



**CIVICA**

Transforming the way you work

# The intrinsic value of **libraries as public spaces**

Emerald Leung





## Civica's Redesign your library competition

Yuan Ching Secondary School



Gan Eng Seng School

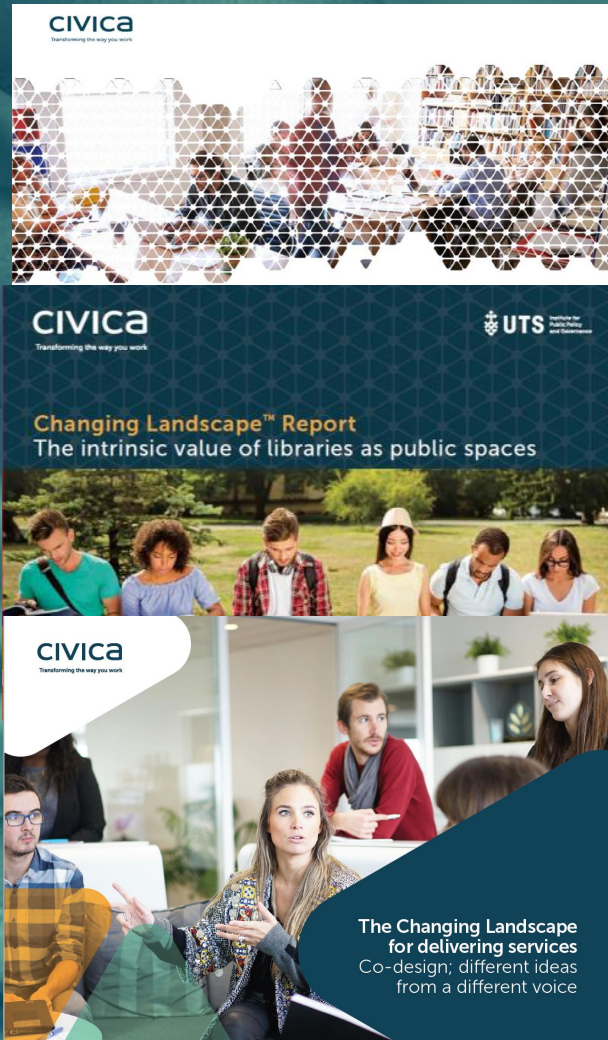


## Singapore Sports Hub Library



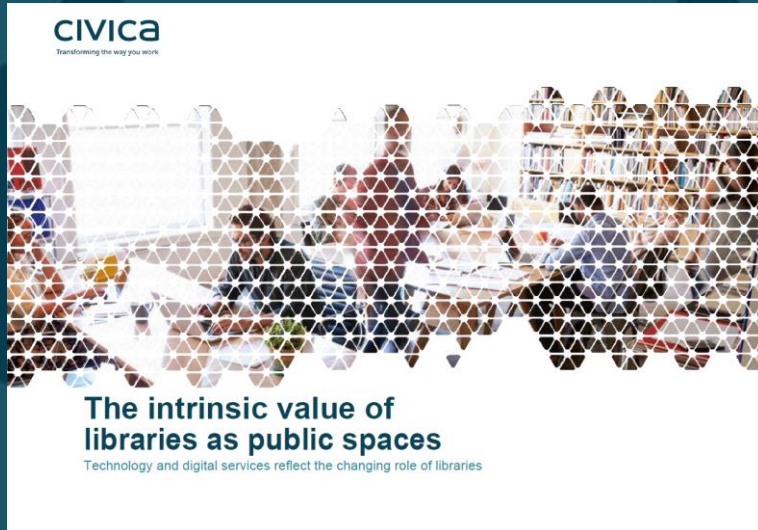


# Civica & UTS partnership



- ▶ Since 2015
- ▶ Institute for Public Policy and Governance at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS:IPPG): Researchers and practitioners in the areas of public administration and policy, social research, evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and leadership
- ▶ The UTS: Centre for Local Government is part of the UTS:IPPG, and continues to be a leader in local government research, teaching and advisory.

# The intrinsic value of libraries as **public spaces**



How library spaces are **evolving**?

What is the **future role** of libraries in Australia?

The increasing role of **technology** in libraries

What is **the need for libraries** in modern society?

Libraries and the provision of **public spaces**

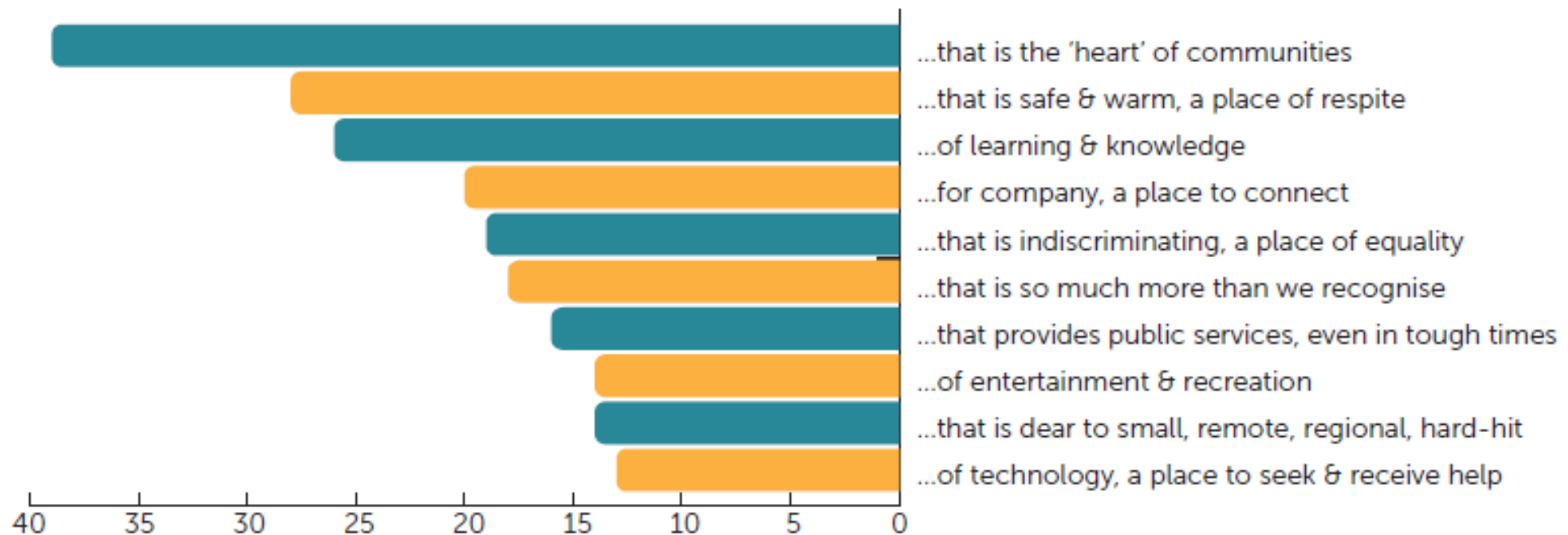


# The role of libraries to **the community**



The fact that community members can enter a library without being a member, without an appointment, without having to disclose personal circumstances and without having to spend money makes this a **truly democratic space**.

## The library is a place...



# In the future libraries will

e.g. Provide  
electronic  
resources, etc

Be **innovative**  
and **progressive**



Need to provide  
**shared resources**  
across libraries

...keep increasing  
**learning and  
knowledge**



...remain  
important to  
**remote, rural,  
hard-hit  
communities**

...need to meet  
**community  
needs and  
expectations**



...provide  
exposure to **new  
technology**



...need to provide  
more **flexible  
spaces**, access to  
more space

...keep providing  
**programs and  
events**

# The role of libraries in providing **digital spaces**

A woman with long dark hair is wearing VR goggles and holding the strap over her head. She is looking upwards with a smile. The background is a teal gradient with floating digital particles and a faint silhouette of a person's head in the upper right.

- ▶ To offer access to technologies which allow citizens to engage, free of charge, in digital spaces.
- ▶ Wifi, public computers to look for work, accommodation, educational support

“ Our library has a range of equipment, technology, training and help with digital devices, services, and online resources that can be accessed by all, not necessarily in the physical library.



# The **perfect library?**

The respondents cast their minds to the concept of a perfect library and what would constitute the ideal library space:

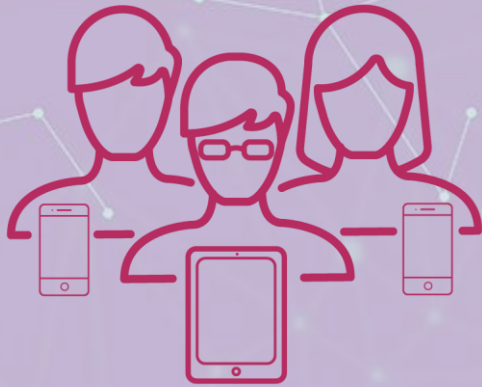
1. A library with both indoor and outdoor space with natural light
2. A library with extended opening hours
3. A library that is co-located with other services such as community services, Centrelink, etc.
4. A library incorporating cafes and theatrettes and entertainment and food
5. A library with up-to-date technology
6. A library offering maker spaces including 3D printers, sewing machines, AV equipment
7. A library whose staff provide technical training and have other professional qualifications
8. A place for business and workers, where people to start and operate a small business



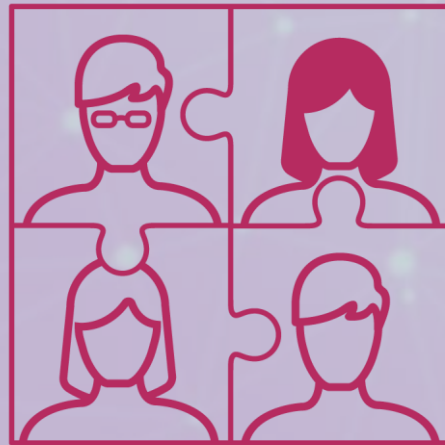


# How libraries will **evolve**

“ I think they (libraries) will become more important spaces for outreach social services such as legal assistance, Centrelink, job search, aged and disability services and so on.



Online delivery, Digital services

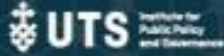


Community hubs

Spaces need to be more flexible to accommodate a wide range of activities – for business hubs, creative spaces, etc

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## **Changing Landscape™ Report** The intrinsic value of libraries as public spaces



Physical-digital, communicating the new normal

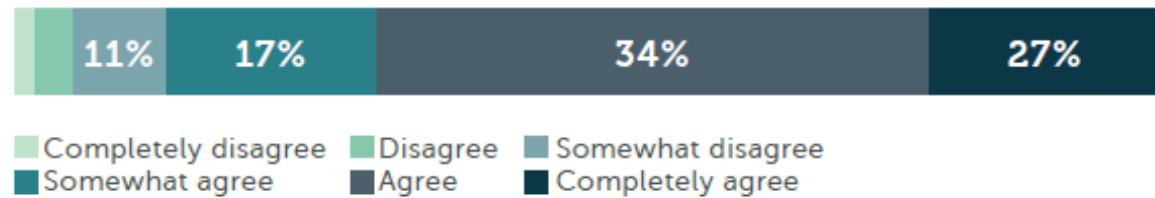
- ▶ Libraries remain at the centre of many communities
- ▶ Online library service delivery requires high performing infrastructure
- ▶ Libraries as hybrid spaces, that is linking their physical and online components
- ▶ New technologies such as AI and VR should be adopted by libraries



# Library customers are (generally!) happy

## Happiness in using online and physical library services

I am as happy using library services online as I am using the service in the library.

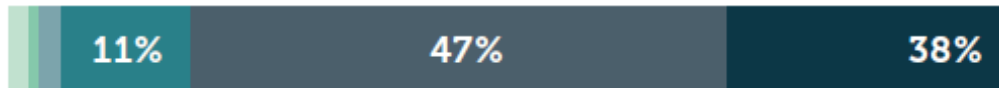


## Satisfaction with the online and physical library experience

Overall, I am satisfied with the online library experience.



Overall, I am satisfied with the physical library experience.

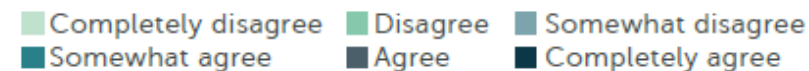


## Values and perceptions of physical and online libraries

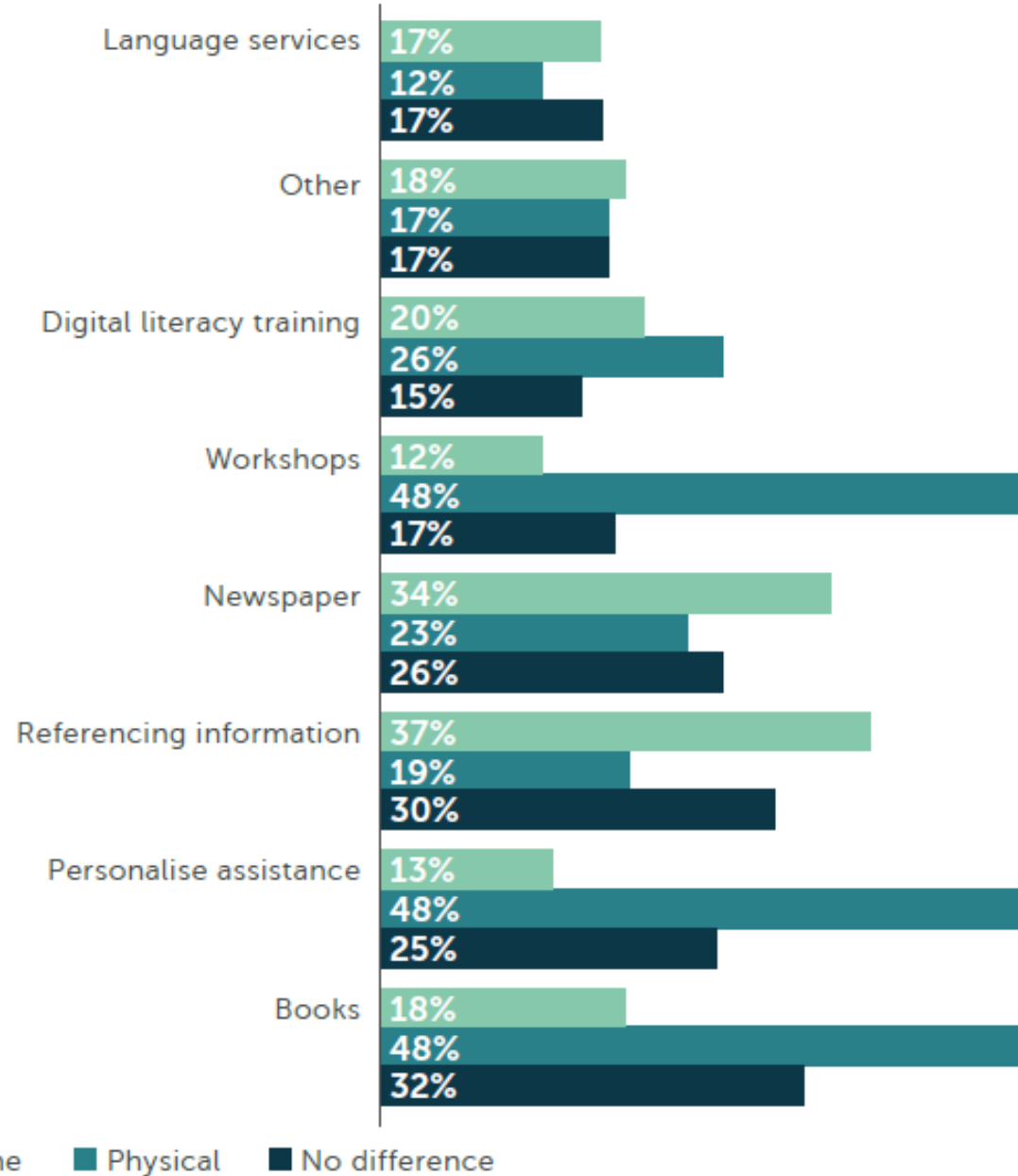
The library website is important



The physical library is important



## Ease of access to the following in a physical or online library





# New types of engagement **(the community view)**

► Social media growth could be leveraged to better engage with communities

Engage more actively and use different communication styles across the platforms - don't just repost the same content. Vary the approach to reach a wider audience and provide a taste of what the user may experience.

[Social media] use it more as an engagement tool rather than a 'push' information tool.

Invite community participation. Being humorous and informative

# Our customers support **co-design**



## Why Local Government Matters



Full Report 2015

**UTS:CLG**  
CENTRE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**ACELG**  
Australian Centre of Excellence  
for Local Government



# Libraries (and councils in general) & co-design

1. The importance of libraries
2. People who work in local govt have enough knowledge to decide what services are needed.
3. Service providers have the best knowledge about how services should be delivered.
4. Communities know enough to make a good decisions about what services they need
5. People who are using a particular service will know how much of that service is needed

## Libraries

Figure 87: Q13\_12 Libraries (n=1997)

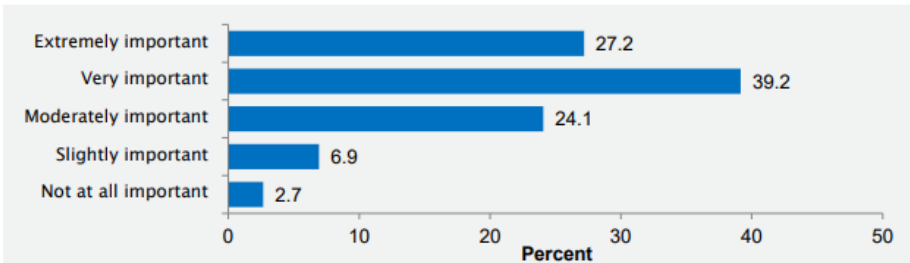


Figure 14: Q3\_11 People who work in government have enough knowledge to decide what services are needed in my area (n=1945)

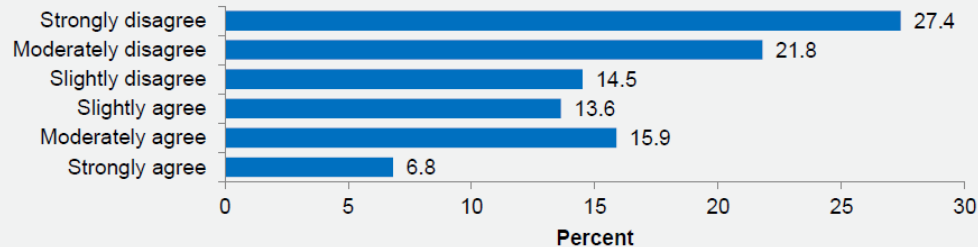


Figure 17: Q3\_14 Communities know enough to make good decisions about what services they need (n=1936)

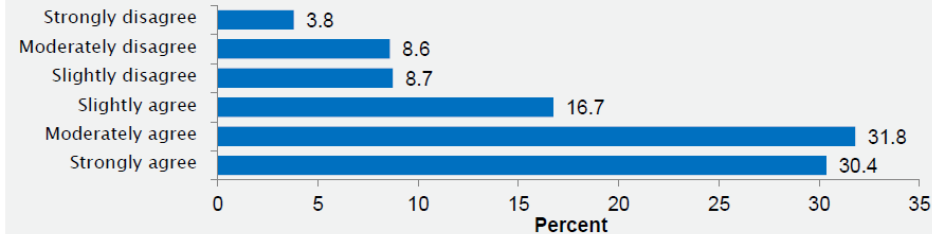


Figure 15: Q3\_12 Service providers have the best knowledge about how services should be delivered (n=1938)

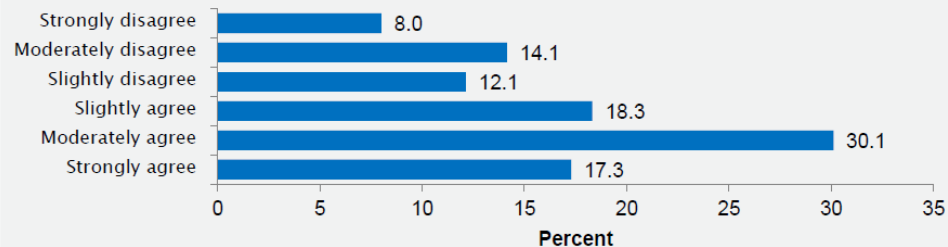
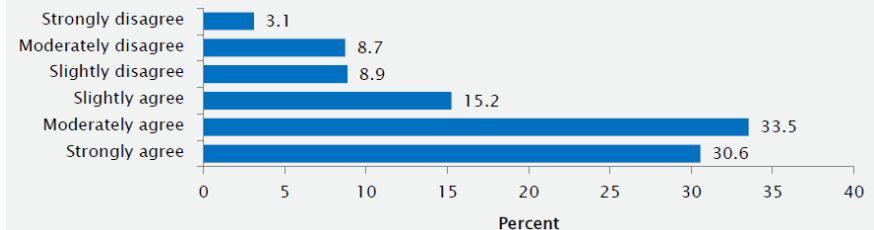


Figure 16: Q3\_13 People who are using a service will best know how much of any particular service is needed (n=1926)



Why  
Local Government  
Matters



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# Co-design; different ideas from a **different voice**

Contains info to support the  
co-design process in councils





# The co-design maturity model

	Reactive	Traditional	Transforming	Adoptive	Future proof   Co-design
Citizen	Citizen driven investigation into service failures	Informal /limited engagement	Engaged with beyond formal consultations	Proactive engagement in order to self-serve	Fully engaged and empowered community
Council	Heavily fragmented operations	Majority of "one size fits all" services provided directly by council	Integration of practice across organisation and with other councils	Facilitate and engage with citizens to self-serve and design services	Devolution of decisions and resources to local communities
Methods		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service providers developing products/services designed for users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to involve a combination of interviews, focus groups, surveys and observations to get input into the system</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service user is engaged as an expert/collaborator</li> <li>Users have influence over development/application of the service</li> <li>Ownership distributed</li> <li>Making – using new methodologies to create new services – often incorporating new technologies</li> <li>Ongoing iteration with those impacted by the service</li> </ul>

# Future gazing **(the librarian's perspective)**

- ▶ A hybrid space that connects the physical and online space
- ▶ Collaboration with vendors, industry partners and government
- ▶ Greater engagement and co-design with the community

“Engaging with the community you serve whether physical or digital, we need to do that to remain relevant.”



# Thank you!

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<https://www.civica.com/en-au/about-us/changing-landscape-reports22/>

or contact me for hard copies [emerald.leung@civica.com.au](mailto:emerald.leung@civica.com.au) (if you have any ideas for useful future research topics I would also love to hear from you

Also visit UTS:IPPG / UTS:LCG

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