

Project ID No.	CP 29 / 7 / 1 / 07
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 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 Details of participants in item 11 will be only be used in accordance with our privacy policy and will not be published on the website.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

Gippsland Regional Council of Adult Community & Further Education
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### 1. Convenor's details

Name:	Walter Aich		
Position:	Regional Director		
Organisation:	ACFE Gippsland		
Address:	PO Box 923		
City/Suburb:	Moe Victoria	Postcode:	3825
Ph:	03 5127 6000	Fax:	03 5127 8715
		Mobile:	
Email:	aich.walter.s@edumail.vic.gov.au		

### 2. Facilitators' details

Name:	Janine Pickersgill		
Address:	PO Box 923		
City/Suburb:	Moe Victoria	Postcode:	3825
Ph:	03 5127 6000	Fax:	03 5127 8715
		Mobile:	
Email:	pickersgill.janine.j@edumail.vic.gov.au		

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

*What outcomes do you hope to achieve in your project?*

Through the development of a Community of Practice (COP), bring together stakeholders with a common interest in provision of quality Vocational Education and Training. The aim is to offer accredited training opportunities in isolated communities via partnerships between RTO's and smaller non-accredited ACE Providers.

The COP will give ACE Providers the opportunity to develop partnerships and give the capacity to undertake action research and address issues that include:

- Delivery of quality training and assessment in isolated/disadvantaged communities
- Appropriate choice of training package and blended delivery methods to suit the needs of the learners within isolated communities
- Professional Development in the pathway opportunities for VET learners
- Identification of barriers involved with shared delivery and availability of resources
- Improve human capital in VET by addressing barriers for ACE organisations and staff to respond to the needs of communities

**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)*

Stakeholders involved in the COP will bring to the table; knowledge of a broad range of national training packages, an understanding of AQTF requirements, experience in collaborative arrangements in the provision of VET, knowledge of blended delivery options and a knowledge of needs within isolated communities.

Delivery of VET programs to people in small and/or socially or geographically isolated communities will increase opportunities by:

- Enhancing human capital in a range of groups including Youth, Mature Aged Learners, Koories, and People with Disabilities
- Creation of partnerships between RTO's and those ACE organisations offering non-accredited training will promote a collaborative approach to delivery of VET in regional districts
- Offering learners within regional communities choice and pathways in education and employment
- Exploring opportunities of RPL from non-accredited training to VET programs
- COP providing strategies to overcome barriers in VET provision to suit the training needs of people in isolated communities
- Through a collaborative approach support staff involved in working with learners in isolated communities.

### 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*):

Potential Stage	Coalescing Stage	Maturing Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of potential participants</li> <li>• Discussions with potential stakeholders</li> <li>• Support for COP to be offered in conjunction with ACFE Gippsland Regional Council 2007 Project</li> <li>• Building a case for COP</li> <li>• Aim and purpose of COP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of information on the COP to potential participants</li> <li>• “Launch event” of one day professional development giving an overview of the purpose of the COP</li> <li>• Call for expression of interest from participants at launch event</li> <li>• Request identification of other key personnel to be invited to participate</li> <li>• Meeting of core group of interested parties to set initial objectives and guidelines for COP</li> <li>• Develop a communication strategy to meet needs of all members particularly for those based in isolated communities</li> <li>• Schedule group meetings in neutral venues ensuring environment is conducive to members feeling comfortable to share ideas and express concerns</li> <li>• Develop sense of community for participants to be supportive of each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate a series of workshops and forums to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establish the educational needs of individual communities</li> <li>○ Establish protocols to address concerns and identify potential barriers</li> <li>○ Identify management and training delivery needs</li> <li>○ Investigate blended delivery options including e-learning and local learning mentors</li> <li>○ Identify PD requirements for management and staff involved in deliver of VET</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Formalise working partnerships</li> <li>• Identify VET programs to be included in ACE Provider Delivery Plans for 2008</li> <li>• Identify PD to be included in Delivery Support Plans for 2008</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for learner pathways from non-accredited training to accredited programs via RPL</li> </ul>

### 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*):

#### Domain of Knowledge

Participants in the COP will be drawn from a range of expertise in the ACE sector including Providers of non-accredited training and RTO’s funded by ACFE. Group members will bring to the table knowledge and skills relating to delivery and assessment of a broad range of entry level training programs. Members may have dealt with some of the identified barriers to education delivery and have strategies for engaging the targeted cohorts in learning. Meeting together will enable this knowledge to be shared and give opportunity to work on strategies for delivery of VET in individual communities.

#### Community

Due to distance/isolation there have been few opportunities for the stakeholders to work with each other. The COP will ensure participants meet (face to face where possible) in a neutral environment away from their normal workplaces. The role of the workshop facilitator will include keeping the group relaxed, developing a “sense of belonging” but keeping participant’s focus on the aims of the COP. Meetings will allow members to gain an understanding of and empathy for the differences between the provision of non-accredited training and delivery of accredited programs throughout the Gippsland region. Discussions should also highlight the capabilities, innovative delivery methods and resources that have been trialled by individual providers.

#### Practice

All stakeholders are currently involved in the ACE sector and it is envisaged the group will tap into both formal and informal knowledge of their various communities. Facilitated workshops will encourage discussion of issues as a whole group or may decide on breakout groups reporting back to the COP. Facilitators are to ensure all participants are encouraged to voice their opinion and/or create opportunity for “every participant” being comfortable in expressing their point of view. A gap in expertise may be identified and appropriate guest speakers may need to be sourced by the project convenors. Members will be encouraged to bring relevant documentation or resources to “share” with the group so participants can create a “portfolio of tools and information”. Alternative communication methods such as emails, use of Skype teleconferencing or Elluminate software may be required to provide alternative communication methods for participants the COP.

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

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

for participating individuals	<p>Opportunity to create working partnerships and support networks for ACE Providers and teaching staff in isolated communities</p> <p>Opportunity to create a sense of community between ACE Providers</p> <p>Appropriate forum to discuss changing communities and potential challenges for the future delivery</p> <p>Sharing of ideas and resources to establish trust between formalised contacts</p>
for participating organisations	<p>Increased knowledge and understanding of what each ACE Provider in the Region offers their community</p> <p>Opportunity to review and improve work practices within their own organisations</p> <p>Increased knowledge of potential educational pathways for people in regional communities</p> <p>Potential to develop ongoing networks and formalised partnerships</p> <p>Insight to future planning for Professional Development needs and resource requirements for future delivery</p> <p>COP to provide a social perspective and gives opportunity to discuss emerging issues with peer group</p> <p>Improved student outcomes</p>

### 8. Promotion

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

within your organisation(s)	<p>Promotion campaign via internal networks, Expression of interest, Personal Invitation, Regional Newsletter, Media Release</p> <p>Case studies – successful partnerships &amp; successful learner outcomes</p>
to industry and other relevant organisations	<p>Regional website – publish documents &amp; case studies</p> <p>Share knowledge with other ACFE Regions &amp; ACFE Board</p> <p>Integrate complementary projects, eg AccessACE</p>
to the broader VET sector	<p>Broaden program to include other RTOs</p>

### 9. Evaluation

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

The success of the project will be evaluated using the "Measuring Impact" Tool endorsed by the ACFE Board. "Measuring Impact is an evidence-based framework developed from the Faris conceptual model of learning communities and consists of:

Input/output evaluation – This accounts for inputs – not only public funds, but also substantial volunteer effort and community in-kind contributions. It also compiles outputs such as the specific project activities of the initiative.

Process evaluation – This includes community engagement, the development of partnerships and the extent of community participation. Effectiveness can be gauged by criteria such as the level of community participation, the extent of development of knowledge and skills, the breadth of community involvement in learning and the fostering of lifelong learning.

Evaluation of changes in community capacity – This is based on the extent to which communities are more functional and capable. This includes improved social inclusion and civic engagement, environmental sustainability and economic diversification.

**10. Project timeframe**

Please list project milestones and key dates

(Please add rows as required)

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Key date</b>
Phase 1 – Promotion, Preparation of Marketing Material, Pre-Workshop Reading, Venue Arrangements	Fri 3 Aug 2007
Phase 1 – Workshop 1	Fri 3 Aug 2007
Project Mid – Term Report Due	Tues 28 Aug 2007
Phase 2 – Workshop 2	Fri 7 Sept 2007
Project Mid Term Forum	Wed 19 Sept 2007
Phase 3 – Workshop 3 (final)	Fri 9 Nov 2007
Phase 3 – Lodgement of MoUs	Fri 9 Nov 2007
Project Final Report	Tues 27 Nov 2007
Project Final Accountability	Mon 28 Jan 2008