

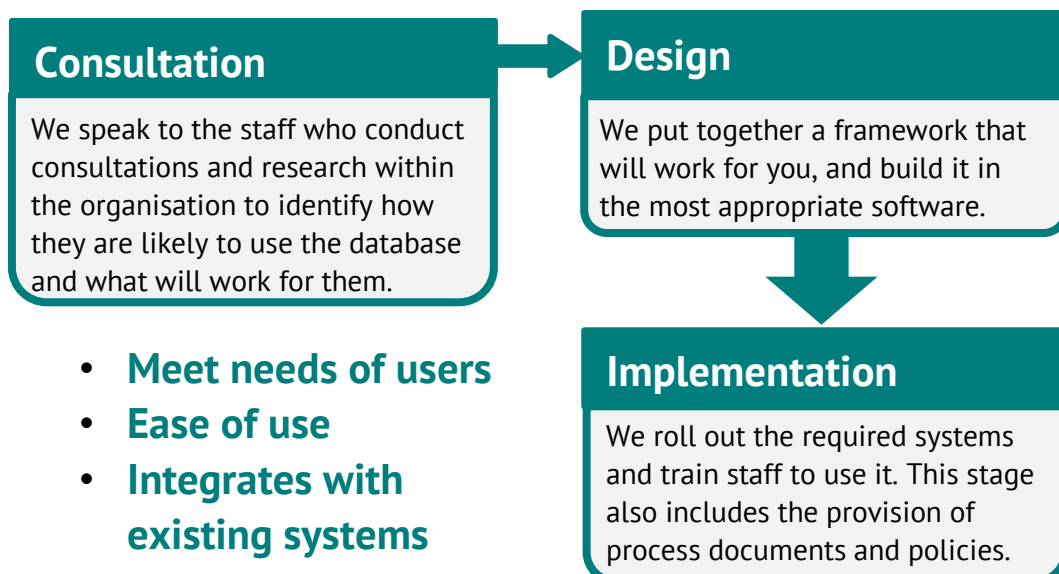
Consultation and Research Database

To ensure that the needs of the community are considered when designing plans and strategies, Local Councils undertake a range of consultation and research activities every year. Often these are undertaken independently within departments and even teams, without dissemination of information to the broader organisation.

ASDF Research can help your organisation design and implement a Consultation and Research Database to help keep track of past, present and future projects. Monitoring of Council consultations and research in a way which is accessible to all staff performs a number of critical functions:

- **Shared learning.** The Consultation and Research Database allows for any staff member to search for past projects conducted under a topic, department or methodology. This information can be used to learn from past consultations and research; either by identifying that the information they were hoping to collect has already been ascertained, or supporting new project design and analysis with previous findings.
- **Consistency of approach.** The Consultation and Research Database will enable staff to see how similar projects have been conducted in the past to ensure that future consultation and research is comparable. It will also allow for key personnel within Council to review materials prior to distribution and ensure they meet with best practice and communication protocols. This results in higher quality consultations and research, leading to more accurate and useful findings.
- **Avoid over-consulting/surveying.** The database is linked to a calendar so that when planning future projects one can identify if the target market is already being approached at the proposed time.
- **Opportunities for collaborative projects.** The database allows staff to see whether similar projects are being run and who to contact to discuss them.
- **Audits and annual reporting.** The database allows for easy reporting by department, project type and timeframe for inclusion of these activities in annual audits and reports.

ASDF Research Service offering



Features and functionality

It is envisaged that a Consultation and Research Database will have the following features. The initial consultation stages of the project will identify which of these features are relevant to your organisation, as well as determine any additional requirements:

- Quick and easy-to-complete form to log a research project, which automatically updates the database and a calendar of research, and notifies the relevant officers so they can check the materials;
- Calendar of research so staff can see past, current and future projects;
- Searchable database of Council research projects which includes contact name, department, project name, project type, topic, related plans and policies, target market, methodology, critical dates, budgets, and links to relevant documents (including data);
- Easy walk-through to help staff set up a consultation or research project that meets best practice, Council and communications guidelines;
- Help documents (outlining best practice and policy requirements) for individual parts of the consultation and research process (standard questions, design checklists etc.);
- Policy for prioritisation when there are multiple scheduled projects at the same time;
- Project closure procedures which include ensuring the database is up to date with document links and final sample/budget figures; and
- Directory of available research/data under meaningful subject headings that align to Council plans and departments. Includes links to publically available data as well as Council research projects.

Experience

At ASDF we have a unique skillset to enable us to develop a high quality database, including:

- Over 20 years' experience in the conduct of social research in a research provider environment. This includes developing research project frameworks and budgets, as well as management and conduct of all stages of the research process;
- Over 6 years' experience as an internal research and consultation specialist for a Local Council, during which time a Research Database was developed and successfully implemented;
- Over 10 years' experience in database management and business analysis;
- Extensive experience in database design and system development across a number of platforms, including Access, PLSQL and Sharepoint;
- Development of process documents for end users for various functionalities relating to research and database management, presenting the information in a way that is easy for the layperson to understand; and
- Experience in training staff in the use of data management systems and research skills.

Therefore we have the ability to quickly and efficiently understand where consultation and research is at in your organisation, identify the best processes for your needs, and build a product that suits these needs.

Our work in this area focuses on developing systems and process which are easy for staff to use, are relevant to pre-existing policies and processes, integrate with other systems (where applicable) and look good. Where possible we use software staff are already familiar with to minimise the learning curve.

For a no obligation chat about how we can help your organisation, or to request a quote, please contact us at asdf@asdfresearch.com.au.