



TEACH • LEARN • UNDERSTAND

Welcome to the second edition of the [Seriously Social](#) newsletter for 2025. We hope Easter was a joyful time for those celebrating and that the Term One holidays offered a well-deserved break.

In this month's newsletter, you'll find a reminder to enter the [Great Student Debate](#) competition by Thursday 1 May. Finalists will join us in Canberra this September as part of Social Sciences Week 2025.

We're also pleased to share an online student research webinar, and a brand-new Year 6 cross curriculum learning module: Plants and Life in Space.

Additionally, you'll find more opportunities to engage in this year's Social Sciences Week.

Wishing everyone a great term of learning ahead.



Professor Barry McGaw AO, FASSA, FAPS, FACE

Chair, Education Committee, former President
Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia

Events

The Great Student Debate Competition

The Great Student Debate Competition

An exciting national competition where students in **Years 8, 9 and 10** engage in spirited debate, developing essential skills while exploring key issues in Australian history. This year's debate will address the statement: *"That Australian history unites us."*

Eligibility: Open to students in Years 8, 9 and 10 who are new to competitive debating.

Prizes:

- A debate coaching workshop led by experts ahead of the competition,
- A contribution to travel costs to attend the debate workshop and competition in Canberra,
- The chance to showcase skills at a live debate at the National Library of Australia.

How to enter is available in the application booklet: [Great Student Debate](#).

Access the debate guide for classroom teachers [here](#).

For more information email info@socialsciences.org.au .

THE GREAT STUDENT DEBATE

'THAT AUSTRALIAN HISTORY UNITES US'

An exciting national competition where students in Years 8, 9 and 10 engage in spirited debates, developing their skills while exploring key issues in Australian history!

Eligibility: Open to students in Years 8, 9 and 10 who are new to competitive debating.



2025 COMPETITION DATES

Date	Information
12 February	Competition opens - visit (website)
1 April	Free Research Webinar - hosted by the National Library of Australia Register here: https://bit.ly/40Zj5qB
1 May	Entries close at 10am AEST
16 May	Winners informed
3 June	Public announcement of winning teams and advertisement of the Social Sciences Week - Great Debate Competition
9 September	Great Debate Competition - National Library of Australia, Canberra

WINNING TEAMS WILL RECEIVE:

- a debate coaching workshop led by experts ahead of the competition,
- a contribution to travel costs to attend the debate workshop and competition in Canberra,
- the chance to showcase their skills at a live debate at the National Library of Australia!

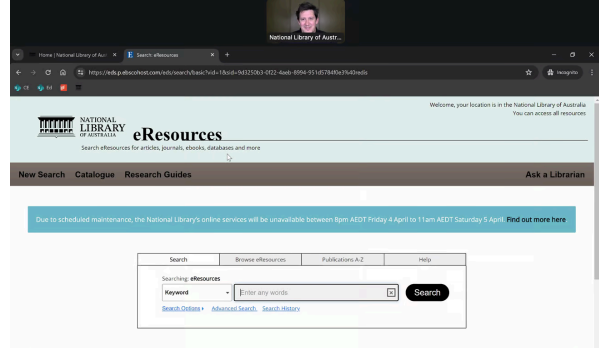


FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL: info@socialsciences.org.au

Proudly supported by the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, the University of Canberra and the National Library of Australia



View now: Great Student Debate Research Skills Webinar



Whether your students are keen to prepare for Seriously Social's Great Student Debate, or ready to delve into Trove for incredible primary source research, this webinar was designed get your students thinking and ready to research.

Students had the opportunity to observe objects closely via the screen, interact using Q&A, and were invited to suggest search terms for navigating our catalogue.

The end of the session included an invitation to access Trove to continue researching the 2025 debate topic 'That Australian History unites us'.

This program took place over Zoom and cameras were hidden. Attendees were able to contribute ideas and questions to the conversation by typing into the Q&A and chat function.

This program was targeted towards students in senior secondary school and held in partnership with Seriously Social, an initiative of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, for Social Sciences Week 2025.

The Opalgate Foundation supported this webinar as part of the National Library's Lifelong Learning initiative.

A recording of this Research Skills Webinar is available [here](#).

View the Great Student Debate Research Skills Webinar recording

What's New?

Year 6 - Plants and Life in Space



We are pleased to share the [Year 6, cross-curriculum learning resource](#)!

While this resource is designed for the Year 6 curriculum, the learning experiences and educational videos can also support other teaching areas. A breakdown of the new educational videos is provided below, with direct links to each resource:

- [An overview of the ARC Plants for Space research project](#)
- [The work of scientists to grow plants in space](#)
- [Social science considerations about the law in space](#)
- [Design and technologies advancements for life in space](#)

This is an exciting new teaching resource developed by the ARC Centre of Excellence in Plants for Space (P4S) and Seriously Social, an initiative of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. This resource, produced at no cost to schools, brings together the expertise of both science and social science research experts. The content is peer-reviewed and offers real-world learning opportunities, helping students explore potential career paths in space research, sustainable farming and related fields.

If you would like to work with us as a trial school for this learning module, please connect with us to express your interest at info@socialsciences.org.au.

Explore the Plants and Life in Space resource

Opportunities

Plants and Life in Space Webinar Proposal

Would you and your students be interested to attend a Plants and Life in Space webinar with science and social science experts in a 30-minute Q&A styled panel session?

We are planning to bring this event together in either June, August or September and would appreciate hearing your preferred dates and requests for learning topics. Please feel free to email us at info@socialsciences.org.au marked Attention: Seriously Social if you would like to provide your preferred date, time of day and learning topics for this session.

Social Sciences Week 2025

Social Sciences Week (SSW) will take place 8-14 September 2025.

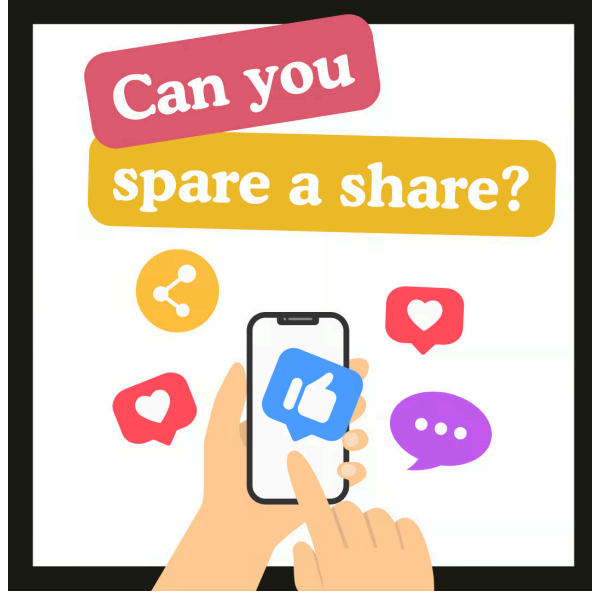
We will have a range of options for schools to get involved in SSW and invite you and your school community to connect with us to promote events that you may wish to lead.



socialsciencesweek.org.au

#SSW2025

Discover SSW resources for schools



Do you follow Seriously Social on LinkedIn, Youtube or Facebook?

Interactions from our followers ensure that more people see the free educational social science resources that we offer.

If you see us in your feed, please give us a like or share and help us to spread the word!

Click below to follow and share.



Connect

Feedback and further inquiries are welcome via email: info@socialsciences.org.au.

Subscribe to stay up to date

Please help to spread the word—educators are invited to [subscribe](#) to the Seriously Social mailing list to keep informed of developments in the Academy's school program.

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