

2020-21 NGAA Research Update



The NGAA's research focus for 2021 is on commissioning new growth areas research, showcasing Member-led research through our next Research Symposium, and exciting collaborations with our research partners. A sound contemporary evidence base is critical to our work and we build this through a three-tier framework: NGAA-commissioned research, NGAA member-led research and collaborating on Partner-led research projects.

NGAA-led research

2021 Research

This year the NGAA will **commission research** that builds on our 2020 Working from Home research, potentially to show the benefits of investing in growth areas and the positive outcomes from recent infrastructure investment. The research brief is being refined and we will keep Members updated.

2020 Commissioned Research

We commissioned research into the lived experience of working from home in a growth area during COVID-19. The research was well received and generated widespread discussion and media attention on the many positives and future opportunities for growth areas of working from home or close to home. Read the two research reports below:

[Close to Home: the opportunities and benefits of working from home in outer urban growth areas](#)

[Jobs and Commuting in Outer Growth Suburbs](#)

2020 Research Symposium

In 2020 the NGAA Research Symposium took the form of seven issues-based webinars. This format was due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Thank you to the following Member Councils for presenting and sharing their research and practice in the webinars:

- o City of Armadale
- o Camden Council
- o Liverpool Council
- o City of Wanneroo
- o Wyndham City Council

Thanks also to the following organisations and businesses for sharing their knowledge and experience in the webinars: Australian Local Government Association; Centre for International Research on Education Systems (CIRES), Victoria University; Deloitte Access Economics; Digital Finance Analytics; Headspace; .id The Population Experts; PlaceScore NSW; WestJustice.

Click on the titles below to watch webinar recordings or see research reports.

[Working from Home - launch of the NGAA-commissioned research](#)

Presentation of [Close to Home: benefits of working from home in outer urban growth areas](#) (Quantum Market Research, 2020) and [Jobs and Commuting in outer growth suburbs](#) (Astrolabe Group, 2020)

[Dis/Advantage: Young people in Australia's outer suburbs after Covid-19](#)

Exploring how the risks facing young people in growth areas can be turned around, and their geographic location in the outer suburbs become an advantage.

[Financial Stress in Growth Areas – the ticking time bomb](#)

A detailed look at the impact of financial stress on growth area households and Councils, and the ticking time bomb of mortgage defaults and rental stress.

[Youth Mental Health - Getting help where it is needed in growth areas](#)

This webinar explored how Camden Council secured a Headspace presence for their community.

[A Post-Budget look at the economic impact of COVID-19 on Australia's outer urban growth areas](#)

The impact of COVID-19 on outer urban growth areas.

[Placemaking for nervous people](#)

Engaging communities and creating connection to 'place' has never been more important than in a time of significant social change. Some of Australia's leading placemaking and community engagement practitioners talk about their 'new normal' in growth areas.

[Shifting planning policy or shifting planning responsibility? A report from the weekly Planning Ministers meetings](#)

Examining whether crisis-induced shifts in planning processes will endure after COVID-19 - and how local government can keep its seat at the planning table.

Research and Practice Group

The RAP Group provides direction and feedback on the lines of inquiry that NGAA research will undertake, and curates member research activities which may be of national interest. This year we have openings for new RAP group members.

The current members of the RAP Group are:

Maria Cooke, Director City Development and Sustainability, City of Kwinana

Dr Anne Hurni, Coordinator Research and Policy, Penrith City Council

Steve Marmion, Manager Advocacy and Economic Development, City of Wanneroo

Greg Sarre, Manager Economic Development and Sustainability, Mount Barker District Council

We thank Dr Robin Visser (formerly Wyndham City Council) and Caralene Moloney (City of Whittlesea) for their contribution to the RAP group over the past two years. Both Robin and Caralene have moved on to other roles.

Member-led research: 2021 Symposium

Planning is underway for the 2021 Growth Areas Research Symposium, and Members and partners will soon be invited to submit projects.

Partner-led research update

Life Course Centre (Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course)

NGAA is an in-kind partner with the Life Course Centre. The Centre was successful in securing a seven year funding agreement from the Federal government which commenced in January 2021.

UWA and University of Melbourne funded by the Urban Studies Foundation (UK)

We have been approached by the University of Melbourne (one of the Life Course Centre Partners) to explore 'unmet research needs that could drive policy innovation in place-based interventions to overcome disadvantage'. We have been asked to assist with the delivery of a workshop on Peripheral Centralities – Politics, Policy & Practice to be held in conjunction with NGAA Congress in November 2021. Dr Paul Maginn, Dept. of Geography & Planning, School of Social Sciences at the University of Western Australia, who has worked with NGAA in the past, sought out our collaboration on this project. He is working with Nicholas Phelps, Chair of Urban Planning at Melbourne School of Design.

RMIT Australian Urban Observatory

The Australian Urban Observatory at RMIT provides useful data to support our advocacy but also to assist councils in planning and delivering services. NGAA has been gifted free access to the Observatory. Data is mapped in the following categories: Liveability, Walkability, Social Infrastructure, Public Transport, Food, Alcohol, Public Open Space, Employment and Housing.