

# ARTICULATING VALUE IN HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES



## **Articulating Value in Housing Co-operatives – project update April 2022**

The research team at Western Sydney University, Swinburne University of Technology, and the University of Newcastle has started reaching out to housing co-operatives to participate in the time-use surveys. Your co-operative may have been contacted by researchers about taking part in the national time-use survey. Here are a few key reasons why your participation in this survey is important and will generate significant and useful findings for housing co-operatives and the sector more broadly.

This is the first national study to capture the input and work of members that goes into creating the benefits that co-operatives offer. The time-use surveys are therefore designed to demonstrate the amount and type of work undertaken by members in Australian rental housing co-operatives. This will help the project to show both the implied financial value of the work performed by members, and how the work undertaken within co-operatives benefits members and the sector. Such benefits might include higher housing quality and stability, better senses of home and community, personal or collective empowerment, and so on. In addition to the time-use surveys, to help identify and explore those benefits and also identify individual, organisational, and sectoral challenges, we will be asking co-operative members about their experiences of living in a co-operative through a voluntary 30-minute member survey, and optional 1-hour in-depth interviews. The survey will be announced when it is available in May, and interviews will be carried out later this year.

Time-use surveys provide the starting point to understanding the value of the work performed by housing co-operative members. To undertake this, we are asking co-operatives to select a representative to work with the Research Assistant (Annette Maguire) on the project. Annette will work with participating co-operatives to ensure that the process of doing the 12-week time-use survey is as easy as possible. Participating co-operative representatives will be asked to:

- Complete a short (5-10 minute) survey that asks basic questions about the structure of their co-operative and how it operates.
- Provide their co-operative's 2020-2021 annual audit.
- Meet with Annette for a 1-hour interview to discuss the regular yearly activities performed by your co-operative.

- Undertake a 12-week time-use survey. Each week for 12 weeks, your co-operatives representative will be asked to record the amount of time your co-operative has spent on each of the following seven activities: 1) tenancies; 2) property and grounds; 3) membership; 4) governance; 5) finance; 6) individual tenant support; and 7) other co-operative activities.

**Co-operatives will be offered a \$200 Mastercard gift voucher to acknowledge their time spent contributing to the research.**

If your co-operative has been approached to undertake the 12-week time-use survey or your co-operative is interested in undertaking it, we would very much like to hear from you, so please email Annette Maguire on [Annette.Maguire@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Annette.Maguire@newcastle.edu.au)

More information on the project here: <http://housingcoopresearch.org.au/>

