INFORMING INNOVATION: PULLING TOGETHER TO ADVANCE AT RESEARCH IN AUSTRALIA

**Aims**: This panel aims to bring a range of stakeholders together to understand the work that has been undertaken in Australia to date, to imagine what assistive technology practice and service delivery (industry) could look like and to formulate a national agenda of research priorities related to AT.

Assistive technology is recognised as a powerful enabler however there are substantial gaps between need, provision and effective use of assistive technology. Much of the research on assistive technology in Australia has either been undertaken by individuals as part of research higher degrees or as a result of small grants from diverse sources. Research on disability has lacked a focus on AT, with audits of disability research in Australia in 2014 and 2017 noting a paucity of evidence around AT. Further, the current global drive towards AT research has not yet been addressed in Australia. This session will discuss research undertaken to date in Australia and how to leverage on this to build a body of knowledge to inform AT practice and service delivery. There are numerous questions to be answered but these cannot be answered in isolation. By working together researchers, organisations and communities can focus their energies to avoid duplication and progress the broader agenda of Assistive Technology. The ultimate goal of this session is to develop a community of AT researchers who will continue to work together on building a body of research that informs innovation in AT practice and service delivery.

(Word Count: 243)