



WELCOME TO THE

# Housing Action Lab

Bringing Queensland's leaders together to  
deliver the housing solutions of tomorrow.

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*Output from the Housing Action Lab Curation Workshop held  
on Friday 21 May 2021*

# A note from our Designers.

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We are proud to be embarking on the Housing Action Lab's journey towards housing and homelessness sector solutions.

**The Housing Action Lab** brings together Queensland's leaders to answer the question:

What transformative actions can we take together today, to deliver the housing solutions of tomorrow creating prosperity for all ages and life stages?

The Housing Action Lab (HAL) is a platform that offers a novel approach to co-innovation for the housing and homelessness sector. Organisations taking part in this new process, which we call ecosystem innovation, collaborate to develop and then scale new and novel concepts. The HAL takes participants through an iterative process that embraces design thinking. At the core of that approach, problem discovery and definition aligns the teams, and hypothesis generation and rapid prototyping ensures teams create solutions that people need at the speed the sector requires.

Leveraging Business Models Inc's multi-party innovation lab framework and methodology, the HAL will be an immersive learning experience. Partnering with the Canadian GTA Housing Action Lab and learning from its success of over the past four years, the HAL establishes an Australian first learning exchange and provides an environment to test and explore solutions to entrenched challenges we hope will scale across the Commonwealth.

The HAL creates real solutions for social change. A necessity as the sector looks to reset, reimagine and restart amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The HAL culminates in the launch of fully realisable solutions and a co-investment decision to drive outcomes in partnership with leaders across the housing ecosystem.

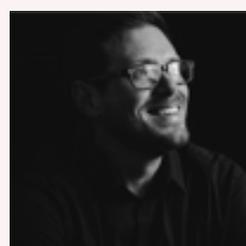
The HAL is calling on the Queensland Government to ensure *"every Queenslanders should have access to a safe, secure and affordable home that meets their needs and supports them to participate in the social and economic life of a vibrant and prosperous state"* (Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-20 Action Plan).



*Rachel Watson*

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**Rachel Watson**  
Director, Watson & Associates



*Michael Eales*

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**Michael Eales**  
Partner, Business Models Inc.

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# Overview of the focus areas.

In consultation with industry experts and advisors, five key action areas have been identified for the Housing Action Lab to explore. These are:



## Homelessness

Devising actions that enable zero homelessness.



## New funding models

Creating mechanisms to create growth



## New ways to operate

Exploring solutions for viability



## Social isolation, loneliness & wellbeing

Creating concepts to create inclusion



## Housing affordability

Designing models that create homes

The HAL is an immersive opportunity designed for maximum industry impact, and as such, while our Advisors and Designers will be there every step of the way to ensure success, it is ultimately up to the HAL participants to get out of the experience what you put into it.

The solutions explored will pioneer a new path for others to follow. To be truly innovative you have to be bold enough to work together and explore something new.

The HAL is all about collaboration, co-creation and action. So, during the event we asked all of our attendees to get their hands dirty. The curation session was run around our key focus areas:

- **Homelessness**
- **New funding models**
- **New ways to operate**
- **Social isolation, loneliness & wellbeing**
- **Housing affordability**

These focus areas became the 'tables' of which each are led by a foundation partner and will continue to be refined as new partners come on board.

We are living in a time of rapid change and therefore urgency to address issues pertinent to the experiences of future generations.

The following five pages summarise the discussions and ideas developed during the curation workshop for each of the focus areas.

We hope they act as a springboard for your own ideas and collaborative action.



# New funding models.

## QShelter

Foundation Partner



**SHELTER**  
because housing matters

QShelter represent a diverse group of people energetic about housing, and keen to explore new funding models under two themes:

- Tackling the community housing sector's reliance on government contracts and grants including new funding sources to address shortfalls.
- Exploring innovative housing supply changes for older women, such as through shared equity agreements.

The complexity of the housing sector is clear; with various government agencies as well as a myriad of providers from the not-for-profit and private sectors responsible for delivering housing outcomes in Queensland.

Tackling the full supply chain; from the efficiency in land development through to access to new funding initiatives and capital injection is critical to being more responsive to housing supply. Collaborative industry development initiatives could design blueprints for funding models or offer policy prototypes could be the disruption the industry needs.

Community Housing Providers often operate on short term government contracts, with premises that are leased and not owned. This model's reliance on receiving rent adds tensions to the provider's operation and limits the opportunity to take on (grow) new housing stock.

How could new funding models be both more sustainable (less reliant on Government funding, offer more flexibility and diversity in funding models to foster growth) and more people-focused? Could a shake-up of funding diversity, focused on growth through new funding models that capture capital for growth investment, be realised?

This table could benefit from collaboration with a financial services, Superannuation Funding, Community Based investor, Community Housing Provider or a technology/data company.



# New ways to operate.

**Wiley & Co.**  
Foundation Partner



Wiley brings a fluid, new way of operating and engineering approach to creating better ways to do things, especially in complex facilities. System design and integration within the broader ecosystem set the scene for a customer needs focused design to tackle the housing challenges, individual needs and the evolution of the typical 'household'.

Disadvantaged youth and vulnerable women escaping domestic violence were identified as two interest groups to design for through HAL.

Breaking new ground in the housing sector is a real and present ambition for Wiley & Co. but they don't want to fly solo and seek partners to help them first define a concrete problem space.

With 46,000 people on the waiting list for social housing, workshop participants questioned the meaning of 'a home' and what style of accommodation is best for different groups, what is a fair rent to pay and what models exist without ownership.

Novel concepts were discussed to both increase the housing stock while creating an 'open arms approach' to housing scaffolded by access to services. A systems approach would also be required for utilities (energy, water, waste) with design criteria focusing on models to sustain tenancy.

Through recognising the need for diversity and choice of housing options could re-invigorate and open up alternative solutions that leverage the manufacturing capabilities of Wiley & Co and dovetail into the expertise of a recreation vehicle manufacturer (i.e. caravans, boats and other nomadic homes) and community services provider.

Operating in new ways also calls for the funding to be both sustainable and flexible, with and without the reliance on Government funds.

This table would benefit from a recreation vehicle manufacturer, youth-focused service, Community Housing Provider, financial institution, Local Government Authority or industry outlier.



# Housing affordability.

## Lendlease

Foundation Partner



Lendlease are seeking to bring joy to affordable housing by reimagining the future of key worker accommodation for the Brisbane Showgrounds redevelopment.

As the project partner for the RNA's Brisbane Showgrounds Regeneration Project, Lendlease are committed to exploring new and novel ways to design a people-centric service model that leads to an affordable housing solution for key workers.

Housing affordability varies greatly across Queensland (from rising house prices particularly in Brisbane, lower rates of housing ownership compared to other States, to rental stresses more prominently seen in South-East Queensland).

- Over 40% of low income private rental tenants in Queensland are paying 30% or more of gross income on private rental (30 June 2019)
- Vacancy rates for private rental properties are highly constrained with vacancy rates in many regions below 1%, and some regions as low as 0.2%.

Striking the right balance between new housing stock and people's preferences is a great first step in tackling affordability for our young people and lower income earners in Queensland.

During the curation workshop, conversations revolved around normalising 'affordability' as a positive experience within a community created with the users in mind. The opportunity to design for a new precinct approach could intertwine elements; that create real social connection, sees tenant empowerment and eliminates hidden homelessness. The concept of exploring housing as a service while promoting health and wellness aspects was also touched on.

Key worker accommodation would aspire to tackling affordability without sacrificing quality. Ongoing overheads could also be rolled up into a service model or focus on empowering the user to be more connected with their energy and water use or waste generation.

Learnings from concepts such as Build 2 Rent and Yarrabilba projects were used as the backdrop to vision for affordable housing precincts to tackle social inequality, where financial independence brings courage and connectivity.

Lendlease tabled the ambition to see this a lighthouse project or blueprint for scaling a new approach to affordable housing, with an ambition to scale similar solutions throughout the Cross River Rail station precincts, nationally and internationally.

This table could be complemented by an energy provider, household appliance manufacturer, not for profit, Union representative, health fund or an outlier from any industry.



# Homelessness.

## Seeking

### Foundation Partner

Are you a leader in human sector service provision (e.g. a multi-service entity) interested in steering this table?

This table could be accompanied by general partners in technology, data, engineering, architecture or a developer.

While this table was not activated at the Workshop, a foundation partner is being secured and current Industry partners will join this table.

As an incubator for this theme, social housing growth, the redesign of services supporting homelessness, and disability infrastructure were topics of interest.

There were 21,671 people experiencing homelessness in Queensland (2016) Homelessness in Queensland includes people living in severely overcrowded dwellings (7,601 persons) and staying temporarily with other households (4,796 persons), with 20% of people experiencing homelessness in Queensland identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

According to the 2016 Census, 4,454 young people aged 12- 24 years were **homeless in Queensland. In Queensland in 2016-17**, 8,081 young people aged 15- 24 years accessed specialist **homelessness** services. A 2006 survey of high school students estimated that 4,469 Queenslanders aged 12-18 years were **homeless**.

There is a projected short fall of 174,900 social housing dwellings in Queensland (2016-2036) with 79,200 of these dwellings in the Greater Brisbane area. The Queensland Social housing register has 47,000 people waiting with over 82% classified as having very high and high needs. This means that the people requiring housing also require housing and other supports to enable tenancy sustainment.

The integration of housing and support has been widely documented as an effective model to address housing sustainment. The development of new ways to integrate and reach into a diversity of sectors will be significant steps to creating homelessness solutions.

This table could benefit from a services provider that has depth of experience in disability, housing and support coordination.



# Social isolation, loneliness & wellbeing.

## Seeking

Foundation Partner

This table would benefit from an organisation that mobilises volunteers or can bring a tech/data solution to lead on this topic.

General partners could include players in the construction, mental Health, technology space or an Indigenous or Community Housing Provider.

COVID has amplified the drivers and effects of social isolation and loneliness in Queensland communities. Loneliness was reported as the stressor experienced most during the pandemic, with one in five Australians reporting these feelings (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020).

Our most vulnerable people in our community are at risk of social isolation and loneliness - our seniors and young people and those with disability or mental illness. The physical and mental health

The HAL will explore what responses within a housing setting will achieve the greatest impact. Accessing data and insights from social and affordable housing tenants and workers will form a basis about what is the most effective process.

This table is intentionally very broad. Interest is being fielded from the disability sector particularly related to housing design for people with disabilities that increase social connection and emotional and physical wellbeing.

The challenges of Indigenous ageing and related wellbeing has also been highlighted by a potential partner. As has the integration of Urban food generation, vertical gardens and architectural elements into design for the community.

This table is seeking participants, and there is strong interest around emerging around indigenous housing, housing related to mental health and wellbeing or a combination of the two. Whilst these are presented as ideas the final table focus area has not been decided.

This table could benefit from an organisation that has a focus on mental health and wellbeing, indigenous housing and human services.

# What's next in the process?

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The curation of the tables will continue with the Foundation members working towards filling their tables. The HAL ecosystem will provide contacts and context for the emerging players.

We will be calling on you to help formalise further partnerships and promote the Housing Action Lab. Shortly we will also confirm your availability and preferred workshop format.



**2020-2021**

Launch event for the HAL Partners, supporters and committed industry leaders, challenge area refinement and prioritization, and working to engage and align the Queensland Government.



**Q3/4 2021**

Over 3-4 months, participants will embark on immersive sessions to develop solutions to identified problem spaces + COVID-19 recovery.



**Q4 2021**

The HAL culminates in an event where industry leaders and innovators will showcase solutions created for identified problem spaces.



**AND BEYOND**

Solutions will receive ongoing support through seed funding and from the HAL network to continue the momentum.

# Thank you to our attendees.

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- QShelter
- Wiley
- Lendlease
- Urbis
- Committee for Brisbane
- BlueCHP
- BHC Creating Liveable Communities
- Community
- Dieke Richards
- Peddle Thorp
- St Vincent De Paul
- QCOSS
- The Y
- Zonta

# Special mention to our advisors.

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- Dr Brandon Gien, Deputy Chair, Australian Design Council & CEO, Good Design Australia
- Dr Peter Riddles, Board Member CSIRO
- Beth Cardier, Principal Research Fellow, Trusted Autonomous Systems (TASDCRC)
- Michael Stott, Director City Strategy & Place, Urbis
- Suzie Wiley, Executive Director, Wiley & Co.
- Isabel Cascante, Director, Research: Public Policy & Evaluation, United Way Greater Toronto



# You're in good company.

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**SHELTER**  
because housing matters



**Deicke  
Richards**



**COMMITTEE  
FOR BRISBANE**



**FISHER & PAYKEL**



# Ready to make a change?

Get in touch!

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