



Contribution ID: 191

Type: Session

Panel: How is data empowering Indigenous communities?

Monday 13 October 2025 14:30 (1h 30m)

This session will be conducted in a panel format and explore the central question “How is data empowering Indigenous communities?” It will bring together 5 speakers from diverse backgrounds across Australia and Canada, to present for 10-15 minutes each, followed by a facilitated discussion and Q&A with the audience.

The panel members will offer their own perspectives on the use of data in Indigenous contexts, including Indigenous-led research, community-controlled organisations, non-Indigenous allyship, and leveraging international standards. Each speaker will share insights from their experiences and areas of expertise, reflecting on the challenges and opportunities of working with data in ways that affirm Indigenous self-determination, governance, and knowledge systems.

This session aligns with the conference theme of *CAREful Indigenous Data Governance*, and will touch on:

- Indigenous-led research to improve data literacy within the Indigenous community;
- Data priorities, practices and current research initiatives at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Brisbane (ATSICHS), a community-controlled organisation;
- How researchers and practitioners outside Indigenous communities can work as allies in ways that are culturally sensitive and respect principles of Indigenous data governance and Indigenous Data Sovereignty; and
- The development of Indigenous-led AI tools.

Panel members:

Becki Cook: Becki is a proud Nunukul Aboriginal woman, educator, and researcher currently undertaking a PhD at the QUT Centre for Data Science. Her research explores Indigenous data literacy through Indigenous Research Methodologies, with a focus on elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and priorities in the field of data science. Alongside her doctoral studies, Becki works as a Research Assistant in Indigenous Data Science and serves as the Early Career Researcher Co-Leader for the Data Science and AI in Society theme within the Centre for Data Science.

Robert McLellan: UQ, Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA).

Robert, a Gureng Gureng descendant from the Wide Bay region, is a community researcher, director and governance practitioner. He is an Industry Fellow at the University of QLD and Senior Program Manager for Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA), and a strong advocate for truth telling and speaking up for Aboriginal rights, justice, and economic advancement. Dedicated to authentic inclusion of First Nations voices, Robert is passionate about revitalising Indigenous languages, cultures and building culturally inclusive, honourable and cohesive communities.

Raymond Brunker: General Manager, Community Services, ATSICHS Brisbane.

Raymond is a proud Maramanindji man from Daly River, Northern Territory. He has a special interest in finding solutions that empower communities and families. He has a deep history and connection to the Logan and Brisbane community, having attend the Murri School and Woodridge State High School. Raymond has also completed a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and a Bachelor of Human Services. Currently, Raymond is an Atlantic Fellow, completing a Masters of Social Change Leadership with the University of Melbourne.

Dr Bernadette Hyland-Wood is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Data Science, Queensland University of Technology advancing in responsible AI and technological humanism. She is a research investigator

on Indigenous-led data governance research programs and has chaired international data standards to support community advocacy and evidence-informed policy making. Dr Hyland-Wood actively engages with academia, industry, and public policy makers to advance human-centric technologies.

Shani Gwin : Shani Gwin is the Founder and CEO of pipikwan pêhtâkwan and wâsikan kisewâtisiwin. Shani is a proud, sixth generation Métis and a descendant of Michel First Nation. She has a passion for elevating Indigenous voices, truths and successes.

In her role, Shani has built one of Turtle Island's (North America) leading Indigenous-owned, -led and majority-staffed communications and engagement agencies. She helps guide clients and organizations with strategic guidance on decolonization, reconciliation, trauma informed communications, issues management and public relations.

She has over 15 years of professional communications experience in all sectors and is now developing a matriarchal and Indigenous powered artificial intelligence tool. The tool provides protection for Indigenous People online and supports non-Indigenous people with limiting bias and harm in their writing about Indigenous Peoples.

Moderator: Distinguished Professor Kerrie Mengersen

Kerrie Mengersen is a Distinguished Professor of Statistics at Queensland University of Technology. She is a Co-Leader of the Fundamental Methods in Data Science and AI Theme in the QUT Centre for Data Science. Kerrie's research sits at the intersection of computational and applied statistics and machine learning, and focuses on developing ways to efficiently collect, analyse, share and trust diverse data sources. Her applied work focuses on health, environment and industry.

The session will provide both theoretical reflections and tangible examples, drawing from work in academia, community health and governance, and cross-cultural collaboration.

The panel will appeal to a broad audience, including those engaged with data in community, research, advocacy, and policy contexts. It is designed to encourage thoughtful, values-based dialogue on how data can support Indigenous self-determination and community priorities. The 90-minute format includes time for audience engagement, fostering a space for shared learning and diverse perspectives on Indigenous data practices and potential.

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Presenters: COOK, Becki (QUT Centre for Data Science); Dr HYLAND-WOOD, Bernadette (QUT Centre for Data Science); Prof. MENGENSEN, Kerrie (QUT Centre for Data Science); BRUNKER, Raymond (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Brisbane); MCLELLAN, Robert (UQ, Language Data Commons of Australia (LDaCA)); GWIN, Shani (pipikwan pêhtâkwan)

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