Industry Data Expert Analysis (IDEA) Working Group

Summary record, Meetings 1 and 2

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| **Time:** | 10am – 12noon (AEST) |
| **Dates:** | 27 April 2022 (Wed) and 26 May 2022 (Thu) |
| **Location:** | Virtual meeting, via Webex |
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Background

The IDEA Working Group was established in March 2022 to identify information gaps and potential solutions as well as funding and distribution models to deliver those solutions. The Working Group’s [terms of reference](https://www.austrade.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/10838/industry-data-and-expert-analysis-working-group-terms-of-reference-2022.docx.aspx) contain six responsibility areas, including to establish a collection of long-term progress indicators for the Australian visitor economy.

The Working Group is comprised of [13 industry, community and government representatives](https://www.austrade.gov.au/about/consultation/thrive-industry-data-and-expert-analysis-working-group/thrive-industry-data-and-expert-analysis-working-group) and a Chair, each appointed by the CEO of the Australian Trade and Investment Commission. The Working Group’s first meeting was held on 27 April 2022 and its second on 26 May 2022: the first meeting was attended by all but one member and the second attended by all.

The IDEA Working Group has been established for 12 months.

Meeting content

At Meeting 1, the Chair took the first 10 minutes to acknowledge traditional custodians and to cover the purpose of the group as outlined in the terms of reference. The Chair noted that, among the six responsibility areas, the requirement to establish long-term progress indicators for the Australian visitor economy was a specific responsibility that would require ongoing attention because of the time-limited nature of the Working Group.

Members then took the time to introduce themselves, their experience and interests in the visitor economy or related data fields, and what they saw as their initial areas of focus. As an ice-breaker, members were also asked by the Chair to share one interesting or quirky fact about themselves.

Three topics were covered in the second half of Meeting 1:

* Foundation measurements – Tourism Research Australia’s National Visitor Survey (NVS) and International Visitor Survey (IVS) were described in a 10-minute presentation.
* Complementary data – members were given a status update on Tourism Research Australia’s experimentation with and development of complementary datasets and data products
* Banking/credit card data – one of Australia’s leading financial institutions presented to members on their capacity to combine big datasets with data science to produce a granular representation of segments of the visitor economy. Members endorsed a proposal to engage further with banking/credit card data on a practical project.

At Meeting 2, the Chair again took the first 10 minutes to acknowledge traditional custodians, remind members of their conflict of interest obligations, and reiterate the purpose of the group from the terms of reference.

The first substantive agenda item of Meeting 2 was a 10-minute presentation to members outlining the results from a member survey. The anonymous online survey sought, through 12 questions, members’ views and recommendations for data-related areas for the group to focus its attention.

The second agenda item addressed one of the member survey areas, namely that members strongly felt that it was in the Working Group’s interest to be informed of tourism data developments in competitor countries. A proposed project engaging an academic consultant was described to members. This short research project proposed to explore and report on recently announced tourism data hubs in various competitor countries and any related developments. Members endorsed the project, with a view to completing it before the next Working Group meeting.

The next Meeting 2 agenda item introduced a data project proposed by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) through which the rich NVS data would be cross-tabulated with rich customer segmentation data. TRA explained that bringing these two data types together would enable NVS data users to more readily benefit from currently available tourism data. The proposed customer segmentation model identified consumer types and common values within those consumer cohorts, which would provide more targeted information to:

* Marketing – understanding the ‘why’ about consumer decisions
* Product development – understanding the pre-disposition of certain customer groups to engage in activities means products can be tailored to target groups
* Investment decisions – values are more consistent over time than transactions so understanding consumer values supports a more predictive data environment for long-term decisions like investments

The members discussed various customer cohort models and different approaches that might be available, including as next steps beyond the current proposal. Members endorsed TRA taking this project forward with regular milestone reporting at subsequent meetings.

Next on the Meeting 2 agenda was a follow-up presentation from the financial institution engaged in Meeting 1. The practical project selected for this group was to identify visitor economy measurements related to the AFL Grand Final hosted in Brisbane in 2020. The presentation largely related to definitions, with a focus on data discovery, methodology and customer segmentation. Some initial outputs from the data review were also presented. Members discussed the project and endorsed implementing a full data analysis of available data with a view to bringing back the completed data project to the next meeting.

The last substantive item on Meeting 2 agenda was a discussion on the Working Group’s responsibility to deliver long-term progress indicators. The Chair noted that this project was, internal to Austrade, referred to as the Longitudinal Indicators for the Visitor Economy, or LIVE framework. The members heard a presentation from Professor Susanne Becken of Griffith University on a project commissioned by Austrade in 2019 to develop an initial set of indicators. Professor Becken also outlined global developments since 2019.

Members discussed the LIVE framework and noted that this would be a large task and would require a range of consultations and some ongoing vigilance about data privacy. Members also acknowledged that there appeared to be an industry willingness to look beyond purely economic indicators to also include social and environmental metrics.

The Chair described a project management approach that could be applied to achieve the delivery of the LIVE framework:

* Steering Committee – IDEA Working Group
* Project owner – TRA
* Project Sponsor (act as Coordination Committee) – Austrade
* Prime contractor – to be selected by tender
* Sub-contractor (to the prime) – Academic institute/s

Members endorsed this approach. The Chair noted that the LIVE framework would form a large part of the next meeting, scheduled for 21 July 2022.