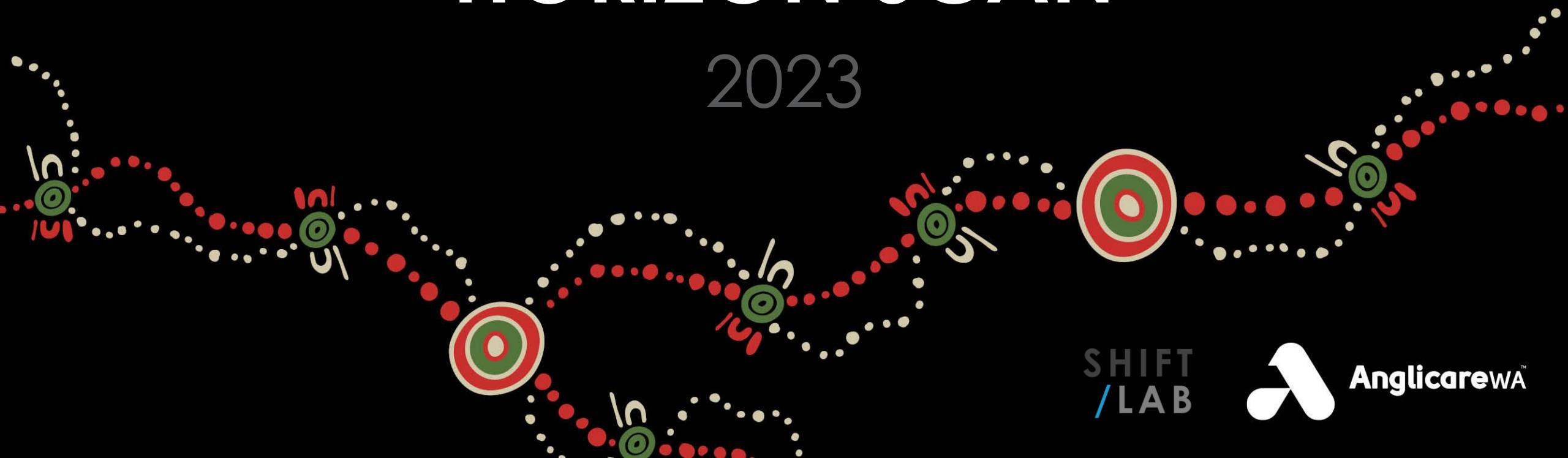
HORIZON SCAN

2023



SHIFT /LAB

Anglicare WA

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Ngaala Kaaditj Noongar moort keyen kaadak nidja boodja- We respectfully acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation as the Traditional Custodians on this land on which Anglicare WA has its head office.

We also acknowledge the numerous other Aboriginal Nations across Western Australia where we live and do our work.

We pay our respects to their strength, cultural resilience and the Elders past and present, and their continuing connection to the land on which we live, work and play.

We welcome and support the proposal of the Voice and accept the invitation made to us through the Uluru Statement of the Heart.

Focus

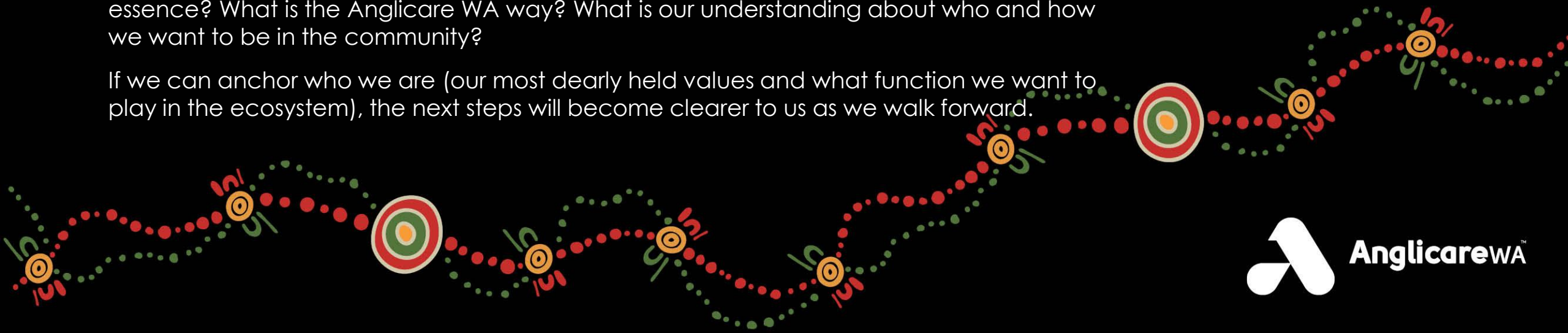
The focus of the Horizon Scan is on emerging trends which have potential implications for the way we approach **poverty and disadvantage in Western Australia**, and opportunities to adapt our mindsets and practices.

Many of these themes are unsettling and prompt a sense of urgency. The mantra of the tech world "move fast and break things" has resulted in many solutions which have created inadvertent harm. While we take a learning and experimentation approach, we believe that the coming times call for a "go slow and fix things" approach.

"The times are urgent; let us slow down." - Professor Bayo Akomolefe, Director of the Emergency Network

As we consider these emerging themes, let's reflect: What is Anglicare WA's unique essence? What is the Anglicare WA way? What is our understanding about who and how we want to be in the community?

If we can anchor who we are (our most dearly held values and what function we want to play in the ecosystem), the next steps will become clearer to us as we walk forward.



Anglicare WA

Exec Summary

This Horizon Scan has been informed by a wide array of information sources pertaining to each theme (appendix at end). It aims to capture emerging themes which have greatest relevance to our future work.

With a population set to top 38 Million by 2050, Australia's demographics are also changing shape with a rapidly **ageing population**. This will increase the burden of disease/health costs, although tech advances may offset some of this for those able to afford it. The **growth in the care and social services sector** will be one of the most prominent shifts in our economy over the next 40 years (Intergenerational Report Australia, 2023). Our demographic mix will see slightly higher numbers of Aboriginal families, and the trend of skilled migrant families, particularly from the Asia Pacific region, will continue to grow.

We are seeing a trend towards **diverse forms of the family unit,** with the 1950s nuclear family (dad in paid work and a homemaker mum) becoming less common. A variety of factors including medical advances and gender equality, but also cost of living and economic necessity, are subsequently resulting in a greater variety of care arrangements.

With rising inequality and global instability, **mental health** continues to be a huge need, but with bottlenecks in clinical provision; peer-led, commercial and app-based alternatives are emerging to fill the gap.

Global advances across multiple areas of **technology** pose both an opportunity and threat. The multiple applications of AI promise to bring computing power and efficiencies which will supersede human capabilities across a growing array of fields. New and more connected devices promise immersive worlds in which to work and play. Big data offers insight and predictive capabilities, but also cyber-crime and data breaches. Biotech offers environmental and health benefits and even the possibility to create super-humans. At the same time, we watch to see if electrification, renewables and other climate technologies will scale fast enough to make a difference to our warming planet.

The **cost-of-living crisis** will continue to affect those in the bottom quintiles for the foreseeable future- while unemployment remains low for now, many continue to be excluded and rates of welfare payments lag below the poverty line. In coming years, we will likely see many 'middle-skilled' jobs displaced by AI, creating a new band of unemployed who are not able to transition to new tech roles. We are also seeing an increase in precarious (casual, short term, gig) employment contracts.

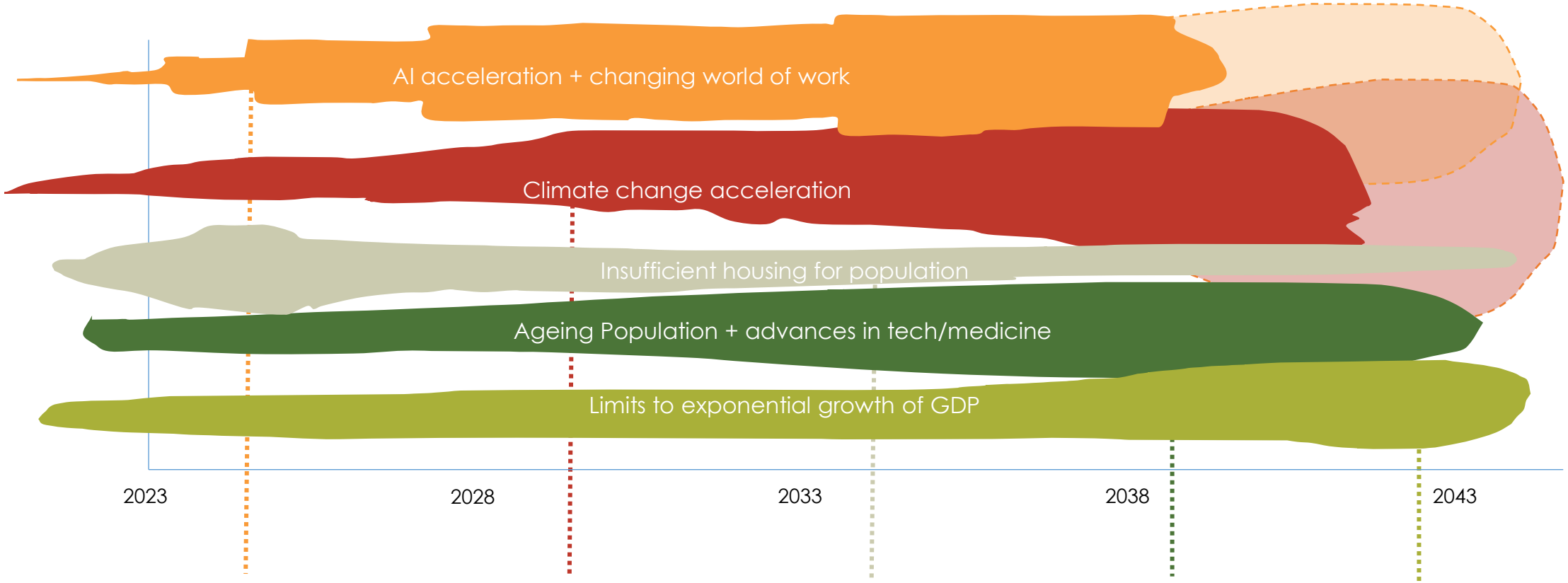
The **housing crisis** will continue to trend for some time, as new social and affordable dwellings are built over several years. A challenge to the Australian Dream of suburban single family home ownership is unfolding, as we start to see a range of pragmatic adaptations- more makeshift solutions and multi-family sharing households.

Physical impacts of **climate change**, and the hard landing of delayed action will impact most on the lowest quintiles who are least able to relocate, retrofit or afford to absorb fluctuations in cost. The psychological impacts of **"permacrisis"** (multiple intersecting crises) are pushing people into four key responses, each with different societal implications. Access to information (and misinformation) and **erosion of trust in institutions** is creating unusual new ideological tribes and a move away from traditional **voting patterns**. The tension between autocratic Government control and radicalisation of citizens is becoming strained– as we saw with measures introduced during the COVID pandemic.

Meanwhile, as the world grapples with the social and environmental fallout of the past 200 years and limits to our ability to sustain exponential growth, deeper worldviews are being questioned. As we look **beyond Neoliberalism** and GDP as the benchmark of a well-functioning society, we have the chance to contemplate, What is a **Wellbeing Economy**? This is coinciding with an upswell in **Indigenous peoples calling for justice** and presenting an **opportunity to learn and to make-right.**

While some of these trends require technical responses, they all connect to a common root question about what it means to be human, to have a good life and a great society. Effort invested into refining new world views, values and narratives to take us forward through uncertain times will be time well spent and will provide a grounding for all the other decisions we make about what our work should be in coming years.

5 Shapes on our Horizon which will impact on inequality



Rapid acceleration in processing power, machine learning, automation represent significant opportunities and risks across every domain of life, including significant implications for the future of work.

Impacts of acute disasters and persisting effects of heat, rising sea, economic costs and social impacts resulting from delayed action, needing a more rapid transition and a harder landing. Opportunities around decarbonisation, regenerative economy.

Australia's population to reach 30 Million by 2033 and 38 Million by 2050. While spending on housing will alleviate some pressure, the housing shortage will likely continue, particularly as climate change set to cost property market $571 billion by 2030 in disaster prone areas.

Number of Australians over 85 set to triple in next 40 years, while those over 65 will double. Longer lifespan will increase burden of disease/health costs, though tech advances may partially offset this for those able to pay. Growth in care and social services sector anticipated.

Exponential growth reaching its limits- Reliance on debt, overconsumption and waste, negative social/ economic externalities increasingly being counted. Unlikely to be able to sustain pace of growth, even with "Green Economy". Neo-liberalism unravelling and alternatives starting to form.

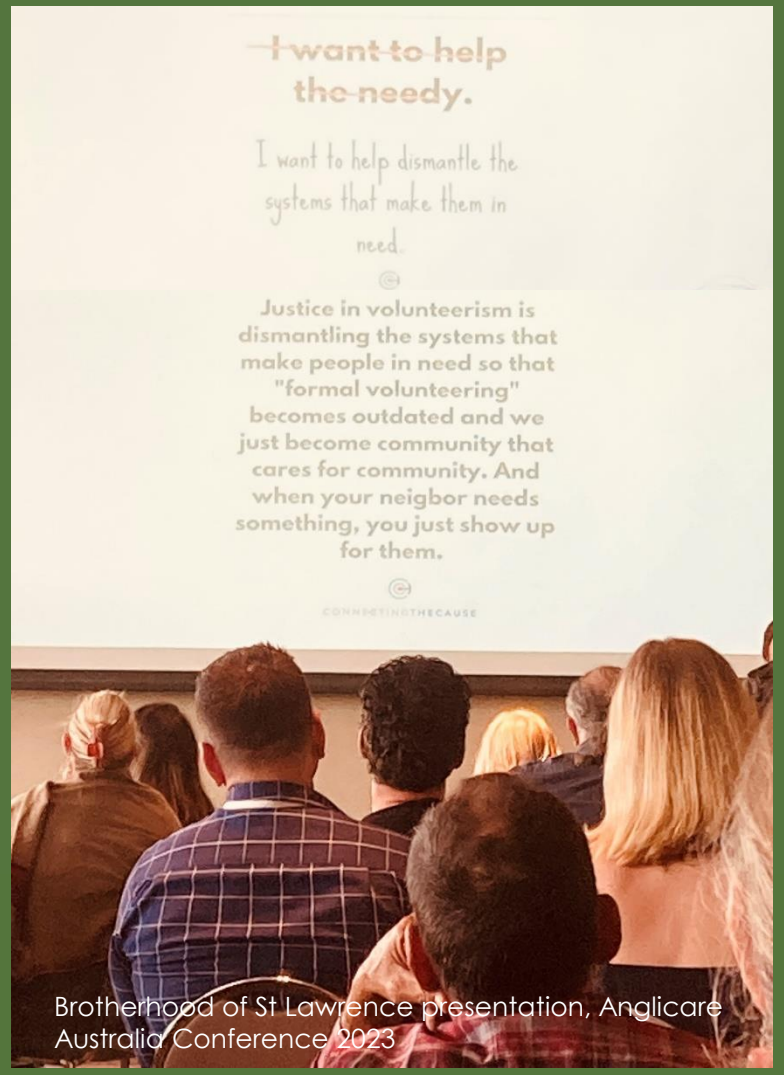
SHIFTING WORLD VIEWS

A new relationship in helping

The nature of our helping work has shifted over time. Our work has at various times employed combinations of the following, often concurrently:

- Deeper past- neighbours and community helped one another. Mutuality- "I help you because I know someone will then help me if I need it".
- Charity as the powerful helping down. Well intentioned. Religious aligned narrative of "saving" people. Some offerings such as schools before state-run school existed were genuinely transformational, but largely tended to be soothing band-aid solutions which did little to shift structural barriers keeping people in disadvantage- a friendly face and some food on a hard day. Mix of parish-based responses and formal Anglican institutions. Place-based parish responses allowed some local responsiveness. Some historic legacy of institutional abuse.
- Community services as professionally tendered arm of the Government Welfare State. With the secularisation of charity work, organisations operate more as businesses, compete for contracts, demonstrate value for money, efficiency. Work often dictated by available contracts. Rhetoric of strengths and person-centred but highly segmented and standardised nature of contracts make it difficult to work holistically or respond to strengths. Funding mostly directed to crisis and downstream responses rather than protective factors- poverty assumed to be due to a personal deficit (such as lack of employability skills, budgeting discipline) rather than systemic.
- Community organising. Working in solidarity and partnership with those who are excluded to advocate and overcome systems which keep them in poverty or disadvantage. Growing access to resources and decision making in families and communities. Vocally advocating with communities to change the societal loops and structures which create poverty. Draws on Liberation theory, community development. Pull towards ACCO-led, community-led, place-based. Often funded through philanthropy.

What mix of these do we want our work to be, in the context of the future themes which are emerging?



Brotherhood of St Lawrence presentation, Anglicare Australia Conference 2023

Inequality in Australia

Many of these biggest trends point towards growing inequality in Australia in coming decades.

- Ninety-three per cent of the gains from economic growth during the past few years have gone to the top 10 per cent of income earners. The rest of us — the bottom 90 per cent — got 7 per cent of that economic growth. This is likely to continue (Australia Institute, 2023).
- Cost of living pressures and housing shortages likely to continue for some time, even with Housing Future Fund investment in replenishing the social housing stock.
- In coming decades, intergenerational transfer of wealth will continue as Baby Boomers with significant assets pass them on to their children, continuing and widening the gap between rich and poor in subsequent generations.
- With the ageing of our population we will see costly health impacts, and with increasing reliance on gap payments for treatments, those not able to afford these will suffer most.
- We know that the poorest are least able to afford to prepare for climate change- they have less capability to retrofit housing for solar energy, air conditioning and heating, insulation, electric vehicles or batteries. They are less likely to afford insurance or have financial buffers to bounce back from disasters or to relocate to safer areas.
- As the acceleration of automation continues, we see a trend towards fewer jobs needing routine tasks, and the prospect of significant numbers of workers displaced by AI. While there will be new jobs in the tech and care sectors, many other low and even medium skilled jobs will become scarcer.
- Inequality combined with mistrust of institutions can be a catalyst towards alienation and radicalisation.

Wildcard- If legislation/taxation around companies using AI to replace human labour is cleverly designed, there is potential to address wealth inequality. Ideas such as Living Income Guarantee / Universal Basic Income have long been posed as possible solutions to inequality. In a context where a large cross section of the workforce is predicted to be superseded by AI, these kinds of solutions move closer into the Overton Window (the range of ideas or policies the public considers sensible or acceptable) . However, if the response is not well designed, wealth will accumulate with those companies, pushing the social and economic impacts of displaced workforces to rely on government funded support.

Australia's Families

DEMOGRAPHICS

Ageing Population

- The number of Australians over 85 is set to triple in next 40 years, while those over 65 will double overall (Intergenerational Report 2023). In this report, Treasurer Jim Chalmers commented that the needed **growth in the care economy would be "one of the most prominent shifts in our society over the next 40 years".**
- Implications of Federal budget pressures brought about by needs of ageing population- may result in need for higher taxes or lower spending in other areas.
- While as a population segment the Baby Boomers are wealthier than younger generations, those in the Baby Boomer cohort who do not own property, have superannuation or other wealth are a high-risk group for poverty and homelessness.
- The ageing population will see a greater number of deaths per year, with annual deaths expected to almost double to 250,000 per year by 2044 (McCrindle). As wealthy Baby Boomers die, their assets will pass to their children, with this **intergenerational wealth transfer further widening the inequality gap.**
- A contributing factor to the aging population has been the falling birth rate, both in Australia and globally. This has come about as a result of families choosing to have children later and having fewer children. In fact, average global birth rates have been going down consistently since 1950, with this trend expected to continue until 2050 (The World Counts). To help counter this, we may see increasing incentives offered to parents to have children.
- Meanwhile, in 2025 the first Gen Alphas will reach their 18th birthday and will be able to vote, work and access our services as adult clients/parents etc. The workforce of the 2030s will include Gen Alpha, Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X and Baby Boomers, each with their own unique traits, preferences of engaging and expectations of services.

Aboriginal Australians

- Australia's Aboriginal population will reach 1 Million people sometime in the next 5 years. Contributing trends include higher than average fertility rates for Aboriginal women and a young population age structure, with a large proportion of the population in the childbearing ages. With a high rate of over half of partnered Aboriginal adults with a non-Aboriginal partner, about nine out of every 10 babies born to these couples are recorded as Aboriginal. Despite lower life expectancies, deaths are considerably fewer in number than births because of the relatively small size of the older population.
- Implications of poor policy or inadequate investment in Closing the Gap in the near term will create greater downstream failure demand cost on health, justice and other sectors where Aboriginal people are disproportionately represented. Timely investment could positively impact future generations of our growing Aboriginal population.

Australia's Families

DEMOGRAPHICS

Migrant Families

- About 30% of Australian permanent residents were born overseas and around half of Australians have a parent born overseas. This does not include the additional cohort of at least 2 million people on temporary/student/working visas of various kinds. While those of European descent currently make up more than half of the population, growing migration rates from India and China suggest that coming decades will see a more diverse demographic. Data suggests a current under-representation of CaLD women in leadership, highlighting an untapped market for talent.
- Current migration to Australia tends to be a younger, more skilled workforce. The ageing population trend is a global trend. In the coming decades, Australia will be competing with other countries who are also trying to attract/retain this younger skilled workforce. These workers may gravitate towards migration opportunities which best enable them to care for their older relatives.

Shifts in family unit makeup

- Another shift for families is the diverse forms emerging around the family unit and kinship care (NESTA 2023). This will continue to be driven by a range of factors:
- Advances in IVF, surrogacy and family law have expanded opportunities for LGBTQI couples and those with fertility challenges to have children, as well as single women choosing to conceive children without a partner. Some families are choosing to include the donor/surrogate within the broader family circle, enabling children to have a relationship with them.
- Lifelong marriage, or marriage at all is no longer seen as essential for a family's legitimacy. There are a range of family configurations and re-configurations brought about by the shifts in partnerships over time, with single parents, step- and blended families.
- Inclusion of grandparents in the kinship arrangement has seen a resurgence, particularly as parents are increasingly juggling paid work and caring responsibilities. The UK is seeing similar trends to Australia. A recent UK report found that **"1/4 of UK preschoolers are dropped off at school by grandparents (NESTA, 2023)"**
- Additionally, there are emerging kinship arrangements through mutual care arrangements with friends, intentional communities/ co-living, and the intent to make parents' lives less isolated and create a "village" of support around children. Many Indigenous cultures have maintained structures of kinship care which incorporate a much wider circle of carers for each child than the nuclear family unit.

Health and Mental Health

DEMOGRAPHICS

The ageing population in Australia is expected to bring an increased disease burden, resulting from the cumulative impact of ageing and lifestyle risk factors.

- The leading modifiable risk factors contributing to the total burden for adults aged 65 to 84 years nationally are tobacco use, overweight/obesity, and high blood pressure (ACT Health).
- In 2022, the **5 disease groups** causing the greatest burden were **cancer, musculoskeletal conditions, cardiovascular diseases, mental health conditions & substance use disorders, and neurological conditions**. Together these disease groups account for around two-thirds (62%) of the total burden and include mostly chronic, or long-lasting, conditions (AIHW).
- Cancer rates per 100,000 people have been gradually dropping over the past few decades due to prevention (including lower smoking rates), earlier detection and improved treatment, however the overall number of cases has increased (due to growing population), with this trend expected to continue (AIHW).
- As a result of climate change, scientists anticipate an increase in illnesses related to flooding (gastrointestinal illness), fires (respiratory illness) and heat-related illness, as well as greater frequency of pandemics. Impacts of climate change on anxiety, grief and other mental illness are already emerging and expected to be significant.
- However, it's worth noting that after adjusting for population ageing, there was an 11% decline in the age-standardised rate of total burden between 2003 and 2022. This suggests that while the ageing population may increase the absolute disease burden, improvements in healthcare and lifestyle changes are helping to reduce the relative burden of disease.
- Alongside this, rapid acceleration in health technology in coming decades may counter some of the negative health trends. Technologies such as bio-engineering (mRNA vaccines), DNA genome editing (CRISPR), robotic and exoskeleton technology (enabling greater mobility), Artificial Intelligence, nanotechnology, 3D printing (prosthetics and human tissue) and more will mean that those able to afford these technologies can not only mediate the effects of ill health, but that they may be able to modify or enhance their bodies to such an extent that they exceed the capabilities of the average human.
- With the divide in healthcare access already widening and increasing reliance on Medicare gap payments, we may well see a new form of inequality emerge- around those who are unable to access technology to heal or enhance their physical bodies.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Health and Mental Health

The **gap between significant demand for mental health services and availability of funded places/skilled workforce** is anticipated to continue into the next decade. The interrelationship between mental ill health and poverty is well established. Limitations of clinical medical models, along with challenges in mental health provision in the public system are also well documented.

As a result of these gaps, alternative solutions are emerging, creating tensions between the highly specialised mental health sector and other modes of wellbeing care. These modes need not be mutually exclusive, but it is likely that tensions will continue, particularly around:

- **peer work-** some models have incorporated peers (those with similar lived experience) into the clinical setting. Outside this, other solely "peer-led" models provide care in community. Many organisations are navigating the tension between lived experience expertise and professional qualification/clinical governance and what this means for safe, effective care.
- The availability of information online, coupled with platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Youtube etc has enabled **greater literacy and de-stigmatisation of mental health and neurodiversity,** with increasing numbers of people seeking and openly sharing diagnoses such as ADHD, autism and dyslexia, actively embracing and celebrating their "superpowers" as a pillar of their unique identity. This is shifting the workforce diversity conversation from one of stigma and disability to one of neurodiversity as a value-add if well matched/supported.
- The emergence of **self-management through mental health apps**- There are an estimated 10,000-20,000 mental health apps. We are also seeing more remote/online mental health services, as well as mental health services starting to incorporate AI alongside human workers (e.g. Lifeline).
- In 2023 the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approved **use of medicines containing MDMA/psilocybin** to treat certain mental health conditions. While numerous trials have proven successful, the Australian Clinical Psychology Association lags on support and clinical governance guidelines. As this plays out, we can expect increasing use among clients, some of whom may be self-managing or accessing therapeutic experiences outside of regulated clinical environments.
- CBD oil and other types of medicinal cannabis are also available with a prescription and use is expected to increase, requiring shifts in how drugs are tested in relation to work/driving capacity.
- Also worth noting are the increase in vaping, with evidence of health harms, and the opioid epidemic spreading in Australia, with increasing potency of opiates- front line police now carry Naloxone to counter overdose from opiates, for both members of the public and themselves- for example Fentanyl can prove fatal from brief skin contact.
- Australia's suicide rate is set to increase by 40% in the next decade unless risk factors such as debt, isolation and loneliness are addressed (KPMG on behalf of Suicide Australia).
- People are increasingly prioritising wellbeing as a factor in their career decisions- this has implications for workplace wellbeing, diversity and inclusion, job design and employability.

Technology Trends

TECHNOLOGY

McKinsey (Top Trends in Tech 2023) groups 15 technology trends into five categories. To describe the current state of each trend, they developed scores for innovation (based on patents and research) and interest (based on news and web searches). They also counted investments in relevant technologies and rated their level of adoption by organisations.

Applied AI

Models trained in machine learning can be used to solve classification, prediction, and control problems to automate activities, add or augment capabilities and offerings, and make better decisions.

Industrialising machine learning

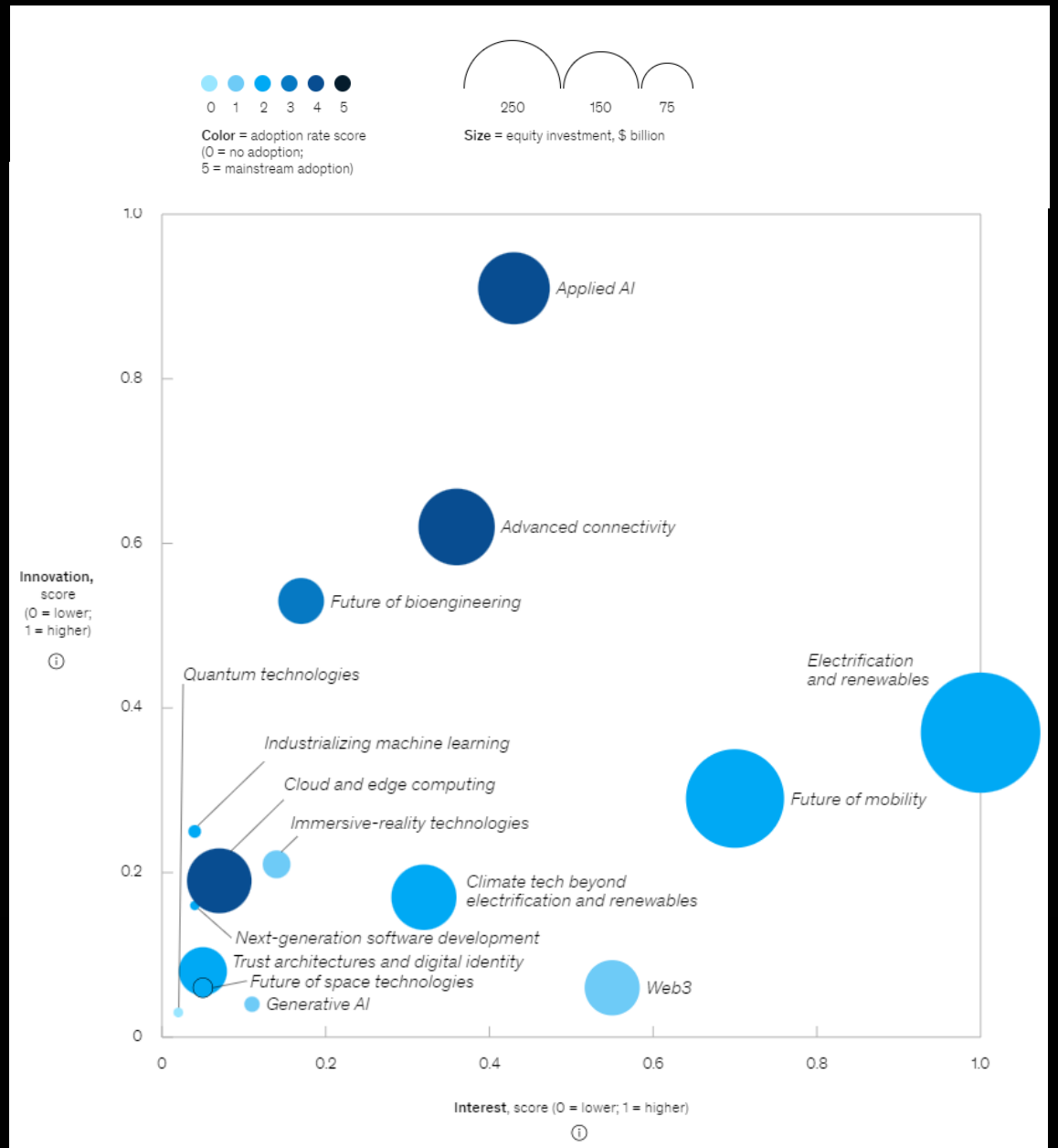
A rapidly evolving ecosystem of software and hardware solutions is enabling practices that accelerate and de-risk the development, deployment, and maintenance of machine learning solutions.

Generative AI

Generative AI can automate, augment, and accelerate work by tapping into unstructured mixed-modality data sets to enable the creation of new content in various forms, such as text, video, code, and even protein sequences.

Next-generation software development

New software tools, including those that enable modern code-deployment pipelines and automated code generation, testing, refactoring, and translation, can improve application quality and development processes.



TECHNOLOGY

Technology Trends

Trust architectures and digital identity

Digital-trust technologies enable organisations to build, scale, and maintain the trust of stakeholders in the use of their data and digital-enabled products and services.

Web3

Web3 includes platforms and applications that aim to enable shifts toward a future, decentralised internet with open standards and protocols while protecting digital-ownership rights. Its a transformative way to design software for specific purposes and promises users with greater ownership of their data and catalyses new business models.

Advanced connectivity

Wireless low-power networks, 5G/6G cellular, Wi-Fi 6 and 7, low-Earth-orbit (LEO) satellites, and other technologies support a host of digital solutions that can drive growth and productivity across industries.

Immersive-reality technologies

Sensing technologies and spatial computing are combined to help users "see the world differently" through mixed or augmented reality or "see a different world" through virtual reality.

Cloud and edge computing

In cloud and edge computing, workloads are distributed across locations, such as hyperscale remote data centres, regional centres, and local nodes, to improve latency, data-transfer costs, adherence to data sovereignty regulations, autonomy over data, and security.

Quantum technologies

Quantum-based technologies could provide an exponential increase in computational performance for certain problems and transform communication networks by making them more secure.

Future of mobility

Mobility technologies aim to improve the efficiency and sustainability of land and air transportation of people and goods using autonomous, connected, electric, and shared solutions.

Future of bioengineering

Converging biological and information technologies improve health and human performance, transform food value chains, and create innovative products and services.

Future of space technologies

Advances and cost reductions across satellites, launchers, and habitation technologies are enabling innovative space operations and services.

Electrification and renewables

Electrification and renewables help drive toward net-zero commitments and include solar-, wind-, and hydro-powered renewables and other renewables; nuclear energy; hydrogen; sustainable fuels; and electric vehicle charging.

Climate technologies beyond electrification and renewables

Climate technologies include carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS); carbon removals; natural climate solutions; circular technologies; alternative proteins and agriculture; water and biodiversity solutions and adaptation; and technologies to track net-zero progress.

Implications/Opportunities/Risks

TECHNOLOGY

The promise of tech was better quality of life for everybody, but it hasn't delivered equity. The digital divide still separates those with the ability to afford the latest tools and bandwidths from those with only access to inferior devices/ software, little or no internet access, or gaps in digital literacy. We should consider our role in enabling digital equity. There are a growing range of use-case opportunities for our work in emerging technologies.

- AI and Data together offer the opportunity for greater personalisation of services- learning a cohort or person's unique preferences to improve customer service and make predictions about what could help them move forward at each stage.
- However, with the honeypot of big data has come a rise in aggressive data breaches. To keep ahead of the evolving sophistication of cyberattacks, there is a greater need for protective approaches, responses and legislation around cybersecurity. We are seeing an emerging cohort of clients (and organisations) who have been victims of cybercrime, identity theft, or scams.
- Live translation will functionally remove the language barrier to enable basic conversation between speakers of most languages.
- Digital passports / identity documents could help people who have lost paper documents (whether homeless, fleeing violence or escaping natural disasters).
- While the cost of XR/VR immersive technology devices is currently prohibitive, we may see widespread adoption, and therapeutic applications for our work as the price of devices comes down.
- Self-driving vehicles are currently being real-world tested in San Francisco. At scale, this technology may replace rideshare/ taxi/ traditional public transport or may even replace private car ownership as the norm, particularly as we transition from fuel to electric vehicles. The barrier of affording a licence/ vehicle may cease to exist, though other factors may emerge.

The trend with the biggest potential to transform life as we know it is AI. If we do not engage with it, we risk being left behind. We need to consider where we want to be relative to other NFPs and also the private sector as it develops digital products and services which may supercede our offerings.

While tech companies moving into provision of counselling and other services traditionally provided by NFPs might be seen as a positive (doing ourselves out of a job), there may be adverse consequences or groups who continue to be excluded. In what ways can we continue to be relevant/useful to those who are most marginalised?

We are already seeing and will increasingly see a growing cohort of 'shut-ins'- people who work/learn/socialise/play/shop online and physically never leave their home (there are already 1.5M of these 'hikikomori' in Japan). How will we provide services to them?

There is a growing public expectation around transparency in how people's data is being used. There is also an expectation that organisations provide transparent information about their operations, carbon emissions, ESG etc. We should consider what expectations clients/donors/staff have of us.

Anglicare WA has developed a digital strategy and taken initial steps towards digital foundations and empowering staff to work remotely, however this is a first step in a much bigger and quickly changing landscape. We will need a variety of digital specialist skills as part of our digital journey, but we also need a baseline of digital literacy uplift across the board for all our staff. We need to consider how we want to pace/stage our investment in building the foundations for more sophisticated digital service capability.

A NEW AUSTRALIAN DREAM?

Shelter, Cost of Living Crisis

Cost of living crisis

- Interest rates likely to remain at current levels for foreseeable short term, may not return to record lows.
- With the current slowed economic growth, there is the possibility of recession. Slow wages growth and slower growth in the welfare safety net are widening inequality and numbers below the poverty line.

Housing Crisis

- Insufficient number of dwellings for population. The short-term influx as part of correction in migration numbers post-COVID is adding to demand side housing pressures.
- Cost of construction materials, further inflationary pressures likely due to other geopolitical factors.
- Social housing stock shortage unlikely to be resolved in short term, despite Commonwealth Housing Fund investment. Many people who should be in social housing are currently at the mercy of the private rental market.
- Lowest quintile hardest hit- biggest income to cost-of-housing ratio, basics. Cost of housing relative to income is higher now than it was in the 90s. Baby boomers with real estate largely unaffected, but cohort of older baby boomers without property are at growing risk of homelessness.

Implications for the Future

- It's already here and may be for some time, creating a growing cohort of newly poor.
- People are being pushed to desperate measures to secure/retain housing and meet their basic needs.
- People are being urged to include more people/families per dwelling. Flow-on impacts- implications of overcrowding.
- Reassessment of the "Australian dream" - i.e. the average nuclear family owning a detached home on suburban block.
- Burning platform to mobilise creative housing solutions such as:
  - More matching/brokering platforms such as Share Abode/Mortgage Mates for shared ownership/rentals
  - Allowances for pensioners with spare rooms to rent them out without losing their pension
  - Allowances for households with a granny flat to rent them to tenants outside their own household
  - More flexible building codes to enable granny flats, retrofits to fit multiple generations/households in one building
  - Emergency measures to enable people to use temporary solutions such as caravans/tiny homes etc
  - Increase in co-operative housing and 'intentional community' (communal) co-housing

A NEW AUSTRALIAN DREAM?

Future of Work

Australia currently has very low unemployment- 3.7% as of August 2023. While the RBA toys with interest rates to rein in inflation and we wait to see if Australia will slide into a depression in the near term, several longer-term interconnected employment trends are also playing out.

- Acceleration of the automation trend, in particular in **AI, promises to displace a staggering array of jobs** in coming years. While there is the promise of new jobs in technology, we will likely see significant disruption to employment as we know it.
- Of the jobs that humans continue to do, there is some evidence that we may see a **polarisation of high-skilled and low-skilled jobs, resulting in a decline in "middle jobs",** with less chance for employees to advance between the two.
- Employees today change their job/career more frequently than their parents' generation, and there is every indication that as the world of work changes, **employees will need to frequently upskill and change jobs**.
- One of the biggest growth areas anticipated is around the **ageing population and the increased need for aged care/disability workers**. The way that automation and human labour plays out in this space will be one to watch.
- **There is a trend towards escalating university fees but with subsidies for** "shortage/desirable" vocations. Over time this trend may result in a workforce which has specialist technical skills but is less educated in arts, history, philosophy, etc.
- We are seeing a shift in work arrangements and the **part time workforce-** Currently 31% of employees work part time and this is a growing number. For some, part time work meets a need for flexibility to take on caring responsibilities, manage health issues, study, work on a side hustle or focus on their wellbeing.
- **However, we are also seeing an increase in precarious employment-** casual or short-term contracts, gig workers, and underemployed workers- these are most prevalent in lower skilled job sectors. There is a cohort of working poor who are having to cobble together multiple poorly paid part time jobs because full-time jobs or sufficiently well-paid part time jobs are not available. Of interest to our work, **female community and personal services workers have significantly higher levels of precariousness then their male equivalents.**
- We may see **growing inequality among the newly poor** who have been displaced by automation and are not able to adapt or compete for newly created tech jobs.

The Commonwealth Government is set to **reform the $7bn Employment Services system f**ollowing recent findings by the Productivity Commission around inefficiency, poor quality and harm resulting from the mutual obligation policies of the Workforce Australia program. Australia is the only country to outsource the entire delivery of its publicly funded employment services. As a first step, the Government has abolished the 'punitive' Parents Next program. We may yet see Government bring the system in-house, make efforts to outsource it to the community sector, or at very least place more stringent controls on for-profit providers. The report suggests that employment-focused social enterprises may form part of the solution.

A NEW AUSTRALIAN DREAM?

Permacrisis/Climate Change

Polycrisis/Permacrisis- Unprecedented convergences between ecological, political and economic strife, including those associated with climate change: "Concurrent shocks, deeply interconnected risks and eroding resilience are giving rise to polycrises." (World Economic Forum Global Risks Report 2023)

Delayed progress on renewables transition, but opportunity

- Narrowing chance of avoiding 2C temperature increase by 2050. Decisive action may limit to 3C warming.
- **Harder landing-** more rapid uphill path to decarbonisation could mean a less just transition (more people left behind- equity about who can afford electrification/solar/retrofits, higher costs with carbon emissions costed in, etc).
- Opportunities in the "Green Economy"- levers to scale investment in technology and Aboriginal land management to sequester carbon and generate energy, food, textiles, building materials and minerals through renewable sources. Gradual switch to biodegradable or recyclable materials, circular economy etc. Diminishing social licence for fossil fuel industry.

Gradual heating and rising sea

- Higher average temps, more days above average each year. Risk of heat-related illness and death. Highest risk in humid regions (Kimberley/Pilbara) where wet-bulb temperature (WBT) is lethal at 35 degrees.
- Lowest quintiles least positioned to relocate or retrofit rental or owned properties will suffer worst.

Increased disasters (fire/flood/cyclone/drought)

- People in disaster-prone areas already seeing 50% insurance premium increases (2023), and this is likely to continue year on year- growing cohort of uninsurable communities.
- Increased burden on Government budget in disaster preparedness/response. Likelihood of growing cohort of "internal refugees" displaced by disasters will need to relocate and be re-housed.

Geopolitical instability

Wide ranging instability and impacts on supply chains, living standards and population flows connected to climate change effects, new pandemics, threat of new cold war, etc.

Psychological responses to overwhelm/grief/anxiety about permacrisis/climate change

For some, crisis isn't new but for others, it's extremely destabilising. As people internalise instability as a norm, we will see diverse responses to the overwhelm/grief/anxiety of polycrisis- 4 F's

- Fight (increasing protests, activism, tribalism, radicalisation)
- Flight (lost trust in Gov, absencing from public life, acting in self-interest, prepping, increased loneliness/isolation)
- Freeze (people switching off- disengaging, quiet quitting - China "bai lan" (let it rot) movement)
- Focus (prioritise within a narrow scope only what we can control-often at the family/community scale)- localisation.

SHIFTING WORLD VIEWS

Voting behaviours and political radicalisation

- The digital age enabled **democratised access to information and the ability to access news in real time**. On one hand, the internet has enabled truth telling at a global scale and has led to a growing expectation of transparency and accountability.
- However, at the same time, well-meaning or sometimes intentionally bad actors (including corporations, political movements and even Nation States) are also leveraging the internet's open-ness to proliferate misinformation and conspiracy theories, using content logarithms to target and radicalise segments of the community, fueling mistrust in institutions and fracturing groups into an 'us and them' mentality.
- The erosion of trust in institutions through availability of information and misinformation is playing out in the public arena, impacting everything from COVID vaccinations and the Voice referendum to the shape of our democracy itself. Government responses to crack down on radicalisation such as increased surveillance, police powers and penalties can also function to limit freedoms and silence activism and critical voices, further eroding trust.
- At the last Federal Election, more than 5 million people voted for a party other than Labor or Liberal. This gave way for the rise of the teal independent candidates but has also created space for other radical factions. This is anticipated to become more of a factor in subsequent elections.
- Where people have traditionally stuck to a coherent political ideology on either the left or right, some may now hold multiple, contradictory positions depending on the issue- this has been described as a 'salad bar' of ideologies which may relate to rights/freedoms, individual vs greater good, anti-authority sentiments, or positions against a perceived "elite" or "other".
- As we move forward, AI-generated synthetic media will continue to exacerbate the situation through creation and targeted dissemination of dis-information.

Implications/Opportunity

- The social contract is being challenged as times change and trust breaks down. There is a heightened risk of political radicalisation as formerly fringe views become normalised through repeat exposure.
- In times of uncertainty, we may see the rise of extremist factions and authoritarian leaders exploiting anger about growing inequality, climate change measures or new issues such as workers displaced by automation.
- Due to our proximity to a wide cross-sector of vulnerable people, there may be a growing role for community service organisations to mitigate radicalisation through being transparent and trustworthy, challenging misinformation, understanding and addressing underlying drivers of disillusionment, facilitating open dialogue and bridging divides, providing productive avenues for advocacy, community organising and change.

SHIFTING WORLD VIEWS

Towards a Wellbeing Economy

Neoliberalism has been the dominant frame since the 1980s, with its focus on privatisation, austerity and small government, de-regulated free market capitalism, framing of citizens as self-interested actors calculating the means to achieve their individual goals, and the imperative to justify social good in economic terms.

Unimpeded pursuit of private wealth has not played out for the public good and as the global context shifts, we are seeing increasing challenges to this worldview, and attempts to shape the thinking and policies around what comes next, though its grip has been surprisingly enduring to date.

There has been a push back against a legal and taxation structure which has enabled centralisation of extreme wealth with the few, and a growing demand for the real social and environmental costs of their enterprises to be counted and balanced. There is a growing focus on elevating the environmental and social in ESG performance indicators.

There has been a pushback against privitisation, as seen in the recent Inquiry into Workforce Australia and backlash against price gouging by privatised energy providers.

Australia has joined a growing number of countries who recognise that GDP is inadequate as the sole measure of progress and are looking to national wellbeing measures. This is occurring against the backdrop of evidence that society may be reaching the outer limits of its ability to maintain exponential growth, vulnerabilities in the global financial system, and the imperative to transition to a way of life not centred around fossil fuels.

As we face an uncertain future, many economists are exploring alternative economic paradigms which are less extractive, such as new monetary theory, degrowth, donut economics, stable-state economy and others.

The newly established Nexus Centre (National Centre for Place Based Collaboration) will create opportunities for different outcome measures, accountability, commissioning/ funding over time. The economist working on the Centre's Innovation Fund is exploring place-based commissioning and Social Impact Bonds 2.0 (a new interpretation of Payment by Results), as well as an Evaluator General function in Government to ensure a new type of commissioning relationship to counter blockages to the innovation and learning cycle.

For services specialising in social and environmental good, there are opportunities to offer our expertise to companies around their ESG measurement. We have the opportunity to define our place within a Wellbeing Economy, framing our work in relation to regenerative activities such as creating jobs in caring work, healing/therapeutic work, empowering communities etc.

There may be opportunities to leverage the pushback against for-profit privatised delivery of social services to grow our service portfolio, though we may also see Government swing back towards in-house delivery of services. We can also leverage the trend towards resourcing of co-design and longer contracts in commissioning to do deeper work.

SHIFTING WORLD VIEWS

Gradual Centering of Indigenous Worldviews & Culture

Alongside the realisation that neoliberalism may not have served us well, we are also seeing a global trend around Indigenous world views coming into focus. As colonised peoples around the world find their voices and each other, their critique of colonialism and its lasting legacy are clear and unequivocal.

Indigenous peoples want mechanisms for their voices to be heard. They want recognition of their sovereignty, and treaties enabling access to Country to practice culture and care for their traditional lands. They want the truth to be told about the histories which have been erased, and they want reparations to make right injustices.

In Australia, The Uluru Statement of the Heart, and its call for Voice, Treaty and Truth Telling has set out a pathway for this to occur. The 2023 Referendum for Constitutional Recognition and a Voice to Parliament has been an opportunity to progress this discussion and invite organisations to reflect on their commitment to enabling the objectives of the Uluru Statement to be realised.

There are two dimensions to this:

1. A process of justice, equity and making-right is starting to take shape. We have a role to play in making right the unjust legacy of colonialism, in its past and current iterations, to close the Gap in lifespan and quality of life for First Nations peoples.

2. There is also an opportunity to pay respect to and learn from indigenous worldviews and correct our own course:

- While recognising the diversity of indigenous worldviews, some commonalities include the concept of the circle, emphasising spirit and spirituality, interconnectedness and enduring connection to place based on collective belonging, respect, reciprocity, responsibility and relationships. Culture is the embodied practice of the worldview. (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education)
- In Australia, mainstream systems are only just beginning to gain understanding of Aboriginal knowledge systems and practices, and to consider how to adapt to them.

Opportunities for AWA

- For Anglicare WA, this means engaging in this journey with humility and purpose, recognising our sometimes-problematic ties to our colonial and missionary heritage and world views.
- The Right to Thrive framework and our approach to ACCO relationships is another step along the journey to reconciliation.
- We have an opportunity to contemplate how Aboriginal worldviews offer a different lens to inform the evolution of our own worldviews (including Anglican/secular, Western/Indo-Pacific, capitalist/welfare state/neo-liberal, individualistic/communitarian, anthropocentric/animist, as custodians/owners, etc), and as a result, the embodied practice of our work and our way of life for the generations ahead.

Sources

The themes in this environmental scan have been distilled from a range of sources internal and external to Anglicare WA.

Attendance at:

- WACOSS Emerging Issues Forum 2023
- WA Artificial Intelligence Conference 2023
- George Aye- Leading Design Differently Masterclass

Conversations with:

- Mark Glasson, Anglicare WA CEO and WACOSS Chair
- Nicholas Gruen, Economist, Lateral Economics
- A selection of senior leaders at Anglicare WA
- Innovation design counterparts across the Anglicare Australia network
- Futurists and system designers in the innovation sector
- Other thinkers in the social service sector and social design sector
- Edith Cowan School of Medical Health (psychadelics in therapy)

Review of:

- State of the Future of Work 2023- University of Melbourne
- Future Today Institute 2023 Tech Trends Report
- 2023 Ipsos Global Trends Report
- Accenture Life Trends Report 2023
- McCrindle Australia Towards 2031
- McKinsey Tech Trends 2023
- World Economic Forum Future of Jobs and Global Risks Report 2023
- PWC The Future of Health in Australia
- Future of Work National Skills Commission 2019
- CEDA Reports: Powering the Transition
- Australian Intergenerational Report 2023
- Telethon Kids Institute Impact Report 2023
- NESTA Future Signals 2023
- Impact Economics Trends 2023
- Equity Economics Trends 2023
- The Australia Institute- various papers
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Climate Change Impacts on Health- World Health Organisation

- A range of other contextual information sourced by the Innovation Team