

Project ID No.	CP 232 / 5 / 1 / 07
GOAL	4 SUB-PROGRAM

Effective Networking Communities of Practice

Action plans must be submitted online to www.reframingthefuture.net by COB Tuesday 5 June 2007.

Please select "Submit a Form" on the Home Page Menu and follow the prompts.

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 Details of participants in item 11 will be only be used in accordance with our privacy policy and will not be published on the website.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

TAFE SA Adelaide South

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3. Project overview (100 words maximum)

What outcomes do you hope to achieve in your project?

This project will connect associates in education, employment and disability within a community of practice to initiate holistic solutions to improve the VET outcomes for young people with disabilities.

Through working collaboratively to examine and develop strategies to address the following issues:

- being responsive to a range of disabilities
- solutions to 'at risk' transition points
- equipping staff as effective support people and coaches
- utilising assistive technologies and information technology
- establishing networks, links and local solutions to achieve collaborative outcomes

the community of practice will facilitate broader access for young people with disabilities to opportunities for developing 'whole of life' skills, achieving higher AQF qualifications and movement onto meaningful employment.

4. Domain of knowledge

What aspects of the national training system will be addressed by your project?

(e.g. establishing relationships with industry clients; improving workplace assessment or delivery; implementing new Training Packages) (Please add rows as required)

The project addresses two of the COAG recommendations, particularly focused on responsiveness:

- Improve overall workforce participation, with a particular focus on target groups, in a manner consistent with the long-term interests of the individual and the economy, giving due regard to productivity; and
- Increase the portion of young people making a smooth transition from school to work and further study

TAFE SA is a key provider to offer training opportunities for young people with disabilities to enable and empower them to participate in life activities and employment. Currently there are a number of drivers that underpin the compliance practices of VET providers to people with disabilities as follow:

- The Disability Discrimination Act and accompanying Disability Education Standards place responsibilities on all service providers
- The AQTF 2007 underpins RTO practice with standards for clients and learners and this includes people with disabilities
- Welfare to Work is requiring greater numbers of people with disabilities to enter the work force and this demands pre-employment training as well as on the job training

This community of practice will bring together professionals with common interests and expertise to build on and expand the domain of knowledge based on the above drivers, but move beyond compliance to exemplarily practices. The expansion of the domain of knowledge underpinned by the range of VET strategies for people with disabilities will enable the community of practice to develop coherent strategies to increase the responsiveness to working with young people with disabilities and identify ways of making this information readily available to others.

5. Facilitating your community of practice

Please describe how you propose to facilitate your group progressing through the stages of growth of a Community of Practice (see Table 4.1 in the report: *The Potential for Communities of Practice to underpin the National Training Framework*):

About 55% of all students with a disability in VET left school at or before the end of Year 10, compared with 40% for all VET students. Among all the recognised equip groups in VET, people with a disability in VET, as a whole, have the lowest levels of educational achievement and employment outcomes. Developing educational and employment pathways for this cohort of students in VET is critical to enable them to gain skills and participate more actively in the economic and social life of Australia. The pathways to further education and employment of young people with disabilities after leaving school are characterised by non-linear progression and regression, with various obstacles and side tracks. However, the common goals and vision shared by different VET sectors who work with people with a disability will form the basis of progression of this community of practice through the different stages of development.

Stages of development and facilitation strategies

Potential

Invite members of the Community of Practice from TAFE SA – metropolitan and regional areas, private RTOs, school sector, government and disability employment agencies

Establish coordinators/thought leaders to form the working party to plan and create the initial design of the project

A critical consideration for members in the working party will be people who can challenge our ways of thinking and the conventional ways of working with people with a disability

First workshop

- Set the scope of the project through negotiations and brainstorming
- Use the shared vision and common goals as drivers to establish the purpose and key focus of the group
- Define shared and common goals, but allow options for different levels of participation for members
- Develop shared action plan to achieve the goals
- Explore the key drivers for organisations and RTOs to form partnerships
- Discuss how the community's worth and effectiveness might be evaluated in terms of individuals and organisations – start planning diverse tools of evaluation

Coalescing stage

Second and third workshops

- Provide a birds-eye view and critical analysis of current policies, strategies, data and progress of the work of various working groups for young people with a disability
- Identify ways of gathering information and roles and responsibilities of members
- Build trust and open communication process to motivate members to explore issues experienced by students with a disability and generate ideas to deal with the issues
- Recognise and develop implementation strategies of champion ideas to solve problems
- Drive knowledge management strategies through setting up of repository of knowledge for people with a disability to be shared with wider disability network
- Document outcomes and minutes
- Assist in maintenance of focus

Mature stage

4th workshops and beyond

- Address key challenges through various workshops by inviting guest speakers and dissemination of good practices
- Drive the implementation of practice developed through the community
- Members to identify one area of change that they can do for young people with a disability, eg assistive technology and facilitate members who have common interest to form partnership
- Allow time for members to share their experience on their actions and outcomes
- Build up of case studies with focus on innovation and new ways of achieving outcomes for people with a disability
- Encourage networks and associates outside the community of practice formal meetings where relationships are established in between workshops
- Identify gaps of knowledge and ways of meeting needs
- Evaluate outcomes

6. Structuring your community

Please describe how you propose to support the development of the three components of your community: its domain of knowledge, community and practice (see *Effectively Structuring Communities of Practice in VET*):

Community of Practice	Strategies to Support
Domain of knowledge	<p>Members have been involved actively in one of the following working groups for people with a disability transition to employment and further education</p> <p>Acknowledge the common ground in policies, strategies and progress of a number of groups, eg:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social Inclusion Board 2. HEROC 3. Client and Student Voice Action Group – Disability 4. SACOSS: Educators and Trainers Forum 5. Helping Young People stay in Education – Enhancing Youth Pathways 6. Business Services, Bedford and TAFESA Vocational Education and E-Learning Pilot 7. DECS: State Disability Transition Program <p>First workshop will focus on defining Domain of Knowledge and engaging issues from the above wealth of knowledge and information</p> <p>Use of existing networks and previously established links to support communication, dialogues and identify challenges of different sectors</p> <p>Use of domain of knowledge and engaging issues to drive common vision and goals relevant to each sector</p> <p>Develop ownership of the defined Domain of Knowledge</p> <p>Discuss effective strategies of managing the Domain of Knowledge</p> <p>Identify new ways of collaboration across sectors to enable transition, ie to drive outcomes, based on the framework of domain of knowledge</p>
Community	<p>Focus on common issues, challenges and directions</p> <p>Promote of communication and sharing of individuals' experience, ideas and knowledge as the basis of learning of the community</p> <p>Foster sectoral relationship across TAFE, Government and disability employment agencies and private RTOs</p> <p>Develop trust and encourage members' challenging silos approach and traditional ways of practice</p> <p>Participate in activities that promote interaction</p> <p>Establish reflective practices</p> <p>Provide convenor's and facilitator's services throughout the project</p>
Practices	<p>Encourage members to utilise one area of domain of knowledge to drive change for people with disabilities</p> <p>Establish real hands-on collaboration across sectors</p>

	<p>Sharing of good practices and adaptation of good practices as regular features in workshops and outside workshop communication</p> <p>Contribute experiences and resources using assistive technology for people with a disability</p> <p>Invite experts to give critical analysis of current situation and present on topics that can challenge our traditional ways of working</p> <p>Develop agreed measurable outcomes of the community, eg innovative ways of collaboration and achieving transition for people with a disability as the core value of the practice</p>
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7. Anticipated outcomes (see Chapters 6-7 of *The Potential*)

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

for participating individuals	Participants will gain a working knowledge of issues surrounding young people with disabilities in the transition from school to post school options and be empowered to implement solutions within their direct areas
for participating organisations	Improve overall workforce participation, with a particular focus on target equity groups, in a manner consistent with long-term interest of the individual and the economy, giving due regard to productivity and an increase in the portion of young people with disabilities making a smooth transition from school to work and further study

8. Promotion

Please outline how your project's processes and products will be promoted:

within your organisation(s)	Phone calls to targeted participants inviting them to be part of project forums. Follow up with letters of invitation outlining key points of project, define participants role and required time commitment
to industry and other relevant organisations	Phone calls to targeted participants inviting them to be part of project forums. Follow up with letters of invitation outlining key points of project, define participants role and required time commitment
to the broader VET sector	Phone calls to targeted participants inviting them to be part of project forums. Follow up with letters of invitation outlining key points of project, define participants role and required time commitment

9. Evaluation

Please provide an outline of the methods you will use to evaluate the participants' learning and your project's efficiency and effectiveness.

A range of processes will be adopted to evaluate this project, including:

- At the start of the project a needs assessment will be used to find out peoples needs, wants, preferences or a combination of these

The essential elements of the needs assessment will include:

- A planned questionnaire to commence the project
- Noting of discrepancies between stated and desired outcomes of the group
- Identifying priorities members may have and checking them with the group

The Facilitator will:

- Reconcile the groups needs against the requirements of the project for the Mid-term and final reports against the action plan – meeting objectives and project timelines
- Provide opportunities for critical reflection on both inputs/outputs and processes built into the project and the evaluation
- Encourage team members to self evaluate and reflect on professional and personal development through reflective activities and surveys

Questions to be addressed:-

Has the project enabled innovative and effective networking between different organisations in relation to improving:-

- Opportunities and pathways for young people with disabilities?
- Strategies identified for awareness raising of the issues
- Key indicators of an effective network been identified and agreed upon by the participants and a sustainable network established?

10. Project timeframe

Please list project milestones and key dates

(Please add rows as required)

Milestone	Key date
First Forum – Potential Stage	26 June 2007
Forum Two – Coalescing Stage	8 August 2007
Reframing the Future – Mid Term Reporting Forum	Mid September
Forum Three – Coalescing Stage	5 October 2007
Forum Four – Mature Stage	2 November 2007
Project Final Report	27 November 2007