



<b>Project Reference No.</b>	<b>M3 - 289</b>
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## Communities of Practice

Action plans must be uploaded through 'Submit a Form' on [www.reframingthefuture.net](http://www.reframingthefuture.net) by COB Tuesday 27 May 2008.

All sections must be completed.

Please note: sections 1 – 11 of this document will be placed on the Reframing the Future website. Details of participants in item 13 will only be used in accordance with our privacy policy and will not be published on the website.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

Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE
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#### 3. Your project goal (which of the three Reframing the Future goals your project is addressing).

The Reframing Indigenous Engagement project will address the goal "To develop staff capabilities to continuously improve the quality of competency based training and assessment".

#### 4. Your priority area (which of the seven priority areas your project is addressing).

Priority area	
Diversity	Enhancing practitioners' capabilities to work with an increasing diverse client base, in particular with aboriginal, disability and other equity groups

#### What challenges will you address during your project in focusing on your priority area?

The Reframing Indigenous Engagement project will allow teaching and support staff to take part in a community of practice focussed on developing a common understanding of issues impacting on the educational engagement of indigenous Australians. The aim of the project will be to allow staff to discuss, explore, and share information & insights to support the indigenous learner within the education sector. This project will develop staff capabilities toward continuous improvement in the quality of competency based training and assessment by increasing the capacity and confidence of staff to incorporate culturally sensitive teaching and assessment strategies for the indigenous learner.

### 5. Domain of knowledge

What aspects of your priority area will inform your communities domain of knowledge?

- Koorie Unit Staff experienced in overcoming issues that may impact on the engagement of indigenous learners
- Community Elders experienced in the education sector contributing knowledge regarding the cohort, and cultural issues that may impact on engagement
- Non indigenous practitioners currently delivering training to indigenous learners – contributing their experiences and raising issues that they have encountered
- Non indigenous support staff / customer service officers – contributing their experiences and raising issues that they may have encountered

The domain of knowledge for this project will be to identify issues that are impacting on the engagement and retention of indigenous learners across the National Training System, and to identify delivery strategies and/or administrative strategies that will support an increase in engagement for these learners.

### 6. 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*):

Stage	Facilitation Strategies
<p><b>Potential</b></p> <p>In this stage we will identify potential participants to the community. This process will include inviting key people from across the education and indigenous sectors to contribute toward the process, bearing in mind that all experiences are valid within the context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promotion</li> <li>● Identification of participants</li> <li>● Word of Mouth</li> <li>● Invitation to attend</li> <li>● Detail the aims of the community of practice</li> <li>● Highlight the need for a variety of people to be involved</li> <li>● All experiences are valid and can contribute to the outcomes of the project</li> </ul>
<p><b>Coalescing</b></p> <p>In the coalescing stage, the community will come together, and explore commonalities impacting on the sector, and share perspectives on the issue of indigenous engagement and retention within the National Training Framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scheduled face to face facilitated meetings to share experiences, and general discussion surrounding issues that may impact on the cohort's engagement across a variety of learning areas</li> <li>● Encourage frank and open discussion between participants</li> <li>● Explore common issues</li> <li>● Depending on participant availability, may require some form of online discussion forums</li> <li>● Access to video conferencing available if required, to assist overcome geographical distance between members of the community of practice</li> <li>● Document discussions / Key issues</li> <li>● At this time undertake qualitative and quantitative assessment of participant knowledge, and levels of confidence in undertaking strategies to support student engagement for the indigenous learner</li> </ul>

Stage	Facilitation Strategies
<p><b>Active</b></p> <p>The Active phase of the project will include the identification of practices to support this group of learners, and incorporation of strategies to help overcome barriers to engagement, or difficulties as identified during the coalescing stage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss and document ideas and strategies that will support staff toward better understanding the cohort (methods to embed across organisation/s)</li> <li>● Identify, document and discuss strategies to improve engagement for indigenous learners</li> <li>● Identify and document key points within the learner engagement that may be flagged as critical – requiring support to prevent disengagement</li> <li>● Potential for guest speakers / presentations to promote services available to support the learners</li> <li>● Establish and strengthen informal network</li> <li>● Encourage outcomes of workbased learning activities to be shared with the group</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dispersed</b></p> <p>As the project moves into the Dispersed stage, face to face contact may be reduced, however, participants will have an increased knowledge on issues impacting on these learners, and documented strategies to support these learners. Contact will be encouraged between the group, and strategies introduced to allow effective and regular discussion as required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Email contact</li> <li>● Phone contact</li> <li>● Call for information on successes within members area of expertise, in regard to indigenous learning – share with the group</li> <li>● Distribution of information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Memorable</b></p> <p>Documented outcomes and potential strategies for supporting these learners within the National Training Framework will be made available and/or distributed to organisations operating within the sector who could benefit through access to this information.</p> <p>The ongoing knowledge gained by individuals while taking part in the project will be a conducive environment for improved operations within their area of expertise (including potential mentoring of other staff).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Champions of the project involved in the mentoring of new staff</li> <li>● Showcase successful strategies, talk about the outcomes of the project with others</li> </ul>

**7. 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:** Upon identifying participants, brief biographies will be distributed to all members of the community, along with a structured outline of the intent of the community of practice.

The domain of knowledge for this project will be to identify issues that are impacting on the engagement and retention of indigenous learners across the National Training System, and to identify delivery strategies and/or administrative strategies that will support an increase in engagement for these learners.

Initially an overview of the purpose of the Community of Practice and the domain of knowledge will be distributed to potential members of the group. Relevant strategies and reports relating to the current challenges facing the learner cohort will also be distributed to participants, to ensure a basic level of knowledge prior to entering the forum.

Primarily the Domain of Knowledge component will be supported by ensuring participants are clear of the project objectives, and topics that they may be able to contribute toward throughout discussions.

**Community:** This aspect will be supported by the scheduling of facilitated discussion activities, to encourage the sharing of the experiences between participants, and an environment of frank and open discussion will be encouraged. The community will be enhanced by ensuring that participants are recruited from a variety of areas, with a wide base of experiences, and level of knowledge for contribution toward the project.

**Practice:** An administrative officer will be made available to coordinate the documentation of identified practices, and distribution of information to key players. Suggested policy changes (if any) will be documented, and forwarded to key stakeholders for action / embedding into organisations, where appropriate. This administrative officer will also support the evaluation of the project, throughout the stages of its growth and ultimate disbursement.

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

a) What new capabilities do you anticipate the participants will develop during the project?

- Confidence to access a network of support agencies for this cohort
- Access to new knowledge
- Foster Trust and sense of common purpose
- Add value to their professional lives
- Sense that their experiences are valued, and have contributed toward the improvement of practices in supporting the cohort of learners
- Increased level of understanding of the Wurreker Strategy, and its impact on the organisation
- Increased level of understanding of cultural and other issues impacting on the group of targeted learners
- Greater level of understanding into the benefits of Communities of Practice, and how their use can contribute toward improving the National Training System, as well as the effectiveness of workbased learning strategies

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

<p>for participating organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dissemination of valuable information to staff</li> <li>● Spreading knowledge and expertise to support quality improvements for organisations operating within the National Training System</li> <li>● Increased level of understanding for staff - and their capacity to support the identified cohort</li> <li>● Greater level of understanding for external stakeholders on the organisations capacity to support the learner, and our commitment toward improvement</li> <li>● Documented strategies to actively support the increased retention engagement and rates of indigenous learners within the National Training Framework</li> <li>● Active participation of staff toward increasing positive outcomes against Wurreker Strategy reporting requirements</li> <li>● Supporting and promoting this aspect of the Institutes Strategic Direction to key stakeholders, staff and the community at large</li> <li>● Fostering innovative ideas of staff</li> <li>● Collaboration with external stakeholders</li> <li>● Facilitating response to cohort requirements within the education setting (including the National Training Framework)</li> <li>● Increased profile in the effectiveness of Communities of Practice to problem solve and share information between stakeholders</li> <li>● May have some dual benefits toward expanding inclusive strategies for students of Culturally and Linguistically diverse backgrounds, specifically for those of a non English speaking background</li> <li>● The breakdown of communication barriers that can currently exist between departments and campuses ("breakdown the silo's)</li> <li>● Increased confidence and professionalism of staff when dealing with this cohort</li> </ul>
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<p>For the VET system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The effectiveness of Communities of Practice in the collaborative identification and documentation of strategies to support learners within the National Training Framework</li> <li>● Shared knowledge across the sector</li> <li>● Increase in capacity to tailor solutions for this cohort within the National Training Framework setting</li> <li>● Identification of strategies to address barriers this cohort may have to accessing and continuing their education pathway</li> <li>● Increased confidence to take action for individual organisations operating within the National Training Framework</li> <li>● Strengthen networks of those working with indigenous learners</li> <li>● Those operating within the National Training Framework will also benefit via access to the outcomes of this Community of Practice, contributing toward the established of their own culturally appropriate, regionally sensitive processes and practices.</li> </ul>
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**9. Evaluation process**

Please provide an outline of the methods you will use to:

- a) evaluate the participants’ learning

This project will be evaluated in three stages.

- At the commencement of the project, and upon identification and recruitment of key stakeholders, an evaluation will be conducted to gather information on the current level of involvement or understanding, to provide a basis for future comparison.
- An evaluation will be conducted midway through the delivery of the project, to identify the progress, and identify any areas that may require closer focus. This stage will provide an opportunity to action areas requiring continuous improvement strategies.
- At the conclusion of the project, face to face and/or telephone interviews will be conducted with individual participants. A group discussion will also be conducted to discuss the findings of the individual evaluations, and provide an opportunity to obtain further feedback from the group.

Ad hoc feedback will also be taken into consideration with regard to improvement of the project, or to guide discussion focus. If appropriate, this may include direct interview’s with one or more indigenous students.

All feedback will be documented for future reference and reporting purposes.

- b) evaluate your project’s efficiency and effectiveness.

In the long term, the Institute’s statistics with regard to educational engagement and completion of indigenous learners will be assessed to evaluate the impact of this project, specifically with regard to faculties that are non indigenous specific delivery areas.

A departmental and external organisation map will be generated to identify how far the outcomes of the project have spread, and the number of individuals who have been informed or gained access to additional information as a result of this project. These statistics will be used toward identifying an approximate “per head” costing for the professional development of internal and external stakeholders. This strategy will support the identification of the projects efficiency, and its effectiveness across the sector.

## 10. Promotion

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

within your organisation(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal marketing – internet based, cluster meetings (contact via managers and/or direct presentations), email, flyers</li> <li>• Direct contact with staff as identified through reporting processes currently in place (staff operating within non indigenous specific departments delivering courses to students who have identified as indigenous)</li> <li>• Distribution of information to all departments operating within GippsTAFE</li> <li>• Potential to incorporate outcomes into the GippsTAFE induction process</li> </ul>
to industry and other relevant organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct contact</li> <li>• Press release detailing the outcomes of the Community of Practice</li> <li>• Internet (link from GippsTAFE website)</li> <li>• Koorie Advisory Committee meetings</li> <li>• Mailout</li> </ul>
to the broader VET sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email to other Institute's across the sector promoting the outcomes / link to website</li> <li>• Indigenous network meetings</li> <li>• Mailout of outcome information/reports to Koorie Units operating across the sector – for potential introduction to their individual organisations</li> </ul>

## 11. Project timeframe

Please list project milestones and key dates

(Please add rows as required)

Milestone	Key date
Identify potential community of practice members	1 June – <20 June
Generate information / invitations	1 June – <20 June
Recruit / Promote the project	10 June – ~30 June
Commence Coalescing phase, schedule meetings for group	30 June – Ongoing
1 <sup>st</sup> Stage of Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess level of knowledge of participants (qualitative assessment)</li> <li>• Document current quantitative statistics (Indigenous enrolment and engagement numbers)</li> </ul>	<20 July
Mid Term Report due to Reframing the Future	<b>19 August 2008</b>
Document discussions and transition the Community of Practice toward active phase	Ongoing
Identify and document improvement strategies / Practices	~ 10 October
2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage of Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess level of knowledge of participants (qualitative assessment)</li> </ul>	>September

Milestone	Key date
Transition Community of Practice to Dispersed Phase	~ October
Transition group toward Memorable Phase Distribute information and identified strategies (as appropriate) to greater community, and organisations, promote the outcomes of the project.	October / November - Ongoing
3 <sup>rd</sup> Stage of Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess level of knowledge of participants (qualitative assessment)</li> <li>● Document current quantitative statistics (Indigenous enrolment and engagement numbers)</li> <li>● Evaluate, identify and generate departmental and external organisation map. Identify an approximate “per head” costing for the professional development of internal and external stakeholders.</li> </ul>	>November 10
<b>Final Report Due to Reframing the Future (as per guidelines)</b>	<b>25 November 2008</b>