of the marketplace as they cannot access useful tech or use data.

## Funding

Drives to corporatisation and scale - with loss of care

### Risks:

- Nurturing funding mechanisms linked to efficiency and inappropriate outcomes measures - with lip service to care.
- Managers, workers and end-users lose faith with soulless providers.

## Workforce quality

Inattention to the conditions needed to attract high quality workers. Current workers experience burnout and high turnover results.

### Risks:

- Loss of a future of engaged innovative Millennials who want to contribute to social impact.
- Underutilisation of mature workers.

## User needs and expectations

Inattention to holistic user experience, building capability and supplying hybrid delivery. Over-focus on episodic care.

### Risks:

- Leads to fragmented service experiences and growing gaps in wellbeing between those who can navigate the system and those who cannot.

# How prepared are you?

Answer the quick quiz below to get a sense of where your organisation stands on each topic. Use this exercise to highlight opportunity areas.

My organisation was tech-ready for Covid-19?

Not at all  1  2  3  4  5 Absolutely

End-users are digitally savvy and can access online services.

Not at all  1  2  3  4  5 Absolutely

Workers are confident and enabled users of service tech.

Not at all  1  2  3  4  5 Absolutely

We routinely assess emerging techs and disruptive models.

Not at all  1  2  3  4  5 Absolutely

End-user data are safe, private and ethically managed.

Not at all  1  2  3  4  5 Absolutely

# How can you get the ball rolling in your organisation?



Activate this document with leadership and employees.



Hold a workshop, engage and decide what needs to be done to explore or prepare.



Create a strategy, put it into action. Reach out to us if you need a partner to get things going.

## Huge thanks to all who participated.

This briefing was co-designed by Jane Farmer, Swinburne Social Innovation Research Institute and Sean Gallagher, Swinburne Centre for New Workforce, Carolyn Wallace (Merri Health), Alison Crowe (Independence Australia), Kirra Johnson (NEAMINational), Erin Wilson (Uniting Kildonan Chair, CSI Swinburne), Travis Mason (Aus Red Cross), Nick Byrne (TypeHuman), with input from Poppy Malone (HireUp), Greg Satur (Hayylo), Tom Hadkiss (Anglicare), Tom Mulvaney (FamilyLife), Jo Cavanagh (FamilyLife), Bec Lloyd (Rowboat), Suzie Cathro (Rowboat) and others.



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# Need some support as you look to the future? Say hello.

## Say hello to The Social Innovation Research Institute

We create solutions to complex social problems using co-design, new technologies and data analytics techniques.

Jane Farmer – [sii@swinburne.edu.au](mailto:sii@swinburne.edu.au)  
[www.swinburne.edu.au/research-institutes/social-innovation/about/](http://www.swinburne.edu.au/research-institutes/social-innovation/about/)

## Say hello to the Centre for the New Workforce

We work to build sustainable workforces and meaningful careers through understanding the future of work.

[www.swinburne.edu.au/new-workforce/](http://www.swinburne.edu.au/new-workforce/)

## Say hello to Rowboat

We are a crew of Human-Centred Designers working to help organisations create better futures for their users.

<https://wearerowboat.com/>

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