



BROTHERHOOD
of St LAURENCE

*Values and civic behaviour
in Australia*
Research method

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The National Engagement Project Trial

Values and civic behaviour in Australia

Project documents available on the Brotherhood's web site <www.bsl.org.au>

Project report

Research method

In-depth interview report

Report of the focus group discussions

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Research brief: A study of Australians' values

Overview

The Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) is undertaking a 'trial' research project as the first step in the National Engagement Project. This 'Trial', referred to as A Study of Australians' Values, is outlined in this research brief with respect to the research objectives and methodology. The Study will also inform and direct the BSL's three-year national campaign for an Australia free of poverty.

The Study of Australians' Values will provide greater insight into the values that Australians hold. Specifically, the research will engage people in a conversation about their values, and will involve an exploration of how these values can be integrated into a vision for Australia's future as a country. The project will also gauge people's commitment to this vision.

Previous research by the BSL has involved discussions around poverty. This project will extend those discussions to improve the understanding of the core values that underpin attitudes and behaviours.

This research brief describes the project. In summary, an initial round of in-depth interviews will inform subsequent focus group discussions with members of the wider community. Content analysis of the interviews and groups will allow a comprehensive report to be produced which examines values in action.

Research aims and objectives

Understand the relationship between values, attitudes and beliefs in relation to behaviours.

- The research will 'mine' down past standard socially desirable responses to understand the underlying values, attitudes and beliefs and how these relate to behaviours. This will be undertaken with a focus on the individuals' aspirations, and their aspirations for family, friends and Australian society.

Develop an understanding of group differences in the conceptualisation and conversation about values

- The research will provide insight as to whether there is an essential value consensus in the Australian population (observable across social groups) or whether there are significant differences in the values held by Australians such that it may only be possible to identify 'clusters' of value positions). The qualitative research methodology will yield results that offer some insights, but it will not be possible to confidently extrapolate any findings to the Australian population.

Determine and test possible 'values communication' techniques

- Various communication techniques will be trialled, including: the use of 'inspirational' statements by leading Australians; projections of a variety of images against the walls of the room; and hypothetical scenarios. Methods of engaging Australians in a manner that is consistent with their resources and desires will be explored.

Outcomes of the study

The Study will:

- Provide insight as to whether there are in fact common Australian values, or a diverse range of different value sets in different parts of the population;
- Tell us whether, and if so how, people's personal aspirations (or behaviours) are different to their aspirations for the nation;

- Review the types of policies that people believe are needed to achieve their aspirations for the nation; and
- Inform ways of framing questions that will effectively identify Australians' value and policy positions.

Proposed research method

Detailed below is the recommended research methodology.

The approach

The Study will include 14 in-depth interviews (see note on page 4) and up to 20 focus group discussions. The in-depth interviews will contribute to the manner in which the focus group discussions are conducted. Given the highly exploratory nature of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, both will be followed by an evaluation period including debriefing of interviewers and revision of research instruments. BSL researchers will participate in the majority of in-depth interviews. All focus group discussions will be convened by experienced facilitators.

The sample

In-depth interviews

The interviewees will be selected on the basis of location, age and socio-economic status (see key matrix at Attachment A). A variety of 'soft quota' conditions are further suggested to provide a broad basis of opinions (see key matrix at Attachment A).

Focus group discussions

The BSL has allowed for the conduct of up to 20 focus group discussions. The precise make-up of the discussions will be determined following the completion of the in-depth interviews.

The BSL will need to approve both the recruiters' questionnaire and the moderators' guideline prior to the start of fieldwork.

The interviews

- The interview process will be designed in such a way that the key research questions will be addressed, but interviewers will retain the flexibility to pursue particular themes which emerge. Projective techniques, such as the use of stimulus material, will also be used.
- Participants in both the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions will be engaged in a post discussion critical analysis to gain their views on the interview process and identify alternate approaches that could be used to gain the information about Australians' values.
- The in-depth interviews will be 2–3 hours in length. Focus group discussions may vary in length, from 1.5 to 2.5 hours.
- The research consultant will be primarily responsible for drafting and finalising, with consultation, the guides for both the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

Analysis and output

- Qualitative analysis techniques, such as content analysis, will be used to identify key findings.
- The consultant will provide reports and analysis of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, addressing the stated objectives.

Timelines

The Study will commence in late November 2001 and conclude in March 2002. Please see figure 2 for detailed timelines.

Additional information

- In-depth interviews will be conducted at a location suitable to the participant, to allow them to be as ‘natural’ as possible. Travel arrangements will be necessary.
- In order to address safety concerns, two interviewers will be involved in any in-depth interviews held in interviewees’ homes.
- A training session will be required for personnel involved in the in-depth interviews.
- The Brotherhood will provide a thank-you letter and some feedback about the research to participants.

Elements to be costed

- Study development
- Interviewee recruitment
- Management of in-depth interview process
- Recruitment
- Debriefing
- Analysis
- Undertaking at least 3 in-depth interviews (BSL staff to conduct the balance of interviews)
- Focus group management
- Recruitment
- Undertaking and managing all focus groups (BSL staff will observe but will not lead)
- Manage and complete analysis
- Production of all necessary reports and other stated documentation
- Participation in presentation of findings to BSL.

Note

At the completion of the initial in-depth interviews it was decided that two further interviews would help to provide the demographic coverage required. Accordingly, a recent migrant who arrived in Australia as an adult and a single, young and professional female were interviewed. Thus the final number of in-depth interviews conducted was sixteen.

Figure 1: Key matrix

a. Hard quotas

AGE	H/HOLD INCOME			TOTAL
	POOR (10-25K)	MIDDLE (26-70K)	UPPER (70+K)	
Under 18	1	1	1	3
18-30	1	1	1	3
30-50	1	1	1	3
Over 50	1	1	1	3
TOTAL	4	4	4	12

b. Soft quotas

- Sex: minimum of five males/five females
- Background: minimum of 2 indigenous/2 ESB /3 NESB
- Location: spread across above matrix with 4 from each of: metro Melbourne/ regional Victoria/outer Melbourne suburb

- Lifecycle: minimum of two families from each of the following types: youngest child under five; youngest child under 15; children over 15 that are dependent; older parents with no dependent children.
- Education: minimum of 3 public; 3 private; 3 tertiary; 3 secondary only; 2 TAFE

and also

One interview with a disabled individual (eg physical disability resulting in need for modality assistance) and one interview with a carer of a disabled individual.

Figure 2: Indicative project timeline

REFINE INSTRUMENTS		IMPLEMENT		REPORT	RESPOND
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review commenced • In-depth interview processes developed • Feedback on ethical aspects of the project • Research Advisory Group convened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment for in-depth interviews and focus groups • In-depth interviews commence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth interviews conclude • Analysis and reporting of in-depth interviews • Preparation of focus group materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group discussions held • Content analysis commences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft consultant's report presented • BSL comments on draft report • Final consultant's report presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSL Executive consider project's implications for BSL and make recommendations to BSL Board
NOVEMBER 01	DECEMBER	JANUARY 02	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL

Recruiting specifications for the in-depth interviews

Age 16-17 years

- 1) low income (less than 25K h/hold income before tax), female, NESB, outer Melbourne suburb, public education
- 2) middle income (between 26-70K h/hold income before tax), male, background (NFI), Regional Victoria, education (NFI)¹
- 3) high income (more than 70K h/hold income before tax), female, background (NFI), Melbourne, private education

Age 18-30 years

- 4) low income (less than 25K h/hold income before tax), female, indigenous, Regional Victoria, youngest child under 5 years, public, secondary education only
- 5) middle income (between 26-70K h/hold income before tax), male, NESB, Melbourne, lifecycle (NFI), TAFE education
- 6) high income (more than 70K h/hold income before tax), male, ESB, Outer Melbourne suburb, youngest child under 15 years, private, tertiary education

Age 30-50 years

- 7) low income (less than 25K h/hold income before tax), female, ESB, Outer Melbourne suburb, lifecycle (NFI), TAFE education
- 8) middle income (between 26-70K h/hold income before tax), male, indigenous, location NFI, lifecycle (NFI), public, tertiary education
- 9) high income (more than 70K h/hold income before tax), gender (NFI), NESB, Melbourne, children over 15 that are dependent, private education

Age 50+ years

- 10) low income (less than 25K h/hold income before tax), male, background (NFI), Regional Victoria, lifecycle (NFI)
- 11) middle income (between 26-70K h/hold income before tax), female, background (NFI), Outer Melbourne suburb, older family with no dependent children, secondary education only
- 12) high income (more than 70K h/hold income before tax), gender (NFI), background (NFI), Melbourne, lifecycle (NFI), tertiary education

Other

Individual with a disability, e.g. resulting in modality assistance.

- 13) Age less than 50 years, low income (less than 25K h/hold income before tax), gender (NFI), background (NFI), location (Melbourne), lifecycle (NFI), education (NFI)

Full-time carer of disabled person

- 14) Age (NFI), low income (less than 25K h/hold income before tax), gender (NFI), background (NFI), location (Regional Victoria), lifecycle (NFI), education (NFI)

¹ NFI=no further information specified

Supplementary interviews (see explanatory note p. 4)

Minor variations of these specifications occurred during the actual recruitment process, for instance a characteristic was exchanged between some in-depth specifications. Changes were made in the interest of time and as they were not the alteration of a specification, rather the relocation of interviews within the sample, the effects were negligible.

In-depth interview guide

Introduction

Use as a guide. DO NOT READ TO INTERVIEWEES.

Welcome, thanks and introductions. (If using multiple interviewers clearly establish the role of one principal facilitator and the other as an observer).

The purpose of the research is to understand the values of Australians, and also to better appreciate what Australians would like this country to be like in the future. I work for an organisation that has a strong interest in ensuring that the views of Australians are recognised and taken into account in the work that we do. The in-depth interviews that we are conducting, that this interview is a part of, will help me develop an understanding so my work will convey the right sentiments.

If you would like, reports and feedback of the research we're conducting and what we do with the research can be sent to you afterwards to keep you updated on the work so you can see the impact of this interview. We can discuss this further at the end of the interview.

(Discuss expectations of discussion and clarify the purpose of discussion).

This is not a question/answer session, it's an open discussion. Because it's your opinions I'm interested in, there are no right or wrong answers, just what you think, so please say whatever you want to.

If I say something that is not clear don't hesitate to pull me up and ask me to explain. While we are talking about personal things for you, hopefully the questions won't be too prying. But if they are, just stop me—that will be fine.

(About reporting)

Your responses are completely confidential. I'd like to take a tape recording, but the only people that will hear your tape recording are the two people working with me on this project. The tape will help me write a report that may quote some of your comments, but won't identify you as the person making that comment. For instance, if it is of vital importance to the research that people like cookies, and you come out with a 'blinder' of a statement, we would write: '“Cookies rock my world.” (male, metropolitan Melbourne)'

I'm expecting the time to fly by but we will take a few breaks. If you have any questions please ask them as we go. Do you have any questions you want to ask now?

Personal profile

Firstly it would be great just to get a few details about yourself—for instance, where do you live, do you work, do you have children, etc.

(Obtain brief information about family profile, life stage, occupation, number of income earners in household, rental/ own accommodation, level of education, amount have travelled, origins (self/ family) including ethnicity)

Societal values

Objective

Have a clear vision of what the person's values are for an Australian society. Values will need to be interpreted from more specific attitudes, so the interview will need to draw the value themes out. Hence this discussion should identify a number of specific attitudinal

elements as well as a few values-based notions. Attitudes only need to be explored to the extent that they may reveal values. The contrast between current and future Australia is simply a means to draw out these values.

Commence with the technique of having the person describe Australia to a person from another country moving here. This is Australia currently.

Prompt:

- What would you tell them about the people our way of life the opportunities in Australia our systems?

Prompt on issues below:

People

- What are our people like? How can this person expect to be treated? What would be the expectations on how this person will treat others?

Jobs/employment

- What could you tell this person about employment in Australia? What could you tell them
- Could they themselves expect to start a business if they wanted?
- How do Australian businesses treat employees? (*Prompt: work conditions*)

Welfare

- What would you tell this person about Australia's support systems such as aged care? What could you say about the equality of people in Australia? (*Probe: poverty*) What would you say about our health care?
- How do Australians treat groups like the elderly, youth, sick, disadvantaged?

Housing/ standard of living

- What are the opportunities for housing in Australia? Can everyone expect to own their own home?
- What sort of lifestyle would you tell this person to expect as a recently arrived Australian? What standard of living would they expect 20 years down the track?
- What recreation opportunities are there in Australia? How do Australians spend their time (work/leisure etc)?

Education

- How would you describe our education system? (public/ private/primary/ secondary/ tertiary/ access and quality)
- Would you suggest this person send their children to a public or private school?

Safety

- How would you describe safety in Australia to this person? (*Prompt: domestic/international*)

Environment

- What would you say about Australia's environment? What would you say about our attitude towards the environment?

Politics (Note: will probably refer to federal/state politics)

- What would you tell this person about our political system?
- What opportunities are there for the average Australian to be involved or influence politicians?
- How important are politics to Australians?

Satisfaction with Australian society

(Note: to be explored in depth later. No need for direct prompting)

- Are you satisfied with the direction that Australian society is heading?
- What do you like about our society?
- Where is it failing your expectations or preferences?
- How important is it that it be better?

Use the relaxation technique where people ‘float down a tunnel’ to the ideal Australia. It will be important to explore this ‘world’ but then move on, clearly separating fantasy from realistic views.

- How realistic is it that the world you imagine will be achieved?
- What would a realistic preferred future of Australia look like for you? What would be some key ingredients? (*Prompt on areas above if not already mentioned.*)

Jobs/employment

Are current government policies in respect of unemployed people fair and reasonable?

Do they differ at all from the policies that, in your view, the ideal Australian society would have in place?

What are your concerns about businesses and industry in Australia today? (*Prompt: are they given enough support/ are they ethical and fair places to work*)

What role would business and industry play in your ideal society?

Welfare

- What are your thoughts on Australia’s services—for example aged care, family support, support for disabled individuals?
- How would inequality be addressed in your ideal Australia? Would a welfare system exist in your ideal Australia? IF YES, what format would it adopt?
- What are your feelings about Australian poverty? How would your society react to issues of poverty?
- What would health care be like in your ideal Australia? How does that differ from what we have now?

Housing/standard of living

- What should people be able to expect as a minimum standard of housing in your ideal society? (*Probe: Should everyone expect to own a home/ have access to reasonably priced private housing? Who deserves to get public housing? How close are we to that today?*)
- What standard of living would people have in your preferred future? How does recreation fit into that standard of living? What would be the expectations in relation to how people divide time between work, relationships, recreation?

Education

- In your opinion, is the current education system satisfactory? (*Prompt on: primary, secondary, tertiary, TAFE etc. and private vs public; standard of education as well as sources and amount of funding*)
- What would it be like in your preferred future?

Safety

- Do we feel safe in Australian society as it is today? What are our concerns about safety? (*Prompt: domestic/international; some groups of particular concern*)
- Are our systems of law and order sufficient? In your ideal Australia how would security differ to the situation today?

Environment

- To what extent are you concerned about our environment?
- What specific issues are you concerned about?
- How does your preferred future treat the issue of the environment?

Politics (Note: will probably refer to federal/ state politics)

- Is there anything about the nature of politics you would like to see changed in the future? Who will be involved in making-decisions about Australia? What will be the responsibility of politics/ politicians?
- How active will groups and individuals in the community be in determining/ influencing policies?

People

- What will the people of Australia be like in the future? Will they be similar/ different? In what ways will they be similar/ different? How will Australians treat each other?
- What role will children play in society? How should they be regarded? How will they be treated?
- What role will older Australians play in society? How should they be regarded? How will they be treated?
- How will your ideal Australia include minorities? Will they be actively involved in all communities? What needs to happen to ensure Australians get along?

Culture (Suggest doing 'party*' first then questions)

- What is Australia's identity as seen internationally? (Prompt: how are we regarded as a nation by other countries? Positives/ negatives. How fair are those perceptions?)
- How important is it that we have our own national identity?
- How does an Australian identity relate to a global society? (*Probe: In your preferred future will we be globally or nationally based? Will we welcome all refugees etc?*)
- What role would religion or spirituality play in your ideal Australia?

*Party technique:

'Imagine that Australia is at a party with other nations. I'm curious to discuss what Australia would be like as a person. Who is at the party? Who does Australia talk to? What type of personality is Australia? Who isn't at the party?'

Conduct this exercise in the present, then get them to imagine the same party in the ideal future: 'If Australia did develop into the ideal society you've described, what personality would we then be at the party? Would we be different in the future? How would we differ? How will we be the same?'

Use 'onion' technique. 'You've described the ideal Australia. Could you indicate on this picture [describe] how far away we currently are from achieving the ideal Australia?'

Questions to reflect on barriers, responsibilities etc to the ideal Australia described...

- What do you think is stopping Australia from achieving the 'ideal society' we've discussed?
- Will we ever achieve this 'ideal society'? How close will we be in, say, 10 years' time?
- What needs to happen to achieve this society?
- Who is stopping Australia from achieving the 'ideal society'?
- Who is responsible for achieving this 'ideal society' (empowerment/disempowerment)?
- What is your role in achieving this 'ideal society'?
- What needs to be done to motivate responsible parties to start the work toward this future?
- In summary, could you give an overview of what the most important issues are?

Personal values

Objective: Have a clear vision of what the person's aspirations and values are.

Note: May use 'animal association' technique if appropriate to the interviewee.

- How would other people describe you?
- How do you feel about yourself?
- What are the characteristics you like in others (e.g. honesty etc)?
- What do you think are the important issues for you at the moment? What are the challenges and problems you are facing in your life?
- Are you satisfied with your life at the moment? What particularly makes you feel happy with your life at the moment? Conversely, what aspects of your life are you unhappy with?
- What are the areas of your life that you feel you really need to be most satisfied with?

Explore as much as possible at an unprompted level getting the participants to outline what is important to him/her in life. Then use prompts as necessary.

Jobs/employment

- How satisfied are you in your job?
- Where do you want to be in relation to your career? What is it about this vision that will provide you with job satisfaction? How secure are you in your job?
- Have you considered further education/ training? What role does education play in your own aspirations?

Relationships

- What do you want from the relationships you have around you? How important are the relationships to you? Ideally, how will people treat you?
- What relationship do you want with your community?
- Do you want to be involved in local community groups?
- How comfortable do you feel in your immediate neighbourhood/ community? Do you feel part of your local community? Why/Why not?

Housing/standard of living

- How satisfied are you with your housing situation?
- What aspirations do you have in relation to housing?
- Are you satisfied with your standard of living?
- What aspirations do you have in relation to your standard of living?
- What concerns do you have about your financial situation?
- How does recreation fit into your aspirations for your future? (*Prompt: Time management issues*)
- What are your expectations in respect of getting old?
- How will you live your life when you are retired?

Spiritual life

- What keeps you going in bad times (faith type issues)
- Do you have any general philosophies or beliefs that sustain you or you feel explain more about the type of person you are? (*Prompt: Would you say you are a religious person?*)
- Is there anything that you don't like about yourself? How would you like your life to be different? What would you change if you had the chance?

(Questions to reflect on barriers, responsibilities etc to the future described)

- What and who is making difficult/ stopping you from being the person described? Who is responsible for enabling you to be this person?

Values for children or dependants

Ask everyone

- What should schools be teaching kids, apart from the usual lessons?
- What are the important things you try (would try) to convey to your kids?

Ask those with children

- What are your aspirations for your children?
- How did having children affect your personal aspirations?
- How do your aspirations for your children and for yourself differ?

Other prompts if have time

- What do you hope their education would be like? (public/ private)
- Where do you hope they will be in relation to their career? (Prompt: security / company)?
- How will they divide their time (between work/ relationships/ leisure etc)?
- What will their material situation be? What is sufficient?
- What do you hope for them in terms of their relationships?
- What is their role in the community?
- How would you like society to treat them?
- How will their life differ from yours?
- Is it likely or unlikely they will achieve these things? What is making it difficult/ stopping them from being the person described? (Probe)
- Who is responsible for enabling [the dependant] to be this person?

Integration of values (societal, personal, dependants) and impact on behaviour

Objective: The comparison between value sets is critical to determine similarity but also the dependency of one on the other. A comparison of values to day-to-day life is purely to get the person considering how their values impact at this level.

Read back list of social and personal values. Confirm accuracy.

- In what ways would you say your personal aspirations and aspirations and social aspirations related? How do they differ?
- Can you achieve personal aspirations without your ideal society?

(If appropriate)

- If we could get closer to your ideal society, would this impact on your personal aspirations?
- If someone was looking from the outside, how would they know your values from your behaviour? So from an average day, e.g. yesterday, how would a person see your priorities from your behaviour? (Prompt: *What actions have you undertaken in the last 12 months that reflect the priorities discussed?*)

Community network mapping

Objective: Develop framework of the interviewee's networks.

Begin by developing map with individual at centre. List the people around the centre. Can use closeness to self as indicating of most time spent with people.

- Apart from work, family and friends, do you have any other interests that bring you into contact with people in the wider community? (*Prompt on: political, volunteer, school committees, church etc*)
- What inspires these involvements?

Evolution of values

Objective: Understand the term 'values' and influences on values in their development and alteration.

- What does the term 'values' mean to you? (*Word association is critical here if there is an inability to describe values*) What are some of your values?

Compare values in community network to self (or, own?) values. Helpful probes include:

- How do you think you developed your perspective on issues in society? *Examples to be specific include voting, republican, immigration, abortion etc*
- - Are your thoughts the same as those your parents had? (Prompt on: For instance, do you vote the same way your parents do?) How are they the same/ different?
- Apart from your parents, who else has helped form the sort of person you are and the beliefs you have (e.g. school, friends, mentors in workplace, sport etc)
- How do you deal with new information provided by one group that's in contrast to your current beliefs?
- Do you have much conversation about the issues discussed with your friends/ family etc?
- What experiences have contributed to shaping your opinion?

- Do you ever pick up information that changes how you see things?
- Are you influenced by things you see and hear on the media? Other sources of information e.g. books? For instance, a TV commercial about poverty amongst Australian families? How do you react to these messages. What about a brochure in the mail?

- Have you ever felt bad about something that you have done? Have you ever felt bad about something you didn't do but felt you should have? What have you felt proud of?
- Have you ever changed your opinion on an issue? What prompted that change? (Who/ what?)
- Have you ever behaved in a manner that was contradictory to your values?

Post-discussion critical review

CLOSE. That's it. Thank you so much for your time and allowing us to dig deep into your thoughts on Australia's future as well as your own personal values. I'd like to talk with you about this interview process a little bit now, and to get your impressions about some of the work we are doing at the moment.

(Identify that the interviewers work at or on behalf of the Brotherhood of St Laurence.)

The research we are undertaking is primarily to understand what people's values are and to go deeper to understand where the values come from, and why some do and don't translate into action. We also want to understand about what kinds of action people think is needed, either by themselves or governments, to bring about a better kind of Australia.

- What do you think about this?
- Is there anything you would like to add to the things you've already said during the interview?
- What questions do you have for me?

Recruiting specifications for the focus groups

In summary, the following will need to be recruited:

- 12 focus groups segmented by Continuum and Lifecycle (with soft quotas)
 - 2 groups convened as part of a pilot before Easter
 - the remaining 10 to be convened after Easter
- 2 mini-focus group discussions (4 participants per group) with 16 and 17-year-olds segmented by gender

The Brotherhood of St Laurence is undertaking qualitative research to further its understanding of how Australians think and feel about Australian society and what they would like Australia to be like in the future. The research will also explore a few specific areas of social concern which are contested in the media to see how people respond to differing views.

Focus group discussions

The critical cell matrix on which the groups will be recruited is shown below. The continuum in the left-hand column is adapted from Prochaska and DiClement (1993).

CONTINUUM STAGE	LIFECYCLE			TOTAL
	Young singles and couples (under 40 years)	With dependent children (under 18 years at home)	Older singles, couples and no dependants (over 40 years)	
Pre-contemplation	1	1	1	3
Sensitisation & Contemplation	1	1	1	3
Trial action	1	1	1	3
Sustained action	1	1	1	3
TOTAL	4	4	4	12

NOTE: Each group would include 8 participants.

Other soft quotas for the 12 group discussions [excludes mini groups] include:

Income

- ensure a range of incomes are included overall [not per group]: of 96 participants;
- one in five (19 participants) should earn less than 25K h/hold before tax
- one in five (19 participants) should earn between 26-70K h/hold before tax
- one in five (19 participants) should earn more than 70K h/hold before tax

Gender

- at least 3 participants of each gender per group)

Language background

- 2 participants per group whose first language is not English

Location

- 8 groups to be convened at the Key Response in South Melbourne (participants from all over Melbourne are encouraged to attend).
- To ensure outer Melbourne is represented the following groups will be convened:
 - one at Melton (pre-contemplation/ young singles or couples with no dependent children),
 - one at Craigieburn (sensitisation & contemplation/ dependent children),
 - one at Ringwood/Lilydale (trial action/ dependent children),
 - one at another outer Melbourne suburb (sustained action/ older singles, couples and people with no dependants)

Age

- a minimum of 8 participants in the 56+ age groups overall [not per group] should be aged over 70 years of age

Mini-group discussions

Two mini-group discussions will be convened (4 participants per group) with Australians aged 16 and 17 years old. One group should include females whilst the other should include males. Groups should include 2*2 affinity pairs.

Rather than recruiting participants to represent the range of Behaviour Change Continuum stages it will be assumed that most participants will be in the early stages of the Continuum.

Other soft quotas (for all groups)

- All participants should not have been involved in qualitative research in the preceding six months.
- At least one-quarter of each group should not have been involved in qualitative research before.
- All remaining participants should have been involved in no more than four qualitative research interventions including focus and mini group discussions and in-depth interviews.
- No more than four participants per group should have worked for a not for profit organisation in the last three years.

Recruiting questions

NAME:

MARITAL STATUS:

AGE:

DATE OF BIRTH:

SUBURB:

TELEPHONE:

AGES OF KIDS living at home:

OCCUPATION:

INDUSTRY TYPE:

Are you self employed?

SPOUSE'S OCCUPATION:

INDUSTRY TYPE:

Self employed?

1. Do you or any member of your immediate circle of family or friends currently work for or have ever worked or ever been involved in market research, advertising, public relations, marketing, Journalism, media, (newspaper, magazine, TV or radio) a)yes b) no

If yes terminate

2. Have you participated in Market Research? YES/NO

When? Topics? (watch quotas for fresh faces!)

How many groups have you attended?

If more than 4groups terminate

If in the last six months.(interview or groups) terminate

If on social issues or for charitable organisation EVER terminate

3. How long have you been a resident of Melbourne? _____ (must be at least 3 years)
4. What language did you speak at home when you were growing up?
 - a) English
 - b) other (specify) recruit as NESB
5. Which of the following brackets best describes your total household income before tax?
 - a) less than \$30,000
 - b) \$30-70,000
 - c) \$70,000+
 (Watch spread – no specific quotas given to see where they arise!!!)
6. Have you worked for a non-profit organisation (i.e. charity/environmental organisation) within the last 3 years in either a paid or a voluntary capacity?
 - a) Yes Go to 7
 - b) No Go to 8
7. [If yes to 6] Specify whether
 - a) Paid
 - b) Voluntary

Note: We want no more than 4 who have done paid work for a non-profit organisation. No restrictions on number who have done voluntary work.

8. Which of the following best describes your life stage?
 - a) single, no kids living at home
 - b) married/de facto, no kids at home
 - c) single with children aged under 18 living at home
 - d) married/ de facto with children aged under 18 living at home
 - e) single with children aged over 18 living at home
 - f) married/de facto with children aged over 18 living at home
 9. Which of the following actions have you been involved in for one or more issues during the last 12 months?
 - a) wrote a letter to a politician
 - b) wrote a letter to a newspaper or magazine
 - c) lobbied an organisation, e.g. by writing a letter
 - d) attended a community meeting including a local government forum
 - e) volunteered time to a cause or organisation
 - f) attended a [protest] demonstration
 - g) signed a postcard or other petition
 - h) none of the above go to Q11
 10. How many times have you done one or more of these actions? _____

If 3 or more = sustained action (SA). If 2 or less = trial action (TA)
 11. Have you thought about but not got around to doing one of these actions for a particular issue in the last 12 months?
 - a) yes = sensitisation & contemplation (S&C)
 - b) no = pre-contemplation (PC) recruit; all others ask Q12
 12. What was the issue/s that you have either acted on or considered doing? _____
- RECORD ISSUES _____

Thank you. We would like to invite you to participate in a market research discussion. This will be held at..... on.....at.....As we invite a small number to attend it is vital that people commit themselves to attending and be on time.

Do you agree to arrive at least 5-10 minutes prior to the group commencing. Yes/no

Please understand that your non-attendance may cause the group not to go ahead.

If for some reason an emergency crops up and you need to reschedule that time please call me on.....or my supervisor

If you require reading glasses, please ensure you bring these along with you to the group.

Timelines

Task	Timeline
Pilot testing	
Recruiting for pilot groups commences	20 March
Pilot groups held at Key Response at 6.00pm. Moderated by Libby Smith. One group per night	26 & 27 March
Recruiting for remaining groups commences	3 April
Groups to be held on the following dates:	
Key Response 1 (NFI)	6.00-8.00 pm 10 April
Key Response 2 (NFI)	6.00pm 11 April
Key Response 3 (mini-group 1)	10.30-12.30 am 13 April
Key Response 4 (NFI)	1.00-3.00pm 13 April
Key Response 5 (mini-group 2)	3.30-5.30pm 13 April
Key Response 6 (NFI)	11.00am- 1.00pm 14 April
Key Response 7 (NFI)	2.00-4.00pm 14 April
Key Response 8 (NFI)	6.00-8.00pm 16 April
Melton: Charne Flowers	10.30am- 12.30pm 13 April
Craigieburn: Charne Flowers	2.00-4.00pm 13 April
Ringwood/Lilydale: Charne Flowers	11.00am- 1.00pm 14 April
Frankston: Charne Flowers	2.30-4.30pm 14 April

Venues for outer Melbourne will be advised.

All groups are to be recruited for 2 hours.

All participants will be paid \$55.

The BSL should not be identified to participants, but can be referred to as a community organisation. They will be told who was conducting the research at the end of the discussions.

Focus group discussion guide

Introduction

Thank & explain purpose of discussion.

A series of focus group discussions is being held across Melbourne with the primary focus of understanding how Australians think and feel about Australian society and what they would like Australia to be like in the future. At the end of the discussions I hope to write a report which identifies some of the priorities people identify for Australia.

To help make sure everyone's comments are noted I'd like to take a tape recording. This tape will stay with me though it may be transcribed by a professional transcriber. The tapes will be kept by me for seven years and others will only hear the tape if they want to authenticate the transcripts and report. It's unlikely that will happen but if it does we'll check there is nothing on the tape that will identify you. Your comments are therefore confidential. If we quote you in the report you won't be personally identified. The only other people who will hear this conversation are some colleagues who from time to time will be listening in another room via the video recorder.

If at any time you want to ask me questions please don't hesitate to do so. If I say something confusing please get me to clarify. If there is something you don't want to talk about you don't have to.

[Moderators to set own rules for discussion, e.g. mobile phones off, etc.]

Any questions before we start?... [Do whip around]... If you could maybe say what you do and your family status.

Behaviour change continuum

- Thinking about the last 12 months, has anything got you 'stirred up' [concerned/ interested]? Explore. WILL NEED TO LEAD FROM PERSONAL COMMENTS BACK TO SOCIAL ISSUES. AVOID A CURRENT AFFAIRS RECALL SESSION. PROMPTS FOR PRE-CONTEMPLATORS: Did you see or hear about a person or group and think, 'They are doing something important'?

Thoughts and feelings (briefly)

- Why do you think it affected you so?
- How did you initially feel? (powerless, uninformed, angry, etc.)

Taking action (this is the main area)

- What did you do in response to being 'stirred up'? IF NO ACTION? MENTIONED... Did you consider taking some action? Why/ why not?
- What actions did you consider?
- Did you follow through on an action? Why/ why not?
- Who did you talk with about it?
- What would have been helpful at that time? (Prompt on information/ other resources)

Future action

- Can you imagine taking action in support of an issue or cause in the future?

- What would you hope for if you took action?
- What would you worry about if you took action? What might stop you? Possible negative consequences.
- We've mentioned the following actions.[DRAW ON DISCUSSION].. What are some other actions that people could take when they get stirred up about an issue? MAKE SHORT LIST AND SUPPLEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING IF NOT MENTIONED: write a letter to a newspaper or politician; join a group and work with a group; attend a rally; attend a public forum, attend a private forum established through a group they are already involved with, donate their time, donate money.
- Can you imagine actually taking any of these actions? Why/why not?
- Who would you talk with about a possible action?
- How would you prefer to be involved in action: through an organisation, on your own, regularly, level of responsibility etc.?

Questions for Trial Action & Sustained Action groups only [Skip questions if you have? They have? already described involvement in the Behaviour Change Continuum]

- All of you here have taken some action, big and small, in the last 12 months that involved you in some cause or issue. I want to understand the link between having a concern about an issue and taking action. When you've been stirred up about an issue in the past, have you always taken action? Why/ Why not?
- Was there any one thing that pushed you to the point of saying to yourself that you would have do something or was it a combination of things? What were they?
- What was the specific process you went through when deciding what to do? Gaining info etc.
- How did your family and friends react when you became involved (supportive; critical etc)?
- Are you the same person as before you took action? How have you changed? [good & bad]
- Do you ever think you'll get to the point when you feel that you have done your bit and that it is now up to others?

Shared experiences of poverty

I have a number of pictures of people that I would like to get your thoughts on. [Show pictures]

- What is your initial, 'gut' reaction to these pictures?
- What do you feel as you look at these pictures?
- Are there particular things that catch your attention?

Causes and responsibility for situation

- How would you describe the situation of those in the photos?
- How did they get into this situation? Prompt: Was it their own doing or was someone else or society at least partially responsible?
- Who is responsible for helping them out of their current situation or are they responsible for themselves?
- What do you need to hear about these people to make you want to help them?

Shared experiences of vulnerability

- Some people have told us that they see people like those in the photographs as vulnerable. What do you think? Why?
- If we think about our lives, can you identify any events or circumstances in life that make us all vulnerable? (Prompt on: marriage breakdown; getting your first job; having your first child; being retrenched or losing your job; retirement)
- If we think about these times in life when we all tend to feel more vulnerable, do we bring those feelings with us when we consider people like those in the photographs?
- Can we identify anything that we might have in common with the people in the photographs?

Vulnerability and poverty

- We've talked about risky or vulnerable situations. Is there any link between the situations of vulnerability we talked about before and poverty?
- Is poverty a word that could be used to describe these vulnerable or isolated situations we've talked about? Explore.
- Is there a better way of describing these situations that we have been talking about?

Comments/ statements/ facts

I'm going to place out a number of cards with comments, statements or facts on them. Please wander around and have a read. What is your reaction to these different comments?

- Were there any that you didn't like? Why?
- Were there any that just didn't have any impact on you? Why?
- Which ones were effective at making you stop and think? Why?
- Was there information missing? What else would you want to know?

Policies and vision for Australia

[Use the percentage distribution sheet]

I'm going to give you the task of allocating funds between the different areas of government expenditure and decide where the money goes. I'll hand out sheets that list funding areas including public hospitals, public primary and secondary education, tertiary education, defence etc. (Introduce sheet & instruct to include 'others' that are missing.)

- How did you find that task? (Briefly)
- Were there any areas missing?
- What were the top areas where your money went?
- What areas received the least amount of money?
- What information would have made this task easier?

That task links nicely to the other main thing I was hoping to talk about—what you would like Australia to be like in the future?

- What are the things that come to mind when you think about an Australia that you would want for yourself and your family [including children, parents, etc., as relevant] in the future? Explore.

Conclusion

As I mentioned at the start, the work that I'm doing around Melbourne at the moment is to understand what people think about major issues in Australia. I should mention that I am working on behalf of the Brotherhood of St Laurence. This research is being funded by private trust money to help understand the perceptions of the general community so we can make arguments to government and media and also help cut through some misperceptions about some of the people that use our employment, child care and aged services.

[Pass around incentive sign sheet and explain the media contact sheet.]

The form I'm sending around requires one signature to say we have paid you so please check you have the right money and sign. Inside the incentive money packages are the contact details for myself if you do have any questions or want to follow up the results of the research, as well as the contact details for a complaints officer.

While the forms are being handed around, do you have any questions or thoughts about what we've talked about?