

Project ID No.	CP 83 / 7 / 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 Details of participants in item 11 will be only be used in accordance with our privacy policy and will not be published on the website.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

Technical and Training Innovation

1. Convenor's details

Name: Peter O'Connor		
Position: Director		
Organisation: Technical and Training Innovation		
Address: PO Box 3101		
City/Suburb: Victoria Gardens, Richmond, VIC		Postcode: 3121
Ph: 03 83253231	Fax:	Mobile: 0418 556 203
Email: peter@tinnovation.com.au		

2. Facilitators' details

Name: Dominic Schipano		
Address: Suite 3, 139 Queensberry St		
City/Suburb: Carlton South		Postcode: 3053
Ph: 03 93494903	Fax: 03 93494844	Mobile: 0419335188
Email: dominics@citt.com.au		

3. Project overview (100 words maximum)

What outcomes do you hope to achieve in your project?

Through this community the Digital Reception and Subscription TV sector of the Telecommunications industry will collaboratively share and disseminate knowledge and practice being important aspects of the National Training Agenda and VET. The outcomes will include members exploring and sharing expertise and training experiences in meeting industry skill needs while gaining a deeper and broader understanding of VET. Enterprises, industry associations and Registered Training Organisations will come together within a supporting community to practice innovative ways of implementing the ICA and ICT National Training Packages and competencies, and undertake professional development within these qualifications.

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 domain of knowledge of the skills, knowledge and assessment processes required by this sector is covered by the endorsed ICT02 and ICA05 Training Packages. Community members will receive a list of the ICT02 competencies and qualifications structure that sit within the National Training System ensuring the skills

and knowledge are understood and providing relevancy to the workplace, on work-based learning and improving workforce development.

Community Members will explore appropriate sector national training systems, challenges and industry competencies by:

- increasing industry knowledge of the current training system, examining workplace training delivery and assessment and facilitate dialogue that ensures training is client-focused and appropriate within a work-based learning environment
- explore consistency of learning and assessment in relation to the Telecommunications Training Package that will enable enterprises and industry to uptake innovative approaches and Best Practice models
- identify relevant training competencies and qualifications so as improve the uptake of enterprise/workplace training programs, apprenticeships including people with a disability and indigenous Australians in this sector
- Develop training pathways using the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) to identify career pathways including recognition of current competence for new, existing and contractor staff

This community provides a forum by which the Subscription TV sector will explore the technical skills and National Training Packages qualifications relevant to industry based skills and workforce development and gauge their responsiveness in meeting industry driven quality.

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**):*

The community will be facilitated by Dominic Schipano, an experienced facilitator familiar with both the Telecommunications industry and the RTF programme. His experience will provide direction, leadership and an environment that will enable the members to collaboratively learn and practice the domain of knowledge from the training packages and workplace experiences, interact with others in the industry and develop working relationships with other members.

The members have been identified and they will receive an invitation to join the community. This invitation will include information outlining the project and its current stated aims and provide them with the opportunity and a commitment to joining this Community. This will ensure members are supported through the various stages of community development of "Potential", "Coalescing" and "Maturing" (as identified by Wenger 1998, Mitchell et al) by:

Potential

Many of the industry sector have expressed a need for industry stakeholders be brought together to discuss common issues of quality and standards within training, invitations are to be sent to members, identified through networks and referrals, including industry representatives, Skills Council, and Telecommunications company representatives to participate in this community. As invited members accept their invitation to be part of the community, they will be provided with copies of the application, reading materials and information from the start-up forums and details of the training packages competencies. Many members will be familiar with each other as they are competitors in this sector but they have expressed their willingness to come together to address some of the issues within the training and quality needs for this industry.

An initial meeting will be held to establish the Community of Practice purpose and objectives, the internal structure and refine the domain of knowledge. In establishing a supporting environment, the community will:

- Provide for members to introduce invitees so as to identify and recognize members skills, what they bring to the community and potentially develop a professional relationships with other members
- When appropriate nominate community leaders such as chair, administrative support and establish suitable communication lines and meeting dates
- Assist the facilitator, who will be responsible for creating a comfortable environment and encourage for relationships to be formed by building trust, commitment and confidentiality among members
- Undertake an initial questionnaire among members to establish commonalities in the community's purpose, aims and priorities
- Re-state the initial purpose of the project and the details as per the documentation sent with the invitations and allowing for input to vary the purpose to suit the community's needs within the RTF framework
- The above will cater for different levels of participation and make it easy to contribute and access the community's knowledge and practice and assist member's activities and action in meeting industry quality training needs

These members will be from the same sector of the industry dealing with subscription TV and digital TV and therefore would have similar experiences, knowledge of the issues and possibly common solutions to these obstacles enabling them the benefit to share best practices and models with others in a safe and collaborative environment.

Coalescing

After the initial stages of the community meetings, the project members will be supported by teleconferences and regular email contact so as to continue to recognise, build and support relationships. The principle roles of the community will be identified (individual and shared) within the community of practice such as facilitator, mentor, administrator, project manager, subject matter expert, events coordinator and spokesperson and they will be responsible for the community progress and achievement of milestones.

As stated in the application, the following activities will allow the Community to move beyond the potential stage:

- The community will have an agreed number of community and working-group meetings designed to identify, prioritise, agree and progress activities so that members are informed and involve in meeting the community's priorities
- Using specialised working groups and specialised skills of members enables each to develop group dynamics and a working relationship with others within their field and commonality.
- Members to be given activities to practice VET ideas and models within their workplace thus learning from others within the community
- Industry key stakeholders in VET will provide support, expertise and knowledge to assist in maintaining quality skill benchmarks and increase use of the Training Package by imparting Training Package knowledge through power-point presentations, resources and workshops. This includes the use of technically skilled people and subject matter experts to assist with the workshops
- Enable members to contribute and share VET and learning experiences with community members and their fellow workers using the ICT02 Training Packages and competencies framework in workshops, ideas, tools, models and experiences
- Encourages and support any relationships within and outside of the Community through trust & open communication
- These activities have been included in the milestone and community's calendar of events

As the members become comfortable with the project's aims, a code of practice/conduct would be developed including communication, level of participation, commitment to trust and confidentiality and roles/responsibilities.

The Community's activities will allow members to build respect, trust and relationships and from a social aspect members will be invite to functions on forum days and conferences such as the Reframing the Future forum later this year. Other VET and training events will be built into the community's calendar so as to provide members with greater exposure to the national VET community and their practices.

Maturing

As Community matures with members being more comfortable with each other within a trusting and collaborative environment, the members should maximise the opportunity of interacting and providing valuable input and contribution to the discussions, solutions and practicing models for the industry. This will be undertaken by meetings, working groups and forums and will be meeting as regularly as work pressures will allow but is anticipated that the community will conduct teleconferences and/or meetings every 5 weeks. This will be enhanced by other means of correspondence such as emails will which allow participants to stay in contact and up-to-date.

It is anticipated that 2 full face-to-face meetings will be organised in addition to the teleconferences and specialised workgroups of technical staff supporting these activities. These workgroups will then work together for the duration of the project, focussing on specific work actions, solutions and validate learning/assessment strategies. The mix of members from small, medium and large enterprises will enable members to explore various practices, issues and solutions to the delivery of technical competencies within a work environment.

As stated above the community's maturity will allow for knowledge to be shared and put into practice within the safety of this community, where members can explore options within their workplace and discuss their finding without fear or favour within the community.

Throughout these 3 stages, the community will be measuring its work and progress through the various means stated above, in the milestones and in section 9 on evaluations. This Community's progress will be documented and be part of the reporting and feedback process to members and key industry stakeholders.

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**):*

As stated above the members will be sharing, supporting and influencing each other and the VET system through this project. The community will be supported by an experienced facilitation process, appropriate documentation and structured activities that will ensure that members participation be encouraged and be a positive experience. In addition to the above stages of support, this community includes the following components:

Domain of knowledge

The *domain of knowledge* will include the competencies and Training Packages relevant to this sector and this will enable individual members to share data, experiences and knowledge in implementing the VET training system within their organisation and to influence the sector in the context of quality, recognition and skills to support workforce and industry. This knowledge and community's objective will need to be established after the first working-group meeting - initially this will be done by using a questionnaire. The facilitator's role will be to ensure the domain of knowledge is captured and agreed to by all Network members collaboratively.

The use of this domain will be beyond superficial knowledge but will be supported in applying and using this information to benefit the individual and the organisation to improve productivity. This will include harnessing this knowledge, expertise, benchmarks and best practices that members bring to the community through work groups and presentations.

In addition to this, the community will enable this group to influence and assist others in the VET sector to understand the National Training System and its benefits. This also includes helping others in the VET System to overcome barriers, issues and challenges that they may face and by being a resource and a focal point to others through emails, workshops and social activities during and beyond the project.

Community

Many members are known to each other they are competitors or work mates but they have expressed the need to be a support to each other in addressing the training issues in VET within the industry – this community will support them by addressing their concerns and issues of training and quality in this industry. This will enable members to inform and improve the training system to meet their needs

The support will be in the form of providing an environment that will enable the members to collaboratively learn, share their experiences and practice their ideas by interacting with others in the industry and develop working relationships with other members. This collaborative approach will be fostered through social activities, workshops and forums, sharing of experiences, models and stories, and fostering new relationships. This Community would require that members maintain open communication, develop trust with competitors to ensure a collaborative approach to addressing the issues. Email/phone communication will be encouraged to maintain regular contact and share ideas In between the formal meetings

Practice

As stated in the project overview the purpose for establishing this Community of Practice is to bring together industry stakeholders, providers and major enterprises so as to formalising existing relationships and develop new collaborations that will reinforce a partnership approach to meeting and addressing industry skill and training needs within the National Training System.

This will be undertaken by allowing the community to foster Ideas, tools, models and experiences so as members can "practice" their wares in a safe and supportive environment. This will be done through workgroups, activities and meetings where members can share their thoughts and practices and the project will document these results. To encourage continual participation information will be disseminated via email throughout the project and members can elect to download the relevant notes and support materials via relevant websites such as the RTF, DEST, and IBSA

Within this project, the opportunity exists for this sector to support and Identify new entrants to the industry and by reviewing enterprises current training needs and current training practices may increase employment and workforce development options to the labour market.

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>The community will encourage the individuals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new contacts and networks while re-establishing existing relationships with colleagues and other professionals engaged in the industry – governments, enterprises, training organisations and industry associations, within a structured formal but collaborative environment • Increase and encouraging knowledge and best practices in implementing training packages and training issues and develop a greater awareness of industry support for training and assessment • Enable participants to share experiences and best work practices and models assisting individuals in meeting competency training requirements in the workplace and a willingness to support and understand issues, share ideas and show empathy for difficulties experiences and providing time for problem solving, reflection and social interaction • Provide a deeper and broader understanding of implementing the NTF in diverse contexts with exposure to innovative practice from across Australia including confirmation, validation and extension of professional practice within the training system • Increase the domain of knowledge and increase individuals confidence to pursue the issue of workplace training issues • Better informed staff members within their own workplace of the VET and National training System as it applies in their organisation
for participating organisations	<p>The Community will provide the following outcomes for participating organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognised industry skill benchmark that organizations can use to achieve a consistent and quality approach to training delivery. This approach should increase the understanding and uptake of Telecommunications competencies in industry and within organizations • Increase in organisational expertise as members support each other and share models and best practices with other enterprises • Opportunity to re-establish old and develop new collaborative partnerships, joint projects and best practice opportunities • Enable enterprises to implement new models, tools, resources, strategies etc within their training system • The furthering of relationships between the VET sector and industry and between community members • Allow for and encourage an understanding of industry attitudes towards the training system • Support industry in using the training system and assist in overcoming issues within their organisation by exploring other members experiences, practices and learning

8. Promotion

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

within your organisation(s)	<p>The community comprises of many organisations and the group will agree to a marketing/promotion strategies and guidelines that members can take back to their organisations. Assuming that this meets organisational approval part of the promotion could include power-point presentations, best practice/benchmarks and internal champions of the community aims.</p>
to industry and other relevant organisations	<p>The promotion to industry and key stakeholders such as government will be to invite them to the 2 day conference in October/November and participate in the Community's presentation of issues, solutions and recommendations. Additional the community may advertise in industry newsletters and journals highlighting the achievements of the community within the Training arena for this sector, including best practice and models.</p>

to the broader VET sector	Undertake a activities and presentation at Training Awards, the National RTF Conference in November and be part of state based and industry based workshops/conferences and forums.
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9. Evaluation

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

Brinkerhof's model of self-evaluation will be used and in particular the key questions will be asked of members at key stages throughout the project. Evidence to support evaluation will include:

- Story telling – publishing
- Reflective questioning and discussion
- Active participation of members, formal and informal feedback
- Usefulness of the community's outputs (shared mental models, strategies, case studies etc)
- Extension and continuation of the community beyond this projects funding and timelines

The proposed methods to evaluate the project's effectiveness include:

- As part of the initial activities, project members will be asked to establish agreed objectives for the group so that the impact of the project activities can be measured and evaluated
- The community determining hot issues, the progress of the individuals and the organizations, including impacts of workplace learning strategies, by undertaking a self assessment throughout the project
- Group evaluation - using reflective activities and group discussion.
- Gain feedback through a interim and final questionnaire to determine participants agreement and understanding of the purpose of the network and analyse different responses in the 2 questionnaires
- Collection of qualitative and quantitative measures as a result of the above evaluation items
- Reassessment of member' progress, relationships developed and in meeting the stated goals of the Subscription TV sector including identified professional development issues
- Examine the recommendations made by the group (network) at conclusion of project in line with the stated objectives of the project through a formative and summative assessment
- Individuals will be encouraged to communicate to either the facilitator or the project manager with feedback on all aspects of the project. All meetings and discussions will be minuted and recorded for members to access and use to evaluate the progress of the community.

The Community will put in place an evaluation strategy that provides for members to determine whether their and the community's aims are being achieved. This will support members' needs while providing feedback on the progress of the project, its implementation strategy, and the project progress towards stated aims and dissemination of information. This strategy will involve an initial questionnaire and details on the project's objectives as part of the invitation to participate in the community. The teleconferences and face-to-face meetings will provide members with the opportunity to provide feedback and recommendations on how to progress the community. This feedback is designed to determine if the community's goals and participants' needs are being met as well as evaluating the group's trust, commitment, open communication and overall health of the Community.

This also includes evaluating:

- access to members and to industry training data and how well knowledge is shared
- shared objectives that they develop initially to measure progress and relevance of project activities which will impact on the future directions for the Community
- questionnaire feedback from members on their and group's progress in the Community including project process and outcomes at face-to-face forums, teleconferences, emails and by a final survey
- implementation of the strategies, resolution to issues and appraising individual VET models that the community members can implement and share
- members individual level of engagement, reflection and participation in the workgroups and the community
- evaluating strategic alliances/partnerships/collaborative links as an outcome of this project with community members and other industry stakeholders

Further evaluation will be undertaken at identified points within the project such as within 2 months of commencement, at mid point and within 2 months of finishing the project. This is to ensure members understand the purposes, reassess the goals of the community if necessary and develop strategies to meet any issues, challenges and concerns raised by the group.

This will be culminated with a 2 day conference within 6 weeks prior to finalising the community's project which will provide for discussion, workshops and evaluation of the project.

As this community will explore the competencies within the ICA05 and ICT02 Training Packages, it will measure its effectiveness by firstly exploring what resources are available to the members of the community, assess the value of the ICT02 Package and report back to IBSA of its effectiveness in meeting its needs by undertaking discussions, providing advice, models and suggested benchmarks for the workplace.

10. Project timeframe

Please list project milestones and key dates

(Please add rows as required)

Milestone	Key date
Submit Project Action Plan to Reframing the Future	5 June 2007
Identify current members of network and determine new members to be invited to join	5 June 2007
Ongoing communication between network members and continuing work by Project Teams	June to December 2007
Prepare documentation and finalise a communications strategy and list of names, emails, and numbers and mail out invitations and details of the community objectives and questionnaire	25 June 2007
Undertake first teleconference meeting of members who members who accepted the invitation	Week of 9 July 2007
Prepare for workgroup meeting – arrange venue, send invitations, identify pre reading, etc.	Week of 23 July 2007
Undertake teleconference meeting of members who members who accepted the invitation	Week of 6 August 2007
Undertake project workgroup/forums in nominated states - present data, strategies, questions and outline result of the members responses re outcomes for the project etc. and Individual workgroups to meet and address identified tasks, develop ideas and recommendations	Throughout August 2007
Mid Term Reframing the Future Forum	August/September
Lodge Project Mid Term report to Reframing the Future	September 2007
Undertake teleconference meeting of members	Week of 14 September 2007
Undertake project workgroup/forums in nominated states - present data, strategies, questions and outline result of the members responses re outcomes for the project etc. and Individual workgroups to meet and address identified tasks, develop ideas and recommendations	Throughout October 2007
Undertake teleconference meeting of members	Week of 2 November 2007
Final Workshop/ possibility of a face to face conference in Sydney or Melbourne - Finalise evaluations and project findings, discuss data and experiences, and record recommendations and suggestions	Week of 16 November 2007
Lodge Project Final Report to Reframing the Future	December 2007