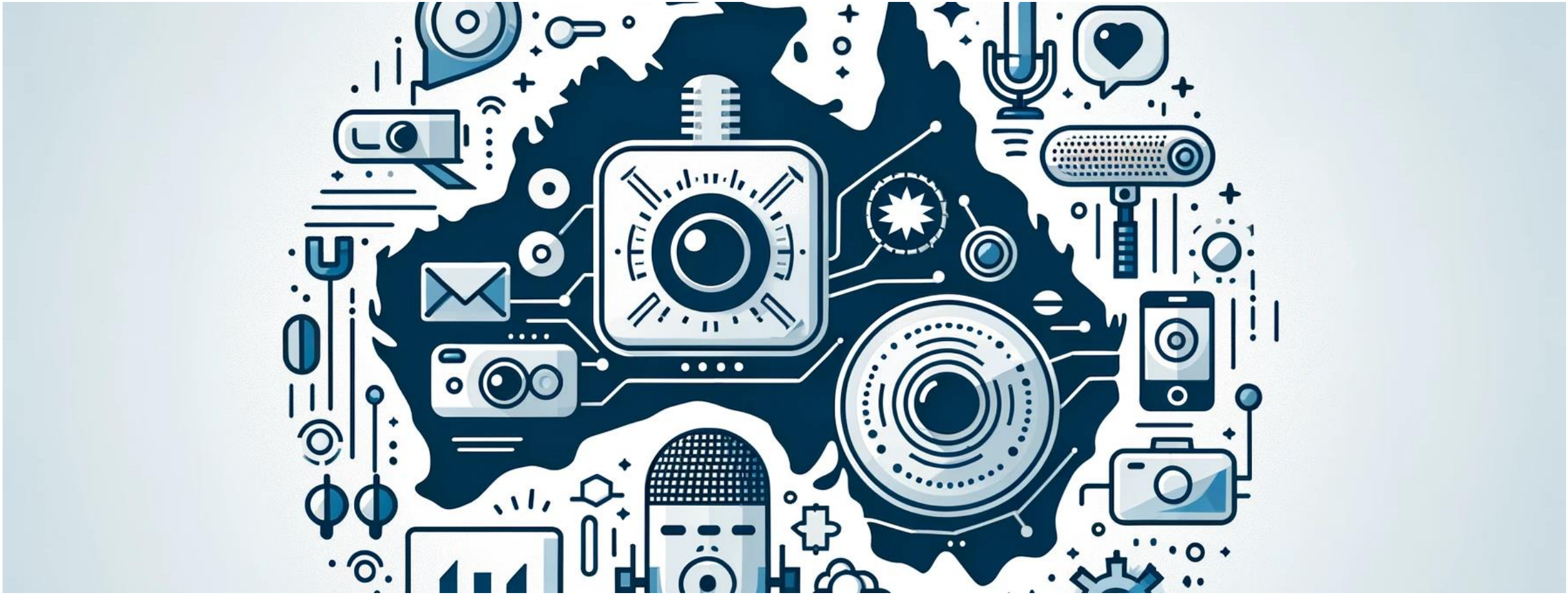
Video Interviewing in Comparison to Other Survey Methods in Australia

2024 FedCASIC https://www.census.gov/fedcasic/fc2024/index.php



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Motivation

Part of a broader comparative study building on the 2015 Online Panel Benchmarking Study (OPBS; Lavrakas et al. 2022; Pennay et al. 2018), which replicated similar international studies (summarized in Cornesse et al. 2020) focused on the performance of nonprobability panels compared to various types of probability samples

Video-assisted live interviewing (VALI) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) when face-to-face interviewing for household surveys ruled out by COVID-19 lockdowns as part of sequential multimode designs

Post-lockdown, VALI has potential as a less expensive alternative to face-to-face

Design comparison

	Probability-based panel (**Life in Australia™**)	Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (**CATI**)	Video-assisted live interviewing (**VALI**)	SMS push-to-web (**SMS P2W**)	Non-probability panels (**Panels 1-4**)
Newness	Contemporary	Traditional	**Emerging**	**Emerging**	Contemporary
Cost	$$	$$$$	**$$$$$**	$$	**$**
Frame	**Probability panel**	Mobile RDD	**Probability panel**	Mobile RDD	4 non-prob panels
Comp mode	**Online / CATI**	CATI	VALI	Online	Online
Incentive	$10 voucher / donation	**None**	$10 voucher / donation	$10 voucher	Panel rewards
Base	**n = 582**	**n = 803**	**n = 600**	**n = 599**	**n = 850-891**

*Main exclusions were address-based sampling push-to-web and face-to-face due to time and cost.

Life in Australia™

Established in 2016, first and only online probability panel

From April 2023 grown to 10,000 active panellists = achieved sample of 7,500

Monthly waves until this year, moving to fortnightly waves

Mostly online; offline panel members interviewed via CATI (3.3% August 2022)

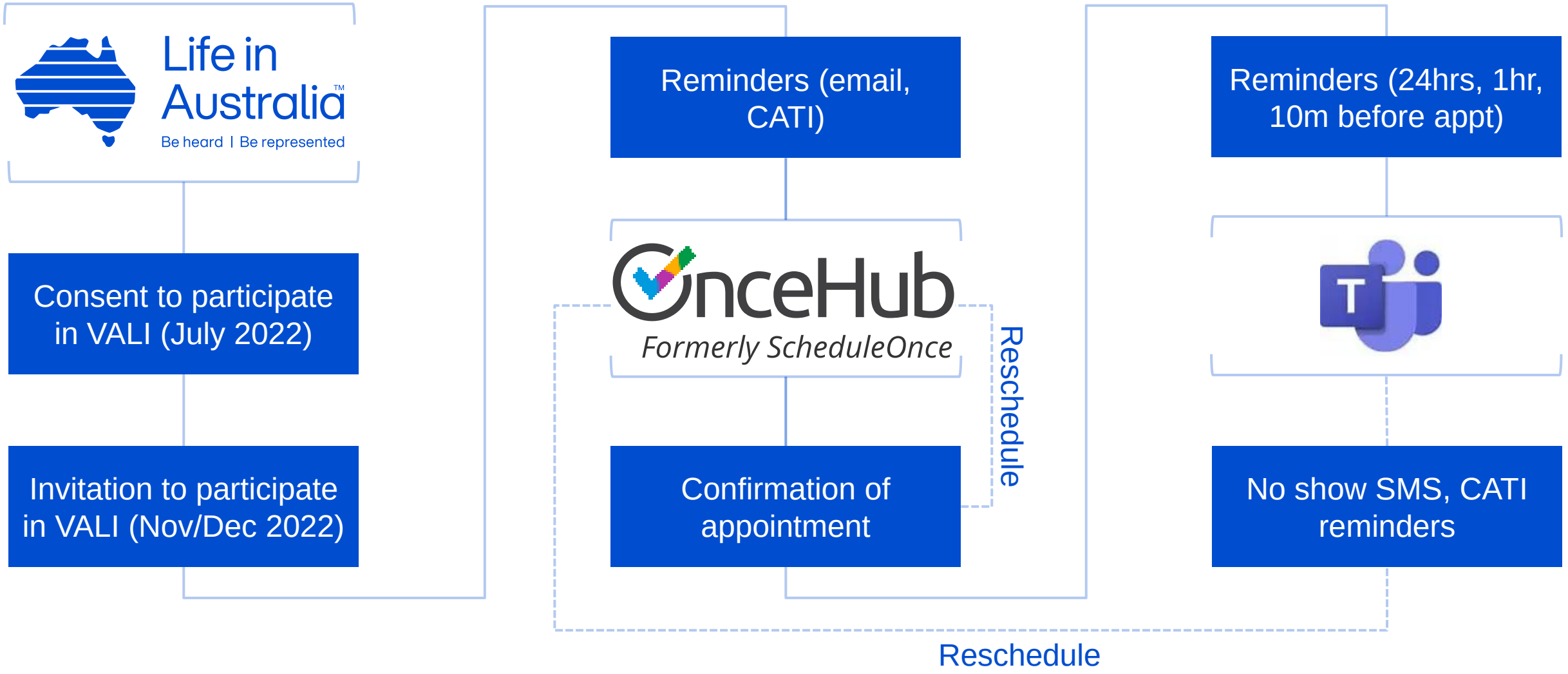
Target length = 15 minutes (10 AUD incentive)

Provide government, academics, and non-profits with probability sample at lower cost than a standalone telephone survey

Year	Frame
2016	Dual-frame RDD
2018	Mobile RDD
2019	A-BS
2020	A-BS, IVR & SMS push-to-web
2021	SMS push-to-web
2021	A-BS
2023	SMS push-to-web

Implementation

Workflow and platforms



Response

Outcome Rate	VALI	Life in Australia™	RDD CATI (high)	RDD CATI (low)	SMS push-to-web
Recruitment Rate	11.0%	11.3%	–	–	–
Profile Rate	93.6%	93.3%	–	–	–
Consent Rate	31.9%	–	–	–	–
Retention Rate	73.4%	73.0%	–	–	–
Appointment Rate	51.1%	–	–	–	–
Completion Rate	83.9%	73.1%	–	–	–
Response Rate*	**1.0%**	**5.6%**	**7.7%**	**2.0%**	**4.0%**

* Response Rate is RR3 for RDD CATI and SMS push-to-web, Cumulative Response Rate 2 for VALI and Life in Australia™

See AAPOR (2016) for RR3 definition, Callegaro and DiSogra (2008) for Cumulative Response Rate 2.

Platform decisions

Probability-based online panel

Literature (McGonagle and Sastry 2021) indicates VALI works best when a pre-existing relationship with respondent, not cold call

Decisions also informed by Hanson (2021) and Schober et al. (2020)

OnceHub

Appointment-setting necessary for cost control—could not afford to have interviewers waiting around for on-demand interviews

OnceHub was simple to use, had a dashboard, SMS reminders, Outlook integration, offered API access, customisation of look-and-feel (e.g., brand colours, logo, able to drop some unneeded text) and personalized URLs

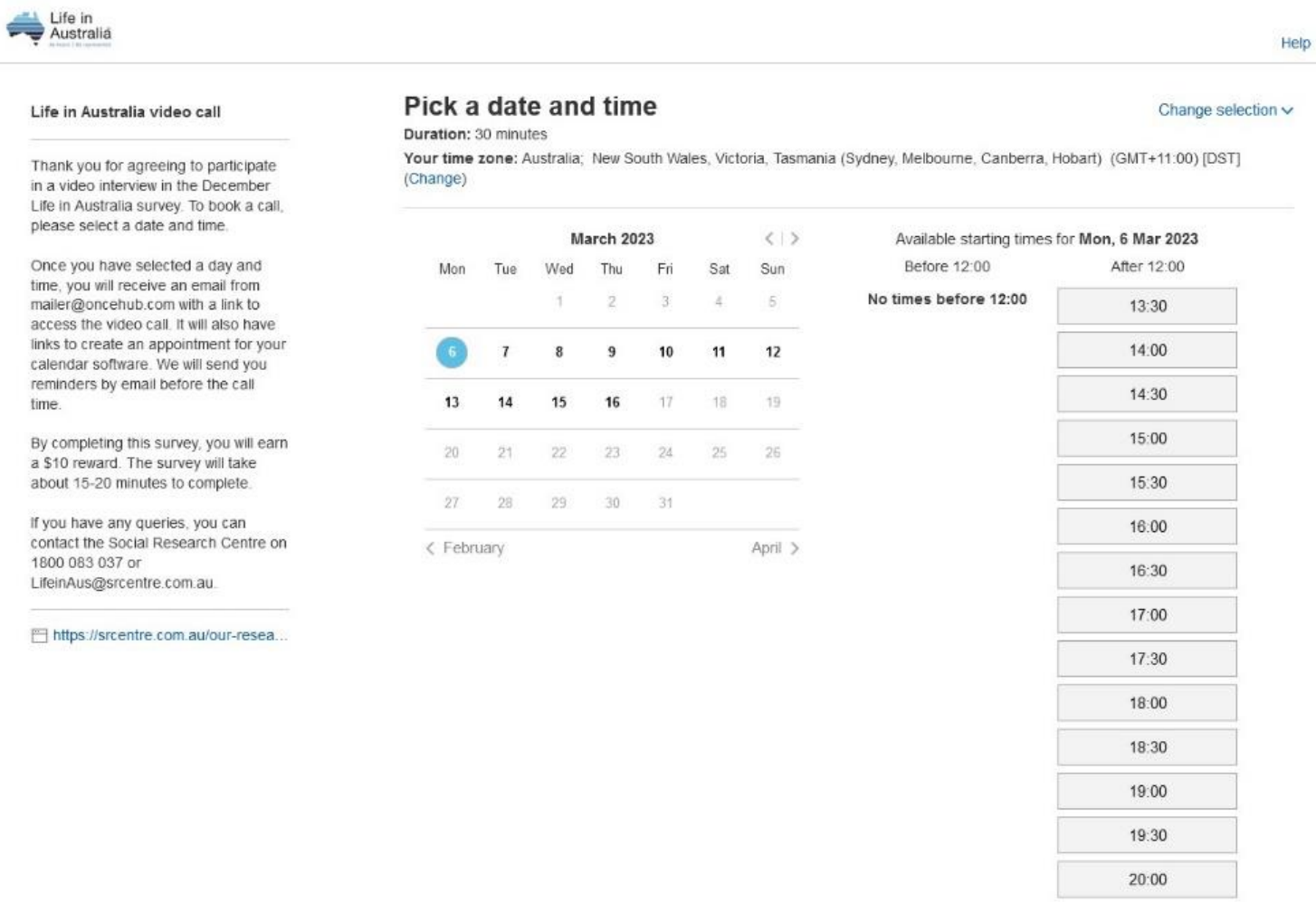
Microsoft Teams

Used as VALI platform by the ABS, already in use at the Social Research Centre, platform agnostic, and no additional license fees

CAI software

UNICOM Intelligence (formerly known as SPSS Dimensions) used because it was our standard CATI/CAWI software

OnceHub landing pages

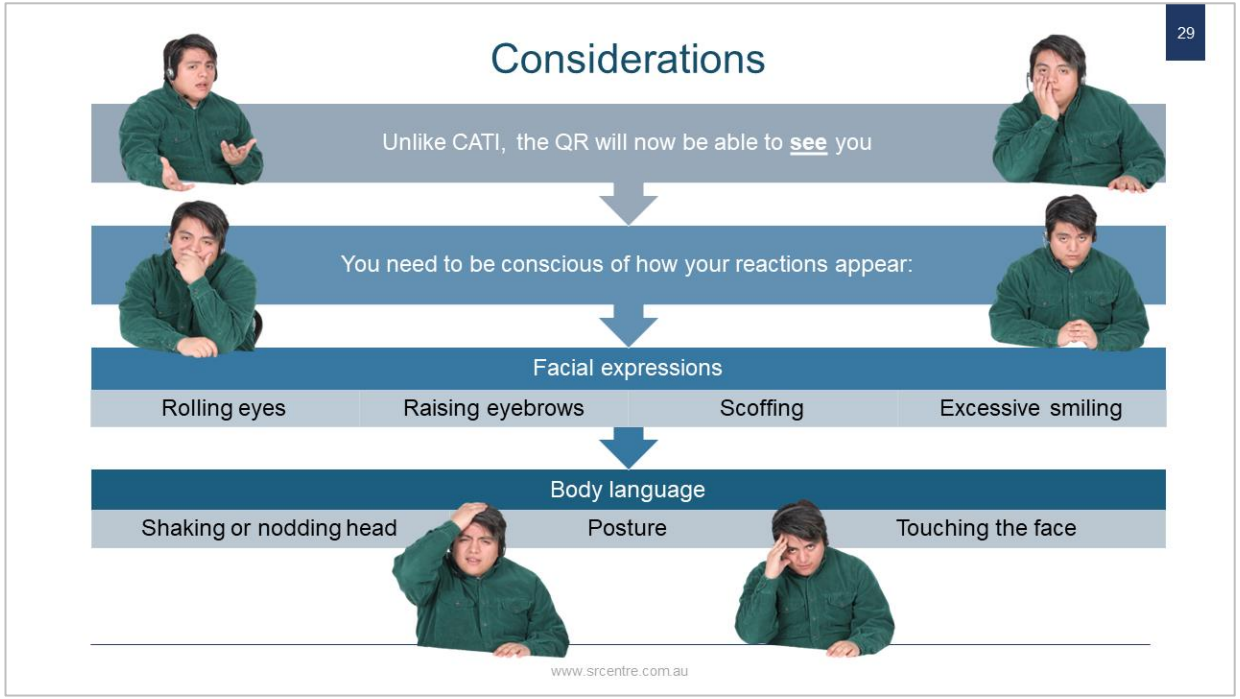


Interviewers

CATI interviewers chosen for being top performers and tech literate

Received one day's training on VALI

- Interviewer dress instructions ("Neat and tidy presentation – office attire")
- Reminders about the visual context of VALI



Field management

Sample released in replicates to avoid overwhelming favored appointment times

Most people invited responded within 24 hours of receiving the email invitation

Each email send would book out calendars for the next few days; sent Wednesdays and Fridays

Up to three parallel appointments were open

Demand from daytime appointments was unexpectedly high, led to reconfiguring of shifts to have three daytime and two evening calendars

For final week of fieldwork, switched to reminder calls

Reminder calls to make appointments worked well for filling up the calendar, but appointments made through reminder calls were more likely to “no show”

Reminders made 24 hours after no-shows took a short amount of time to complete and complemented the VALI appointments well

Interviewers briefed on CATI surveys fielded in parallel; needed to stop dialing 10–15 minutes early so as not to be stuck in interview and unable to join VALI appointment

Interviewer set-up

About half the interviews took place from our offices

- Ease of supervision, troubleshooting
- Aim to reduce issues with interviewer computer set-up, internet access

At home, interviewers required to have two screens + min 720p resolution camera

Two monitor set-up

- CATI interface on monitor with camera to maintain perceived eye contact
- Teams and show cards on other monitor

Standardised background image showing panel logo (vs. blurred or no image)

Major breakthrough was the discovery that the mouse scroll wheel could be used to navigate slides, keeping the keyboard for navigating CATI software

Show cards

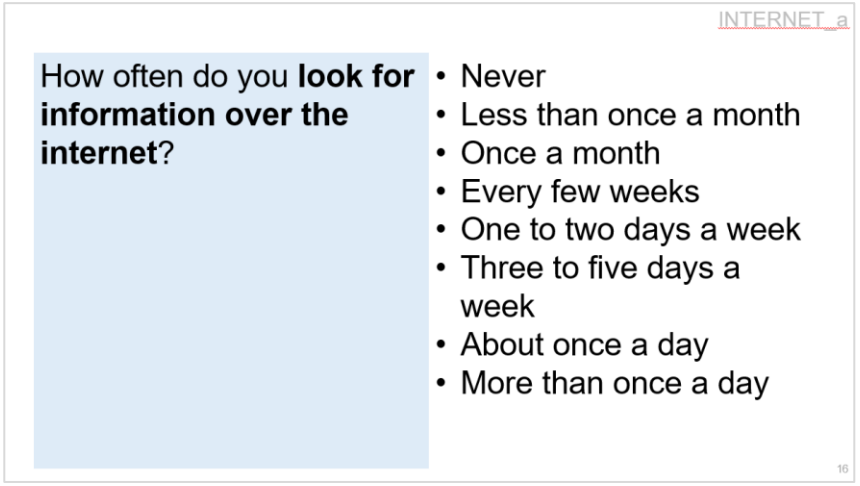
Show cards in black and white to maximize contrast

Initially used a mix of show cards and no cards but found to be difficult to manage in pilot interviews

Used blank cards for use with questions with simple (e.g., yes/no) response options)

For items with long or complex stems, stem shown on light colored background

Interviewers found repeat show cards with stems tricky to navigate



Length of interview

Mode / arm	Total (minutes)	Common sections (minutes)
VALI — Life in Australia™	21.1	10.9
CATI — Life in Australia™	16.4	14.4
CATI — RDD (high and low effort arms combined)	18.3	16.5
Online — Life in Australia™	9.7	9.3
Online — SMS push-to-web	11.6	11.2
Online — nonprobability (combined)	7.4	7.1

Qualitative Debrief: Interviewers

4/4 Interviewers positive about the VALI trial

All 4 Interviewers would be happy to continue VALI in addition to their CATI workload

All 4 interviewers positive regarding training, indicating enough to hit the ground running

Tech overall worked well – most tech issues at start of call. Good processes

3/4 interviewers recalled doing at least 50 VALI interviews. One interviewer 100-150

Interviewers felt most respondents comfortable during the interview (2/4 felt more comfortable than CATI)

3/4 VALI Interviewers worked on Life in Australia™ prior to the VALI trial

All 4 interviewers reported prompt card process worked well (for both respondents and interviewers) – including on mobile devices

Interviewers did not experience any distressed respondents – no support needed to be offered

Interviewers reflected VALI more tiring to deliver than CATI due to visual aspect

Interviewers felt respondents enjoyed the experience – but still prefer Web – primarily due to the convenience

2/4 VALI Interviewers also conducted CATI interviews during the VALI trial as time permitted

Interviewers reported no privacy concerns from respondents – respondents turned their camera off if they wanted

Interviewers debriefed with reported no abandoned interviews

Interviewers acknowledged opportunity VALI offers to build rapport with respondents

Qualitative Debrief: Respondents

15/19 Respondents indicated Web as their mode preference, stating convenience as the most important factor

8/19 respondents recalled their VALI interview as a positive experience

19/19 respondents were positive about the booking process

10/19 felt the interviewer was sensitive to their needs

16/19 reported respondents reported no technical issues with their interview

18/19 respondents recalled the interviewer was visible to them throughout the entire VALI interview

15/19 respondents were at home for their interview

11/19 respondents felt the interviewer maintained rapport during the interview

2/19 reported technical issues, but only at the start and the VALI interview was completed

1/19 VALI interview was abandoned due to technical issues

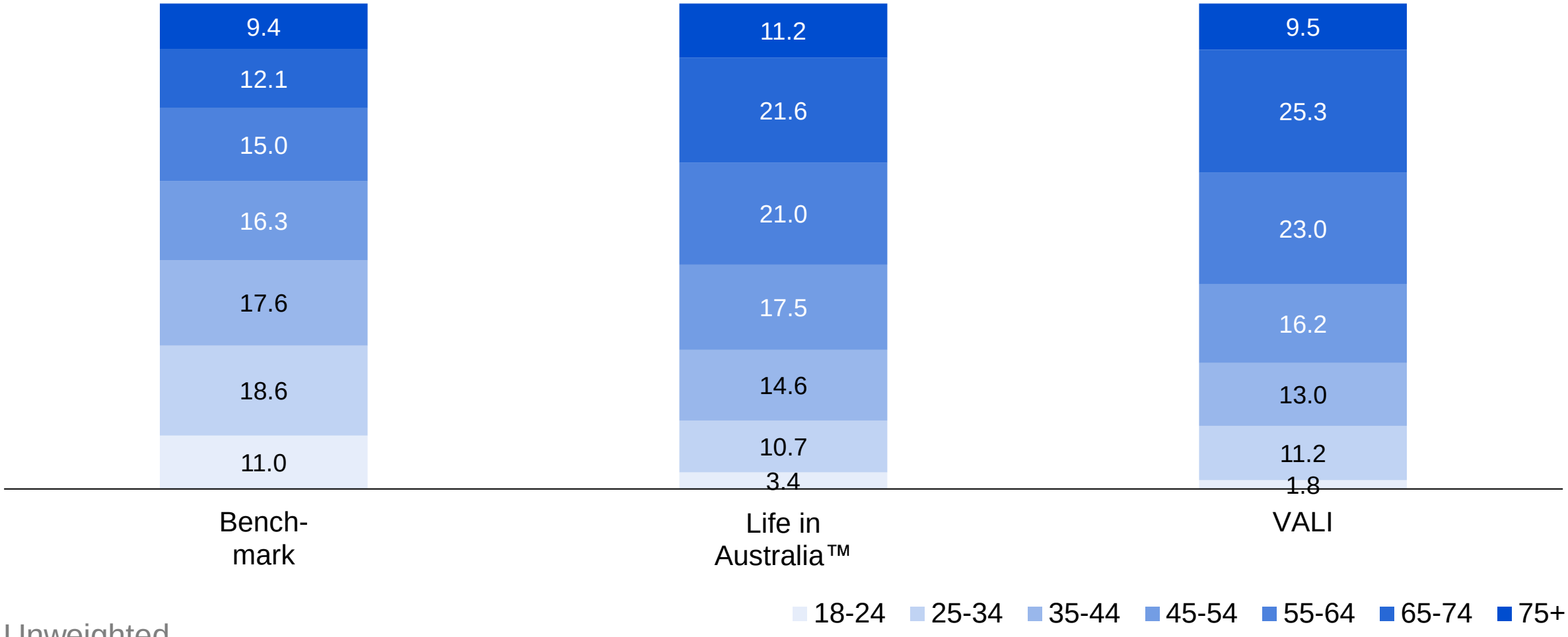
12/19 respondents used a laptop for the VALI interview

13/19 respondents did not use a headset

5/19 respondents recalled flash cards shared during the VALI interview

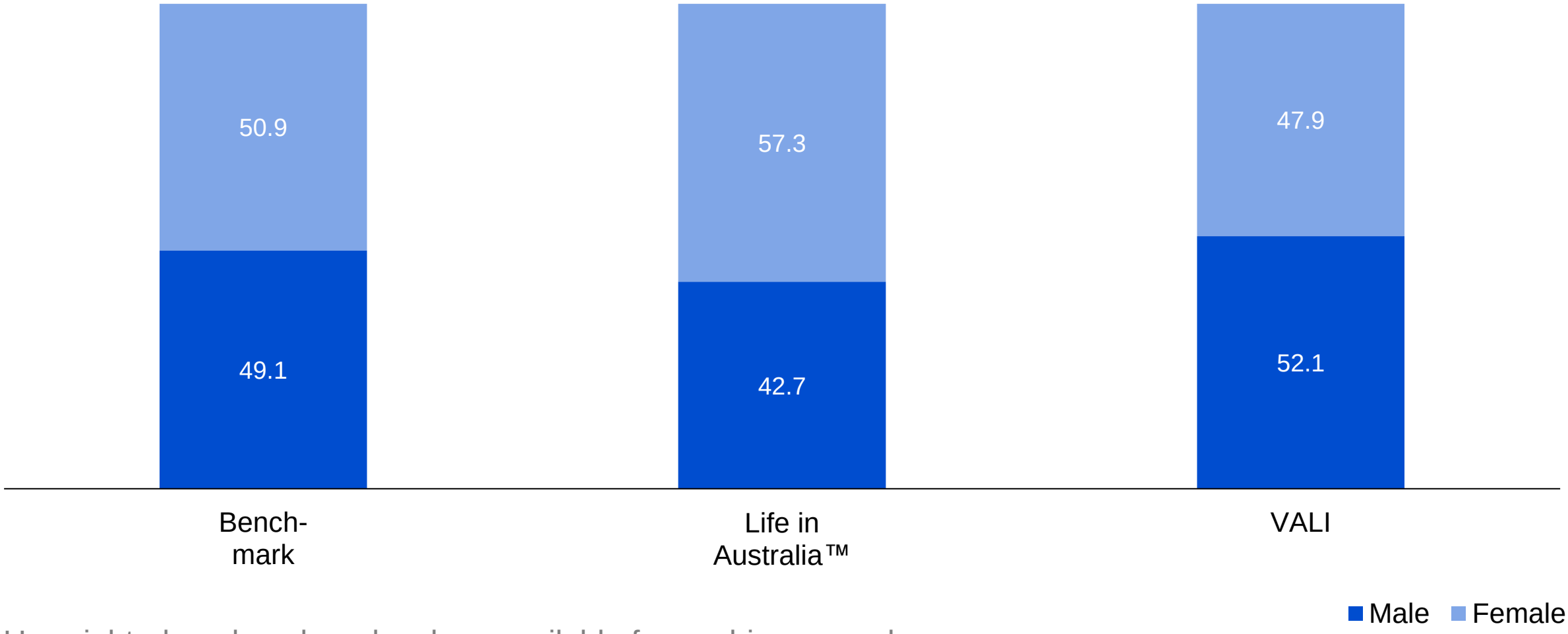
Demographics

Age



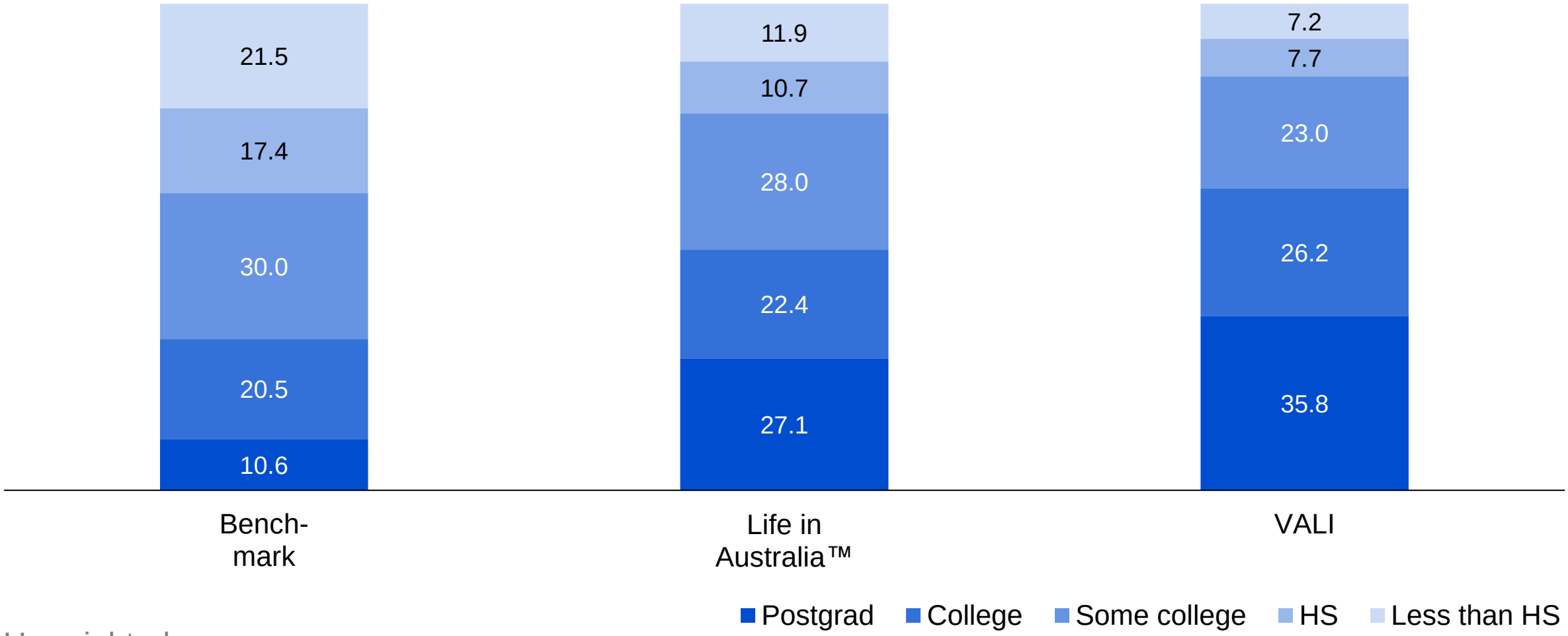
Unweighted

Gender



Unweighted; no benchmark values available for nonbinary gender

Education



Unweighted

Bias

Bias assessment variables

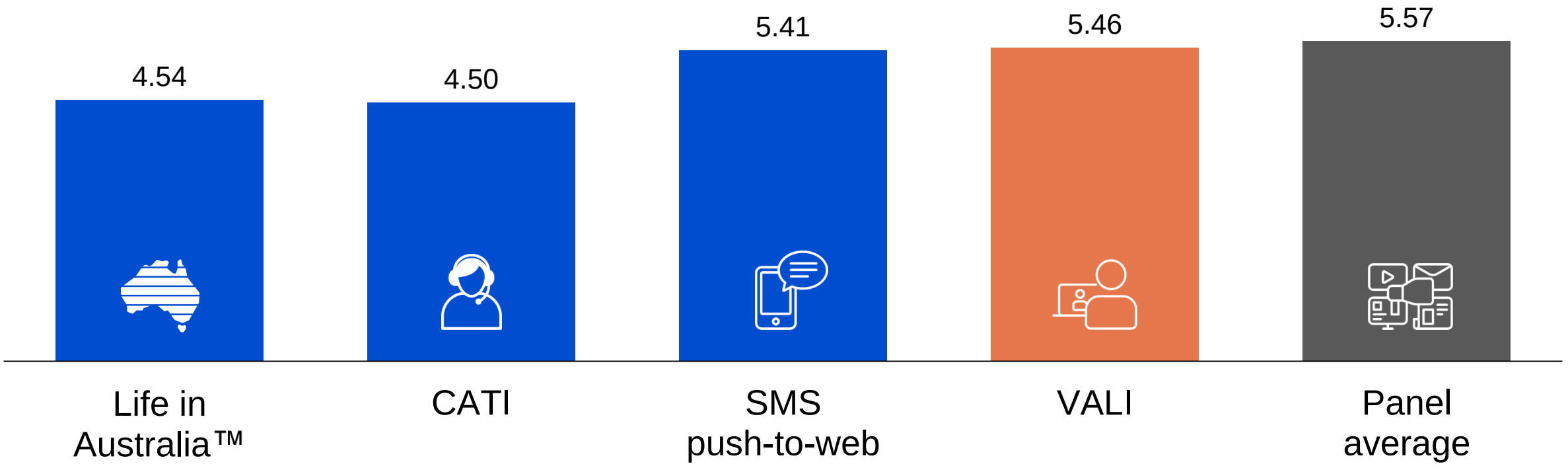
Non-weighting demographics

Received old age pension last FY
Country of birth
HH income
Number of children in HH
Labour force status
Marital status

Substantive measures

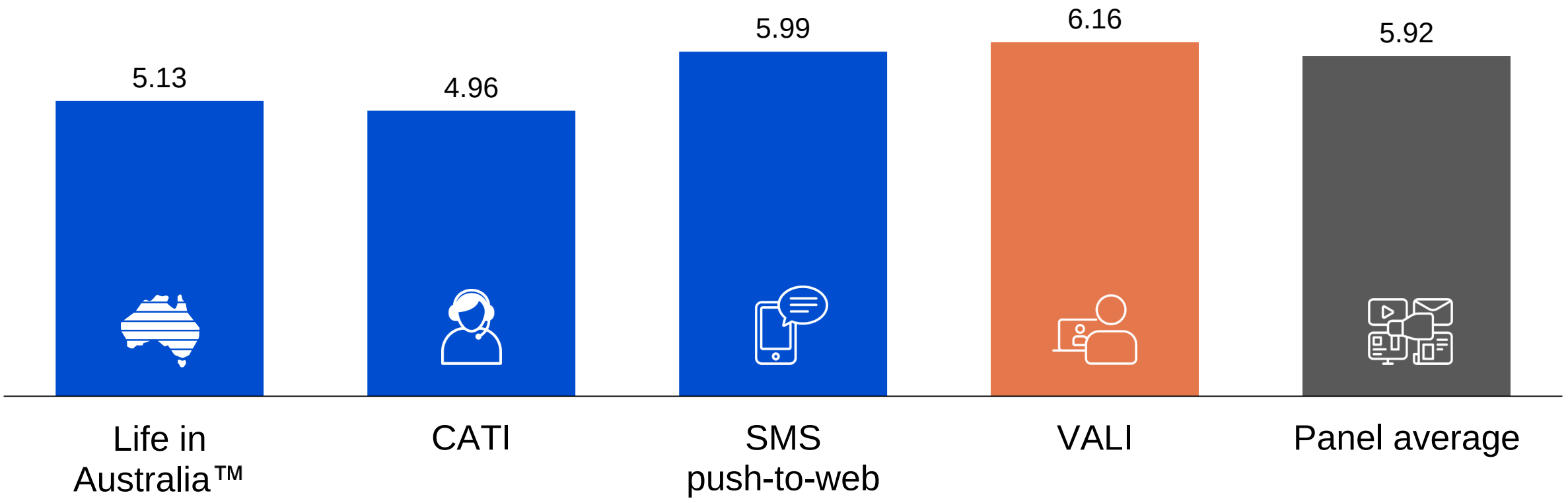
Alcohol frequency
Daily smoker
Experienced discrimination last 12 months
Feels rushed or pressed for time
General trust
Health status (SF-12)
Life satisfaction
No long-term health condition
Psychological distress (Kessler 6)
Support for multiculturalism
Physical activity
Provides unpaid care
Vote choice in last federal election

Bias: all (non-weighting demographics + substantive)



Weighted

RMSE: all



Weighted

Conclusions

Summary

High degree of nonresponse error due to multiple layers of nonresponse

- Even more highly educated than the panel from which it was drawn

But some errors did offset

- Closer to gender benchmark than Life in Australia™

Future application

- Set up and logistics are relatively easy
- Potential to extend calendar application beyond video interviewing
- Respondents prefer web mode

Limitations

- No face-to-face arm to compare to it
- CATI interviewers and online panellists
- Short survey length not typical of face to face surveys

Thank you

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