

Project ID No.	CP 173 / 3 / 1 / 3
GOAL	4 SUB-PROGRAM

## Effective Networking Communities of Practice

Action plans must be submitted online to [www.reframingthefuture.net](http://www.reframingthefuture.net) by COB Tuesday 20 June 2006.

Please refer to 'How to submit an action plan online' in the Reframing the Future handout or on the website.

All sections must be completed.

Please note: sections 1 – 9 of this document will be uploaded onto the Reframing the Future website. Details of participants in item 11 will be only be used in accordance with our privacy policy and will not be published on the website.

### Name of organisation funded by Reframing the Future

Charles Darwin University
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### 1. Convenor's details

Name: Alicia Boyle		
Position: Education Coordinator		
Organisation: Desert Knowledge CRC		
Address: PO Box U 27 Charles Darwin University		
City/Suburb: Darwin	Postcode: 0815	
Ph: 08 8946 7267	Fax: 08 8946 6852	Mobile: 0408 175 832
Email: <a href="mailto:Alicia.boyle@cdu.edu.au">Alicia.boyle@cdu.edu.au</a>		

### 2. Facilitators' details

Name: Paul Fitzsimons		
Address: PO Box 795		
City/Suburb: Alice Springs	Postcode: 0871	
Ph: 08 8959 5400	Fax: 08 89529856	Mobile: 0427 792 528
Email: <a href="mailto:Paul.fitzsimons@cdu.edu.au">Paul.fitzsimons@cdu.edu.au</a>		

### 3. Project overview (100 words maximum)

The Central Australian Education and Training Providers Project will establish a Community of Practice across Central Australia to develop ways of working both within and between providers that aim to improve outcomes for stakeholders with an interest in Indigenous education. The aim of the project is to build on and exchange knowledge so as to develop members' capabilities to ensure provision of Indigenous demand-responsive education and training whilst operating within new commonwealth governance arrangements including Indigenous Coordination Centres, Shared Responsibility Agreements, and with regard to changes to the Community Development Employment Program, Remote Area Exemptions and the Job Network.

### 4. Domain of knowledge

The core members of the Community are Registered Training Providers (RTOs) and are committed to the continuous improvement of their service delivery. In their continuing desire for 'Indigenous economic independence', new commonwealth and territory initiatives (under their Indigenous Economic Development Strategies), will impact on the way education and training business is negotiated in remote areas, with an increase in demand, rather than supply driven responses required.

The Central Australian Education and Training Providers Community of Practice will explore opportunities for learning about improving and innovating service delivery by looking both within and between provider members for new ways of doing such things as:

- managing and administering service delivery for such things as reduced duplication of service delivery, staff recruitment, professional development and retention;
- providing improved pathways for completing qualifications, including higher level qualifications and across provider opportunities;
- investigating alternative strategies for learning and assessment in remote locations considering such things as literacy and numeracy levels, distance, student numbers, attendance, community support capacity – physical and human;
- collaboration with Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICCs);
- collaboration with Indigenous communities through their journey of developing Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRAs);
- developing partnerships with Job Network providers; and,
- collaboration with industries offering livelihood opportunities in Indigenous communities.

These aims accord with a number of Quality Standards (ANTA 2005) for Registered Training Organisations, in particular AQTF Standards:

4. Effective administration and records management procedures
5. Recognition of qualifications issued by other RTOs
6. Access and equity and client service
7. The competence of RTO staff
8. RTO assessments
9. Learning and assessment strategies

A Central Australian Education and Providers Network has been operating intermittently for twelve years although, without consistent champions/community has been difficult to sustain. With recent key remote coordination appointments at both Charles Darwin University (CDU) and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), together with the introduction of ICCs and the negotiation of SRAs by the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC) within the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FCSIA), and the changes to operation of Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) and associated Indigenous services offered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), there is a critical need to identify and develop new, sustainable collaborative arrangements and strategic partnerships for the effective implementation of the national training system for Indigenous people in Central Australia.

*In a joint statement on the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August between CDU and BIITE, Professor Garnett (Vice Chancellor CDU) and Mr Ingram (Acting Director BIITE), said the Memorandum has four main objectives:*

- *Collaboration between the Territory's two tertiary education providers;*
- *Service delivery designed to achieve optimal tertiary education outcomes for Indigenous people;*
- *The development, modelling and sharing of best practice in teaching and learning across higher education and vocational education and training;*
- *Research on Indigenous matters.*

The knowledge shared and practices developed within the Community of Practice have the potential for identifying opportunities for the development of new MOUs/formal partnership arrangements between member organisations.

However, as action learning principles apply within the Community, it will be the Community itself that determines the specific outcomes, and how and when these will be achieved.

## 5. Facilitating your community of practice

Although this is certainly not expected to be linear, the Community has certainly progressed through the potential stage and is setting out in the coalescing stage of its development.

1. Potential stage – finding each other, discovering commonalities
  - An initial meeting was called gain interest in reinvigorating the CAETP Network and its primary intentions confirmed by those in attendance
  - A second meeting was held to define the broad parameters of the domain and to identify key engaging issues
  - Individual and organisational outcomes from participation were identified
  - Initial actions were identified
  - Potential new members were identified
  - Community members were connected
  
2. Coalescing stage – exploring connectedness, defining joint enterprise, negotiating community
  - The Community will be launched on decision of final name and potentially a visual identity
  - Information and communication webspace will be finalised and launched
  - Ongoing Community events will be identified – locations, key content and guests
  - Monthly meetings held, including some videoconference beyond the desert
  - Prioritisation of key issues and identifying those Community members with interest in their further development
  - Identification, consultation, negotiation and commitment to case study sites confirmed
  - Important documents identified and/or developed and shared
  
3. Active/Maturing stage – engaging in joint activities, creating artefacts, adapting to changing circumstances, renewing interest, commitment and relationships
  - Ongoing identification of gaps in knowledge and actively seeking information to address these
  - The value and role of the Community and its access to government and non-government agencies and Indigenous communities will be promoted
  - Issues and actions of the Community will be continually reviewed
  - Case study sites activated, monitored and evaluated
  - Ongoing documentation of experiences shared
  - Continued monitoring of the external environment and the need to adapt activities and/or approach
  - Development of new resources to meet the needs of the Community
  - Showcasing the Community and its activities in appropriate public forums
  
4. Dispersed stage – staying in touch, communicating, holding reunions, calling for advice
  - Maintenance of the information and communication webspace
  - Ongoing meetings
  - Expansion of the case study sites in desert Australia
  - Identifying new collaborative projects
  - Continued showcasing of the Community and its activities
  
5. Memorable stage – telling stories, collecting artefacts, preserving memorabilia
  - Archiving of all Community documents for future access and to provide a base for new initiatives

## 6. Structuring your community

The development of the three components of our Community will be supported in the following ways:

### **Domain of Knowledge – creation of common ground and a sense of common knowledge within the Community**

The common ground and sense of identity for the CAETP Community is the knowledge of and passion for client focussed, demand-driven vocational education and training for Indigenous people in Central Australia. This passion extends to the need to employ education and training for improved Indigenous health and well-being, livelihood opportunities and community development aligned with both individual and community aspirations. The CAETP Community of Practice will provide an opportunity for people with common interests to talk together, explore opportunities for working together and to explore potential partnerships with Indigenous learners, Indigenous community leaders, industry employers and Territory and Commonwealth government agencies within the new regimes governing the coordination of services to support Indigenous people in their chosen development pathways. The Community of Practice will provide a framework of support for members as they unpack and repack ideas that work towards providing consistent, high quality, culturally appropriate delivery and assessment of demand-driven education and training services.

### **Community – creation of the social fabric of learning, where interaction is fostered and relationships are built on mutual respect and trust**

The foundations for mutual respect, trust and dependency within this Community have been built over many years – such is the nature of living and working in remote areas. More recently, a commitment of members at a meeting in Alice Springs has confirmed the need to investigate new opportunities within the ever-changing governing environments – the potential for the Community of Practice has been realised. Organisations already committed to this Community (by acceptance to attend a meeting already held in Alice Springs to establish its need) include CDU, BIITE, Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT), Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC), Central Australian Remote Health Development Services (CARHDS), Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD), Waltja, Group Training NT, NT DEET Education and Training and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. (Verbal and email support for the budgeted in-kind contributions has been received from those in attendance). Discussions with a number of additional members is ongoing.

Although the geographical boundaries of the education and training services provided by members are vast, the majority of members are based in Alice Springs. The existence of the Community does however provide an opportunity for members servicing remote areas in the Top End of the Northern Territory to learn and share knowledge with their southern counterparts. To this end, key remote education coordination representatives from CDU (Katherine Campus) and BIITE (Batchelor Campus) will join the Community.

Monthly workshops at rotating member venues will be held to learn from past experiences, review current initiatives and development innovative approaches for the future. Guest speakers that can inform this development will be invited to share their knowledge with members during these workshops.

Given the mobility of members throughout Central Australia there is a need to host a central repository of information that can be accessed by the Community at any time. The Community will build a web-based repository and alternative communication space within the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre (DK-CRC) website ([www.desertknowledge.com.au/crc](http://www.desertknowledge.com.au/crc)) to assist with information access.

### **Practice – a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories and documents that Community members share**

The practice of the CAETP members will be decided as the Community moves through its various growth stages. The potential for this Community has been clearly established and its operational framework will be considered during the coalescing stage. This will potentially include such things as:

- Timing and location of monthly workshops
- Guest speakers
- Workshop recording requirements
- Webspace development requirements
- Information management – location, access etc
- Evaluation – content, timing and reporting
- Guidelines for best practice management and administration of Indigenous demand-driven service delivery
- Capturing the Indigenous voice in demand-driven education and training service delivery
- Innovative strategies for learning and assessment in remote locations

- Pathways framework for competency to qualification – including cross-provider opportunities
- Pathways framework for education and training to work
- Collaborative opportunities identified and defined with ICCs, Job Networks and Central Australian industries

**7. Anticipated outcomes** (see Chapters 6-7 of *The Potential*)

Please describe the outcomes anticipated as a result of your project:

<p>for participating individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge about their own and other provider strategies, resources and good practice models</li> <li>• Increased knowledge about training needs and issues for Indigenous learners</li> <li>• Improved delivery and assessment practices</li> <li>• Improved knowledge of new DEWR initiatives</li> <li>• Identification of appropriate responses to new DEWR initiatives</li> <li>• Improved knowledge of ICCs and mechanisms of working with them</li> <li>• Development of extended networks</li> <li>• The identification of solutions to long-identified issues</li> <li>• The ability to influence change</li> </ul>
<p>for participating organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of strategies for reducing risk (human, physical and financial) associated with remote delivery</li> <li>• Identification of improved cross-provider pathways for qualification completion by Indigenous learners</li> <li>• Increased efficiencies in the delivery of education and training services</li> <li>• Improved productivity</li> <li>• Facilitation of more rapid and appropriate responses to demand-driven education and training</li> <li>• Evaluation of the potential for Communities of Practice in other areas of their organisations</li> <li>• Improved perception of their ability to address the needs of Indigenous learners and their communities</li> </ul>

**8. Evaluation**

The self-evaluation undertaken by the Community will include the following:

- A pre-project questionnaire will establish a base of information both about the participant's organisation and about their own awareness of the issues impacting on the delivery of remote education and training services for Indigenous learners.
- The Community itself - its operation, activities and outcomes. Formative evaluation surveys will be developed for members to complete at the end of each workshop. These surveys, in addition to discussion and reflection on these activities, will be compiled to develop a mid-way evaluation report and will contribute to the final summative report. Regular evaluation will provide opportunity for the facilitator to assess the need for a revised action plan. Monthly workshops will also provide a forum for verbal feedback from members on issues of importance as to the Community's operation, activities and outcomes.
- Collaboration initiatives – members, government agency and industry representatives will be asked to complete a post-project survey that will seek to identify the progress towards improved collaboration and to comment on outcomes (potential or actual) as a result of the existence of the CAETP Community of Practice.

- Written reports detailing the workshop learning and activities will contribute to evaluation of the project as the Community grows through various stages. All documented practices arising from the existence of this Community will be considered as part of the evaluation of this project.
- All evaluation documents and associated information will be located within the web-based information repository.

### 9. Project timeframe

Please list project milestones and key dates

Milestone	Key date
Project Action Plan due	20 <sup>th</sup> June
Progress Update Meeting – combined CDU project teams and CDU VET Education Managers	June
Pre-project Evaluation	June
Monthly Project Meeting	July
Project webspace active	July
Monthly Project Meeting	August
Monthly Project Meeting	September
RTF Mid Term Forum	September
Progress Update Meeting – combined CDU project teams and CDU VET Education Managers	September
Monthly Project Meeting	October
Monthly Project Meeting	November
Progress Update Meeting – combined CDU project teams and CDU VET Education Managers	November
RTF National Forum	November
Final Report	5 <sup>th</sup> December
Signed financials, acquittals and invoicing	29 <sup>th</sup> January 07