

Australians urged to come together and beat COVID-19 now

March 30 2020



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Swinburne University of Technology has partnered with Arq group to launch an online tool to help track the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Australia.

The goal is to have five million Australians fill out a symptom tracker daily at beatcovid19now.org

The [survey tool](#) is designed for people who are healthy or unwell, including with symptoms of COVID-19.

All you need to do is provide your postcode and fill in the survey, you are not required to input any other information that would otherwise identify you.

The technology behind the [symptom](#) tracker was developed by Arq Group, a leading Australian digital services provider, which has volunteered its services and expertise to help beat COVID-19.

The science behind the tracker was developed by Swinburne Professors Richard Osborne and Matthew Bailes. They combined their expertise in public health and astrophysics and organized a hackathon to prototype the concept.

Based on the initial data, the intention is to further develop the tool and make it available internationally, to support the global effort to combat health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Swinburne's Professor Richard Osborne says, "Reliable and [accurate data](#) is more important now than ever to ensure we know as much as we can about this disease and its spread so that the authorities can take appropriate steps to help beat it. Filling out the survey only takes a few minutes a day and provides vital information to experts battling the virus.

"This platform is not about providing [medical advice](#) but giving a valuable new tool to experts trying to track and contain this virus. Anyone who is concerned that they may have been exposed to the virus

should contact the National Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 020 080 and follow the advice of government medical experts."

Arq Group CEO Tristan Sternson says, "The more we know about this virus, the more chance we have to stop the spread, that's why Arq Group has partnered with a team of researchers at Swinburne and an army of volunteers, to create Symptom Tracker.

"We believe that by bringing together digital experts and researchers, we can do our bit to help governments at all levels manage this crisis. While we are all practicing social distancing, we can take just a few minutes out of our day to fill in the survey to help fight the spread, flatten the curve and save lives."

Swinburne Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Professor Bronwyn Fox, says, "Swinburne is an agile university and has collaborated with industry to find solutions in response to the current global health crisis. By joining forces between researchers and industry experts we aim to make a tremendous contribution to helping Australian health authorities work to combat the pandemic.

"The Symptom Tracker was developed by Swinburne researchers, industry partners and volunteers in a hackathon in less than two weeks. It's an inspiring example of how communities can rally together virtually to create new technologies to benefit mankind."

Provided by Swinburne University of Technology

Citation: Australians urged to come together and beat COVID-19 now (2020, March 30)
retrieved 24 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-03-australians-urged-covid-.html>

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