

# MEDIA RELEASE

26 September 2026



## Tasmanians oppose AI data centres two to one, Liberal voters the only group in favour

More than half of Tasmanians oppose the development of AI data centres in the state, according to new research from Enterprise Marketing and Research Services, with opposition deeply divided along voting, gender and age lines. Liberal voters are the only group in net support, while women and younger Tasmanians are among the most strongly opposed.

The survey of 517 Tasmanians found 54 per cent oppose data centre development at some level, including 32 per cent who are strongly opposed. Just 25 per cent support the developments, with only 7 per cent strongly in favour, while 17 per cent are neutral.

### SUPPORT / OPPOSE AI DATA CENTRES IN TASMANIA

|                            |                             |                       |                             |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>54%</b><br>TOTAL OPPOSE | <b>32%</b><br>STRONG OPPOSE | <b>17%</b><br>NEUTRAL | <b>25%</b><br>TOTAL SUPPORT | <b>7%</b><br>STRONG SUPPORT |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|

*"To what extent do you support or oppose the development of AI data centres in Tasmania?" — EMRS, September 2026 (n=517)*

### NET SUPPORT BY STATE VOTING INTENTION

|                         |                            |                       |                             |                        |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>+34.8</b><br>LIBERAL | <b>-19.6</b><br>ONE NATION | <b>-43.8</b><br>LABOR | <b>-47.5</b><br>INDEPENDENT | <b>-70.6</b><br>GREENS |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|

*Net support (per cent support minus per cent oppose) by state primary vote — EMRS, September 2026*

**BY VOTING INTENTION:** Liberal voters were the only group to back data centres, with 54.8 per cent in support and 20.0 per cent opposed. Every other voting group was net opposed: One Nation voters (31.6 per cent support, 51.2 per cent oppose), undecided voters (-20.8), Labor voters (15.2 per cent support, 59.0 per cent oppose), Independent voters (-47.5) and Greens voters, where more than four in five (81.7 per cent) were opposed.

**BY GENDER:** Men were more likely than women to support data centres (35 per cent), but were still net opposed at -10.5. Among women, 61 per cent were opposed, including 39 per cent strongly opposed, for a net rating of -46.1.

**BY AGE:** Tasmanians aged 18 to 34 were more likely to oppose the developments, with 71 per cent opposed and almost half (49 per cent) strongly opposed.

EMRS Managing Director Brad Stansfield said the results showed the proponents of data centres had a significant job ahead of them to win over the Tasmanian community.

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*“This is an emphatic result. Only one in four Tasmanians support AI data centres, and fewer than one in ten strongly support them. Whatever the economic case for these projects, it has not yet been won with the broader community,” Mr Stansfield said.*

*“The partisan divide is the most striking finding. Liberal voters are firmly in favour, in line with the Government’s strong backing of these projects, while every other voting group is opposed, including One Nation voters.*

*“The gender and age gaps are also significant. Women and younger Tasmanians are considerably more sceptical than men, and that will need to be addressed by anyone hoping to shift public opinion.”*

**AWARENESS, DRAWBACKS AND BENEFITS:** Awareness of the proposals is very high, with 92 per cent of Tasmanians having heard at least a little about them. However, those who felt most informed were more likely to be strongly opposed (43 per cent) and to believe the developments would bring no benefits (45 per cent).

Two-thirds (67 per cent) of Tasmanians believe data centres will have drawbacks or negative impacts, with energy use (41 per cent) and water use (23 per cent) the leading concerns. Only one in three (33 per cent) expect benefits, with those respondents citing increased state revenue and economic growth (35 per cent), employment opportunities (28 per cent) and local technology infrastructure (24 per cent).

*“It is notable that the Tasmanians who feel most informed about these proposals are the most opposed, and that energy use tops the list of concerns. That suggests the public debate and coverage to date has played a significant role in shaping views,” Mr Stansfield said.*

**AI USE MORE BROADLY:** Just under half of Tasmanians (47 per cent) consciously use AI in their day-to-day lives, and 26 per cent use it at work. ChatGPT is the most used tool (41 per cent of AI users), followed by Microsoft Copilot (21 per cent) and Gemini (15 per cent). Views of AI more broadly are cautious: 51 per cent say it poses both opportunities and risks and we need to proceed with caution, 28 per cent are very worried about what it means for the future, and just 5 per cent see it as an exciting development offering amazing opportunities. Asked to describe AI in one word, the most common responses were “dangerous”, “helpful” and “scary” (8 per cent each).

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*The survey was conducted online via the EMRS panel in September 2026 and saw 517 Tasmanians aged 18 and over participate. Results were weighted by gender, age, region and education. The maximum margin of error for this survey is  $\pm 4.31$  per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level; sub-samples are subject to larger margins of error. The survey was implemented according to ISO 20252:2019 standards, certificate number 888027.*