Data Science in the News

Webinar: What can we learn from George Floyd's death, and what role can data and data science play in this?

Friday 19 June
12pm - 1pm

The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis USA at the hands of police has been headline news worldwide, sparking discussions, demonstrations, reflections and statements. His death highlights many important issues and questions. It prompts us to reflect on the role that data and data analysis play in these issues and, in turn, how these issues might inform our work as data scientists. The aim is to bring together speakers to discuss this topic from a range of perspectives, with the aim of exploring how data and data science can contribute to meaningful conversations, decisions and changes as a result of this tragic event.

Our panellists

- Distinguished Professor Kerrie Mengersen, Director of QUT Centre for Data Science (Moderator)
- [Professor Peter Anderson](), Executive Director of the QUT Carumba Institute and Director of the National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network
- [Bridget Hughes](), PhD student with the QUT Carumba Institute
- [Professor Robyn Mayes](), Program Leader for Technologies for Justice in the QUT Centre for Justice and Director of the QUT Business School Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research and Engagement Strategy
- [Dr Nigel Stobbs](), Senior Lecturer at QUT Law School

Session topics

- **Professor Peter Anderson: "The importance of cross-disciplinary research"**

- **Bridget Hughes: "The collective impact of programs and services in Queensland"**

- **Professor Robyn Mayes: "Narratives for change: intersections of stories and data"**

  This presentation explores the dynamics of abstract data, histories and personal stories in creating compelling narratives to educate for, and inspire, change. In doing so the presentation considers the interlinked dimensions of the private and the public, and of scales ranging from the local to the global.

- **Dr Nigel Stobbs: " Systemic Bias in predictive policing and predictive risk algorithms"**

  This presentation will provide some context to the ongoing debate about whether it is possible to balance the potential benefits of algorithmic decision making in the criminal justice system, with the risks of racial and demographic bias. This is an increasingly hot issue given the ubiquity with which the technology is being relied on for decisions about the granting of bail and parole and in determining sentence. The latest research from the US suggests that a fair and workable

balance could be struck, but that in practice this balance is often erased by police, judges and other legal actors who are either unwilling or unable to use the technology in accordance with mandated protocols.