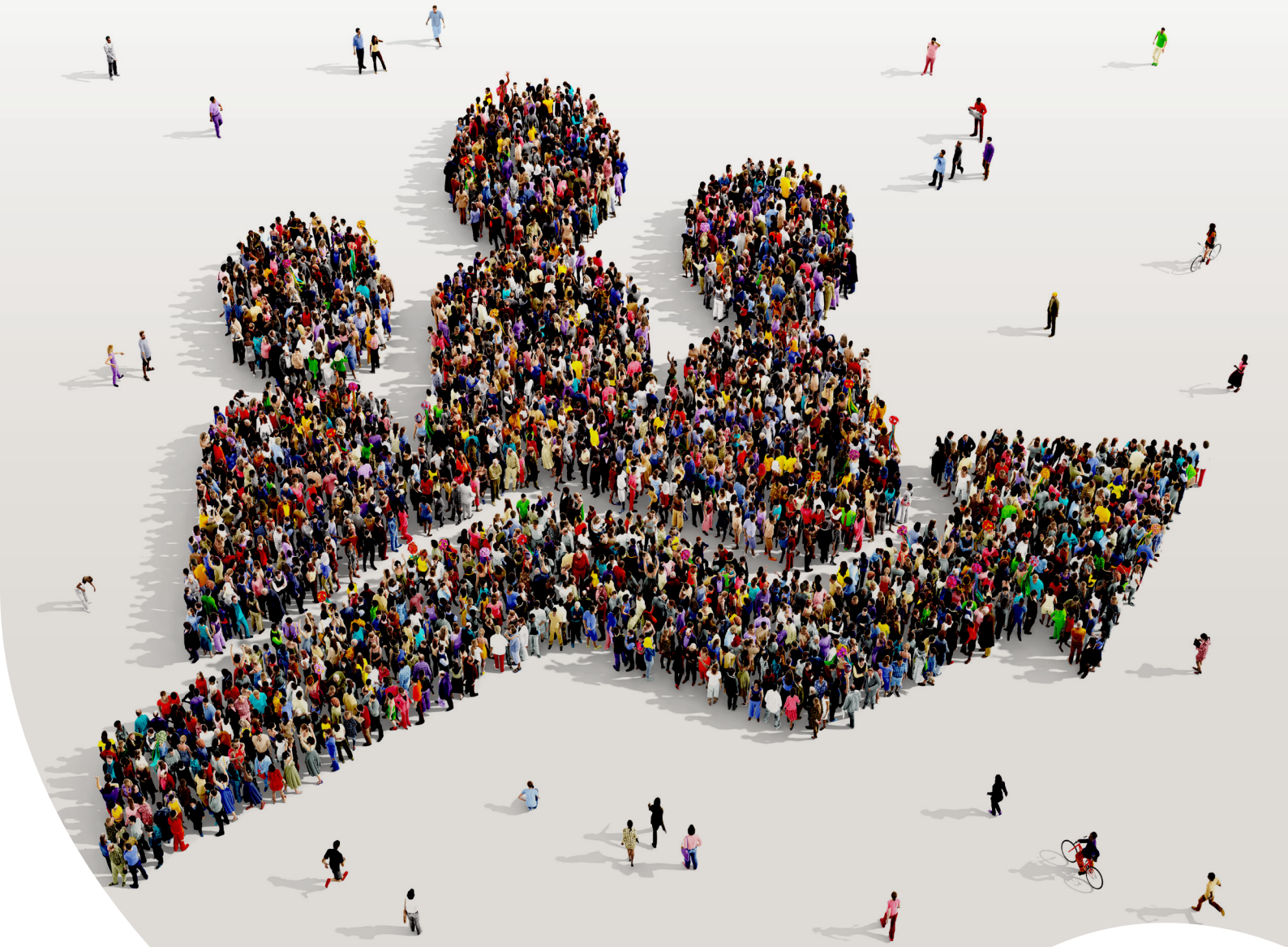
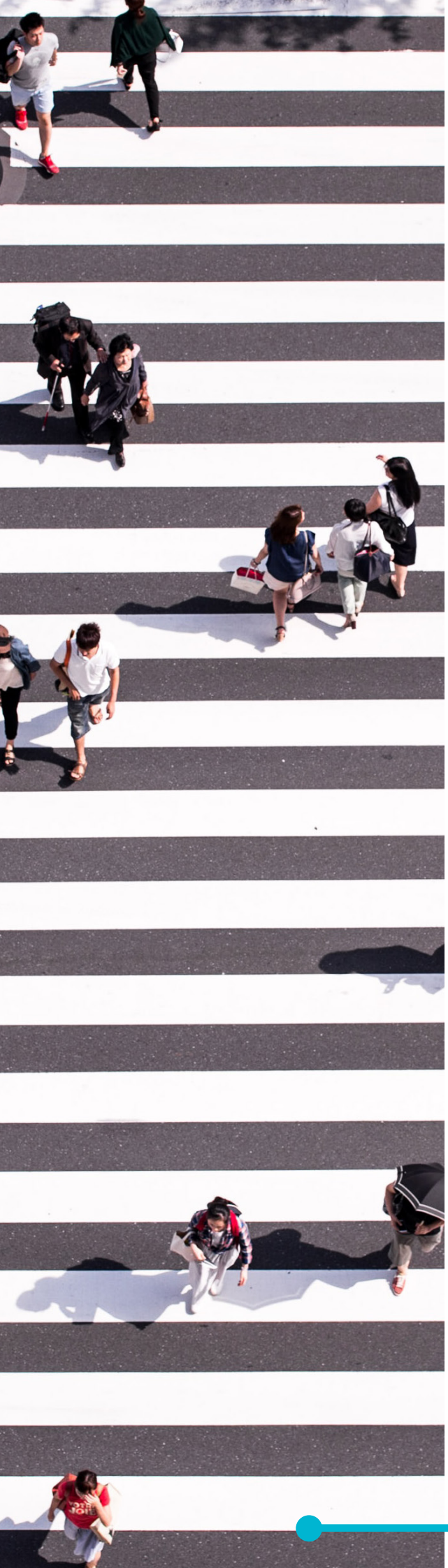
The University Of Queensland
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

Institute for Social Science Research Training

Methods for Social Analysis and Statistics (MFSAS)





Train with the **experts** in bridging the gap between data and social policy

As one of Australia's largest social science institutions, researchers at The University of Queensland's Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR) address some of the most important issues and challenges facing the country today. ISSR's work is broad, multi-disciplinary, and informed by the latest developments in social science theory and methods.

We deliver commercial services and expert training courses to public and private sector organisations, bridging the gap between those who work with statistics and social data, and those who need to apply them as part of creating effective policies.

The MFSAS Program

The Methods for Social Analysis and Statistics (MFSAS) program is designed for those who need to use, understand, and interpret social research data, but who may not necessarily have a background or training in qualitative data analysis, and/or research methods. Our workshops are ideal for professionals in government departments, agencies, non-government organisations, university staff and postgraduate students who want to learn more about methods for social analysis and translate scientific social research into public policy outcomes.

MFSAS courses provide participants with practical skills and content-relevant knowledge that they can immediately apply in their work, such as:

- How to construct, collate and interpret questions of social significance
- How to use social data to inform evidence-based policies and programs
- How to recognise the quality and robustness of research sources

Courses

Gathering and Analysing Qualitative Data Course

The 3-day Gathering and Analysing Qualitative Data course provides qualitative skills to design, collect, analyse and make evidence-informed decisions based on qualitative data or qualitative data integrated with quantitative data (mixed methods).

The trainers use their extensive experience to provide real world examples of how to apply this method in practice to collect large scale qualitative data and how to understand the results from administrative or surve data by investigating these findings in more depth through qualitative methods.

Using experiential design, the course provides opportunities to practice the skills learnt to undertake interviews, focus groups or visual methods whilst gaining feedback from the ISSR trainers.

Who this course is for

Research and policy officers in government or private sector; researchers; school leaders who gather evidence from their stakeholders; students enrolled for Higher Degree Research and anyone who gathers data through interviews, focus groups, documents, observation, or visual elicitation methods. Researchers developing a survey would find the course useful in the design and testing phase as well as to analyse data from open-ended questions.

Topics covered

- Designing research using the appropriate qualitative method(s)
- How qualitative and quantitative methods can complement and enhance our understanding of a research problem
- Understanding and addressing research bias
- Enhancing the validity and trustworthiness of qualitative research through best practices measures such as keeping a reflective journal, creating a well-developed coding framework and engaging others in your analysis
- Developing qualitative research questions
- Planning research (including budget, ethics, sampling, participant recruitment and logistical arrangements)
- Developing qualitative instruments (including interview guides, consent forms and participant information sheets)
- Interviewing with confidence (including interview and facilitation skills, interview and focus group practice and feedback opportunities)
- Understanding other qualitative methods such as observation, ethnography, cognitive/retrospective interviews, visual elicitation methods and online methods
- Choosing the appropriate analytical approach for your study (including Grounded Theory Analysis, Thematic and Content Analysis, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and Narrative Analysis)
- Understanding the analytical process (including anonymising, step-by-step guidance through a worked example of coding, practical tips to develop a coding framework and code in 'real world' circumstances and developing themes from the codes)
- Using computer-assisted software in qualitative analysis process (including documentation, file storage processes, transcription and analysis and an introduction to NVivo and Leximancer)
- Interpreting qualitative data (including how to interpret qualitative results from peer reviewed papers)
- Writing up results for different audiences (including PhD thesis, peer-reviewed papers, reports, book chapters, participant summaries, policy briefs, podcasts, case studies and vignettes)
- Visualisation and presentation of qualitative data to maximise impact

Learning objectives

- Understand the impact of bias in all aspects of the research process
- Understand the value and purpose of qualitative research and when to use these methods
- Gain knowledge and skills to understand, design and conduct high quality qualitative research to inform evidence-based decisions
- Gain knowledge and skills to analyse and synthesise qualitative data
- Understand the complementarity between qualitative and quantitative methods and, where appropriate, integrate qualitative and quantitative data in mixed methods research
- Critically review the quality of qualitative findings in reports, policy briefs and published papers
- Gain knowledge and skills to interpret, write-up and present qualitative findings for a range of audiences

Some really useful best-practice advice to better construct interview/survey questions and make sure that they are optimised for participants and will help to achieve the research question/outcomes. Also really great to test my analysis skills and see how the experts do it!

Simon Alperstein, National Acoustic Laboratories.

Program Evaluation course

During our 2-day Introduction to Program Evaluation course you will be introduced to key concepts, terminologies and techniques, apply them in interactive sessions and then use relevant scenarios and focused activities to build your practical skills and understanding.

Who this course is for

This course is for you if you:

- Plan or implement social, health and human service programs
- Need to monitor and assess the effectiveness or success of your interventions
- Want to refresh your evaluation science knowledge

Topics covered

You will:

- Learn what **types of evaluation** are possible, and the stages, scales and needs that determine when each is useful
- Create a **Program Logic** to show how a program will make a difference, and articulate a Theory of Change that explains this
- Develop clear **evaluation questions**, and identify appropriate measures to address them
- Understand how **quantitative and qualitative** approaches offer complementary information for evaluations
- Recognise how **external factors** and **ethical issues** may affect evaluations
- Identify modes for **sharing evaluation findings** with different stakeholders for maximum impact and learning

> *Practical activities were great... Appreciated the variety of learning modalities (phone survey, lecture-type content, practical activities, group discussion). I also feel like the content was a light touch but comprehensive enough to improve my practice. Flexible and approachable. Encouraged open discussion throughout*
>
> **Kaitlyn Bruschi, Health and Wellbeing Queensland**

Social Cost-Benefit Analysis course

This 3-day course equips participants with an understanding and working knowledge of the theoretical and technical (Excel) skills required to apply Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) to the appraisal and evaluation of projects, policies, programs and regulations with mainly social and other non-monetary (e.g., environmental) costs and benefits.

The course is designed for professionals who need to engage with CBAs to aid the design and evaluation of public and private sector projects and programs, either as policy analysts or as practitioners needing to enhance their technical skills in CBA.

This course does NOT focus on *non-economic* project evaluation methods, but rather on the application of financial and economic principles and analysis to the evaluation of projects, programs, and policies with a social focus.

The course covers the underlying principles and theoretical concepts of CBA, the technical methods and details of calculating the various measures of project profitability (IRR, BCR, NPV), including hands-on exercises to practice the basic skills required to perform CBAs using Excel. On the final day we work through a detailed, real world case study and the reporting of the results of the CBA.

What distinguishes the approach followed in this course from others is the adoption of a multi-account CBA framework. This allows the analyst to evaluate and report on the net benefits of a project/program/policy from the perspective of each individual stakeholder, in addition to an aggregate 'all of society' perspective, highlighting the distribution of costs and benefits among the various stakeholders.

The course also examines the principles and methods underlying non-market valuation methods and techniques for dollar valuation of non-monetary costs and benefits. This includes the potential uses and limitations of other methodologies including Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis, and, accessibility of the various on-line resources on non-market valuation.

Who this course is for

Social policy, practitioners and research professionals, including those from government, NGO and research organisations, who want to develop their understanding and working knowledge of CBA techniques and its application in the decision-making process, including its role in Regulatory Impact Statements. It assumes little or no prior knowledge of economics or CBA.

Topics covered

- What is CBA? The role in public sector decision-making
- Economic principles and criteria underlying CBA as distinct from financial analysis
- Introducing concepts of discounting, Discounted Cash Flow (DCF) analysis, Net Present Value (NPV), Benefit/ Cost Ratio (BCR) and Internal Rate of Return (IRR)
- Social Return on Investment (SROI) as a variant of CBA for projects with intangible costs and benefits
- Using Sensitivity Analysis to allow for uncertainty
- Step-by-step demonstration of CBA applied to a social project for project appraisal
- Applying decision rules in CBA using Excel • Identifying and valuing costs and benefits in CBA
- Methods and techniques of non-market valuation and data sources for including intangibles in CBA
- Assessment of SROI Analysis and an overview of the Queensland Government's framework for Social Impact Analysis (SIA)
- A case study using CBA

Learning objectives

- Understand the rationale for CBAs, key concepts and economics principles underlying them, and how they can assist the policy and project decision-making process
- Learn basic processes and methods for undertaking CBA
- Discuss the need for the valuation and incorporation of non-monetary costs and benefits, including those of a social and/or intangible nature
- Appreciate SROI as a method to appraise projects with mainly intangible costs and benefits, and Social Impact Analysis (SIA) as prescribed by Queensland Government
- Understand the limitations of CBAs, including appropriate uses and caveats in interpretation of results
- Have practical experience using basic CBA processes and methods
- Demonstrate a basic proficiency in the use of spreadsheet-based CBAs
- Understand how to apply Sensitivity Analysis and Threshold Analysis techniques using Excel

> *The course gave me a sufficient knowledge of Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) to assess CBA produced by others. It also gave me knowledge to undertake CBA on existing data, and understanding of requirements of in-depth CBA. This course will benefit me in undertaking my current employment and also future work. Policy analysts and advisers should attend this course.*
>
> **Ian Jeffreys, RACQ.**

Longitudinal Data Analysis course

This 5-day intensive Longitudinal Data Analysis course has been specifically designed to deepen the specialist knowledge of your research teams and enhance the quality and meaning of the data you use when making crucial business decisions.

Longitudinal data are essential for understanding:

- Policy or program impact
- Change over time
- Event occurrence
- Causal relationships

The course delves deeply into topics that are pivotal for organisations that use longitudinal data for research and decision-making. Using an engaging combination of presentations, exercise-based and group activities the course covers the latest in statistical methods, as well as how and where to apply them. The practical hands-on sessions use real-world longitudinal data, from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey and Growing up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC).

Who this course is for

Analysts and researchers in government, private organisations and universities who want to develop their skills in the analysis and interpretation of longitudinal data.

Topics covered

- Revision of linear and logistic regression
- Data structures for longitudinal data
- Descriptive analysis of longitudinal data
- Random effects and fixed effects models for panel data
- Growth modelling
- Event history analysis (also called survival analysis)
- Evaluating model fit
- Choosing appropriate models for longitudinal data

Learning objectives

- Understand insights and advantages that come from longitudinal data
- Develop familiarity with data setup and preparation for longitudinal data
- Learn how to apply advanced statistical approaches to longitudinal data, including panel data models, growth models, and event history analysis using either Stata or R Studio
- Gain knowledge of how to select models for longitudinal data that are suited to your research questions and data
- Understand limitations and constraints of longitudinal data

> *The course introduced me to an additional suite of analytical tools, which adds to my range of analytical options and will provide me with additional "leads when looking for patterns in data". My attendance at this course is the result of a recommendation by a co-worker who took the course - and I, in turn, will be sure to also recommend this course to others. I recommend this course to anyone who has an interest (or need) to determine patterns in the data which reflects events or characteristics over a period of time. Useful juicy stuff!*
>
> **Dr. Travis Anderson-Bond, Youth Justice, Queensland**

Customised delivery

All MFSAS courses can be customised using your own data sets, and can be delivered at your premises. Minimum numbers for customised courses are 10 participants.

Course cost guide

All of our online courses are charged at the standard rate of $610 per day

The following discounts are applicable for group, student and early bird bookings.

Discounts	
Early bird	17%
Group	20%
UQ students	30%
Students	25%

Visit **www.issr.uq.edu.au** to learn more about the MFSAS program.

Email **issr.education@uq.edu.au** to design a customised course to meet your specific needs.

Institute for Social Science Research

The University of Queensland
80 Meiers Road, Indooroopilly 4068,
Queensland, Australia
+61 7 3346 7471
issr.education@uq.edu.au

CRICOS Provider 00025B • TEQSA PRV12080

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE