

INNOVATIVE NETWORKING : A NATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE NETWORK IN NEW ZEALAND

Paul Spoonley and David Thorns¹

Abstract

In 2004, a group of senior researchers based at six New Zealand universities along with a community research centre received funding (\$NZ8 million over five years) to establish a research network, the Building Research Capability in the Social Sciences (BRCSS) Network, from the Tertiary Education Commission. These researchers are involved with 35 existing projects and one aim of the BRCSS Network is to encourage collaborations and innovative approaches to key social and policy research questions. In addition, another key aim is to enhance the capability and capacity of the national social science research community, especially for new emerging researchers and with particular attention to the research needs of Maori, Pacific and New Settler communities. Access Grid technology, which is particular to this project, is being used to fulfil these aims, especially given the relatively small size of the social science research community in New Zealand and the distances between centres and researchers. The interaction amongst the research community will change and there will emerge new research opportunities. In order to understand what is happening and the effectiveness of this interactive networking, the BRCSS Network has set aside budget to research and evaluate the use of this new technology.

¹ Professor Paul Spoonley is Regional Director (Auckland) for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Massey University as well as Acting Director, BRCSS Network and Professor David Thorns is Professor of Sociology, University of Canterbury and a member of the Management Group, BRCSS Network.

Contact Details :

Professor Paul Spoonley
Regional Director (Auckland)
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Massey University
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore
NEW ZEALAND

Ph : 64-9-441 8171

Email : P.Spoonley@massey.ac.nz

Fax : 64-9-441 8169