

Congratulations

The latest research report of the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government, *Learning Community Framework and Measuring Impact Toolkit* has just been released. Congratulations to Leone Wheeler, Shanti Wong and Peter Blunden for their work

[Read more](#)

Cork Festival

Cork has been running the Cork Lifelong Learning Festival since 2004 in order to promote learning among its citizens. The twelfth festival took place from 23 to 29 March 2015 and involved about 500 different events

[Read more](#)

The Wesley Report

This Wesley report sheds new light on the impact financial stress is having on individuals and families in New South Wales.

[Read more](#)

Brimbank Community Partnership

The Communities for Children Facilitating Partner (CfC - FP) initiative is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Social Services (DSS). It aims to deliver positive and sustainable outcomes for children and families in communities throughout Australia

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Bristol as a Learning City

City leaders, the local government, the private sector, universities, schools and community organisations have started working together to accelerate the further development of Bristol.

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Hangzhou as a Learning City

Hangzhou's 3L (Lifelong, Lifewide and Lifedeeep) educational system and 6W (no matter Who, When, Where, Why, access to What information in Which way) learning city.

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A Look at Spaces that nurture learning

The University of Melbourne's new Melbourne School of Design building is a remarkable translation of a shift in pedagogy aiming to prepare students for the new challenges of the fast changing social, cultural and economic contexts.

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Film Promotes Lifelong Learning

Jess and the Mighty Journey, a new film by The Smith Family uses a real life story to highlight education as a key driver for change

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Glenorchy city Council has a learn strategy

The LEARN Strategy aims to address low participation and attainment in education and training across all age groups and create learning opportunities for the whole Glenorchy community.

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Growing Brimbank

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Innovate and prosper

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National Award for Albury OOSH

Albury Out Of School Hours (OOSH), operated by AlburyCity, has been awarded the highest rating a service can achieve under the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care.

[Read more](#)

Securing Livelihoods

Presenting five possible future scenarios for livelihoods, whose positive or negative outcomes depend on how several emerging challenges are dealt with.

[Read more](#)

Role of Higher Education in Community and Regional Development

Set out in two main parts, this book illustrates concepts and practices covering the wide range of forms of engagement that universities can have with their regions.

[Read more](#)

The shared work of learning

Overall, student performance in Australia is not improving. But some schools in Australia, serving highly disadvantaged students and families, are successfully using collaboration to support student achievement.

[Read more](#)

Wyndham Learning Forum

In 2013/14, 44 passionate Wyndham community representatives came together over a number of weeks to develop the Wyndham Learning Community Strategy 2014-2017.

[Read more](#)

The Empty Lunch Box

This exploratory study is the first time that the point of view of primary schools and their day-to-day experiences of dealing with student homelessness have been investigated.

[Read more](#)

Share your news

We would love to hear news of activities, developments, new approaches etc. All in the Network will benefit. This can often be achieved by a simple cut and paste.

Forward to alcn@tpg.com.au

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Learning Community Framework and Measuring Impact Toolkit

An extensive research report has been released titled Learning Community Framework and Measuring Impact Toolkit.

This 56 page resource links the idea of learning partnerships between councils, their communities and learning organisations, and is closely aligned to the UNESCO “Key features of Learning Cities” framework.

This project was a Research Partnership between the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN), Melton City Council, Gwydir Shire Council and Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government.

The toolkit can be downloaded from: acelg.org.au

Evaluation of learning partnership programs in Hume City Council and Gwydir Shire, and the literature review, were used to develop a Learning Community Framework. This Framework has since been used to evaluate other learning partnership programs in Australia, and has also been showcased in forums and conferences.

Internationally, in 2013 The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) launched a Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC). A Declaration on Building Learning Cities recognised, among other things, that concepts such as ‘learning communities’, ‘learning cities’ and ‘learning regions’ were important pillars of sustainable economic and social growth. Key to this was the development of a Framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities which is now a resource for monitoring the progress of Learning Cities.

The Learning Community Framework and Measuring Impact Toolkit Volumes 1 and 2 provide an opportunity to build on the 2013 Learning as a Driver for Change project and in particular, to align the Learning Community Framework to UNESCO’s Framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities. The report and toolkit are aimed at practitioners in the local government sector engaged with learning and learning communities.

In an ideal world an evaluation strategy at the local level should be linked to community-wide and national programs. However, this requires political will and a lifelong learning strategy at a national level. While commentators agree on the importance of measuring outcomes, practitioners at the local level require a range of tools that are practical and easily embedded into a reporting process. These tools should include baseline data, agreed indicators

and frequency of collection to enable easy comparison over time. Toolkits such as MI attempt to do this, but in reality, without adequate training, they appear to be difficult to implement effectively. In addition, if learning communities of place become too focused on results and outcomes, they reduce the opportunity for reflection and action learning by removing the potential for double loop learning which occurs when partners in a learning community move towards a shared understanding of how learning in its broadest sense can be a catalyst for driving change in a community.

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12th Cork International Lifelong Learning Festival



23-28 March 2015

The 12th Cork International Lifelong Learning Festival will take place from **March 23 to 28** this year. As always it will feature a full range of learning activities for people of all ages, all interests and all needs. The week is Cork's main lifelong learning event and is aimed at vastly increasing the numbers of people committed to learning at whatever level. Last year my wife, Maggie, and I attended the 2014 Festival and were overwhelmed by the variety of learning opportunities offered - music, literature, current affairs, meetings, discussions, fun learning events and a lot more.

This year there will be a special event on the [UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities \(GNLC\) initiative](#) (Cork is a member and is contributing a case study of its progress for the publication to be released at this year's UNESCO conference in Mexico City).

The 12th Cork Lifelong Learning Festival highlights the huge range of learning opportunities available for all ages with 500 free events for everyone to enjoy. The festival shows that learning is fun. Lifelong learning is not only about adult and continuing education, and is more than acquiring skills and qualifications – it's a process which lasts throughout our lives, and includes all kinds of learning – from crafts, IT, languages, to the arts, sports, cookery, history, heritage, genealogy and a whole lot more - and the festival reflects that with its range of events.

Events take place all over the city as organisations throw open their doors to welcome the public. Some events take place on the streets, others in libraries, in family and community centres, schools, colleges, shopping centres, sports grounds, theatres, galleries, on the river. They include performances, taster classes, demonstrations, talks, tours, debates and more.

The festival has grown from 65 events in 2004 to over 500 over its 11 years. From the beginning it has been inclusive, encouraging participation from everyone. Although aimed primarily at the people of Cork, the festival also welcomes visitors to the city.

Newsletters and brochures are available from learningfestival@corkcity.ie. Visitors will, of course, be extra welcome.

[Professor Norman Longworth](#)

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2015 Wesley report facing financial stress

Wesley Mission

1 May 2015

[Link to Resource](#)

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Overview: This Wesley report sheds new light on the impact financial stress is having on individuals and families in New South Wales. While Australia has benefited from a strong economy since the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), it seems the afterglow of the resources boom has worn off. Consumer confidence is at its lowest ebb in 10 years, and Australians remain concerned about job prospects, their own day-to-day personal finances, and our national economic outlook.

This report has found that an alarming 44 per cent of households in New South Wales

are suffering financial stress and 38 per cent are spending more than they earn. Furthermore, financial hardship and financial anxiety are impacting upon the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals and their families.

Since 2010 there has been a seven per cent increase in the number of New South Wales households who are experiencing financial stress. During that time disposable income has decreased and more households are spending more than they earn. When there are no savings to fall back on if an illness or misadventure hits, hardship usually follows.

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Brimbank Communities for Children Facilitating Partnership

The Communities for Children Facilitating Partner (CfC - FP) initiative is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Social Services (DSS). It aims to deliver positive and sustainable outcomes for children and families in communities throughout Australia.

The program is place based and develops and facilitates a whole of community approach to support and enhance early childhood development and wellbeing for children from birth to 12 years.

Brimbank is one of 52 Communities for Children sites across Australia and covers the suburbs of: St Albans, Sunshine, Sunshine North, Sunshine West, Albion, Ardeer, Sydenham, Deer Park, Cairnlea and Derrimut.

To learn more about Communities for Children and how to become involved please email Felicity Tregurtha felicity.tregurtha@thesmithfamily.com.au

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Bristol on the Path to Becoming a Learning City

City leaders, the local government, the private sector, universities, schools and community organisations have started working together to accelerate the further development of Bristol.



St Anne's Infant School - Chris Bahn

Bristol, in the South-West of England, has recognised that learning is at the heart of its success in addressing challenges within the city.

City leaders, the local government, the private sector, universities, schools and community organisations have started working together to accelerate the further development of Bristol. [A Vision for Bristol](#) includes the vision of being a Learning City; a vehicle to promote, connect and build on the breadth of learning already taking place. The aim is to bring together organisations to harness the power of learning, to deliver action and address city-wide challenges by focusing on four pillars of learning:

- **Learning for Life** –encouraging all ages to actively learn in ways which are enjoyable and fun, with a focus on addressing social inclusion;
- **Learning for Everyone** – creating accessible learning activities and connecting those at risk of being marginalised or disengaged from the City;
- **Learning in Education** –raising the attainment of students through formal learning in Bristol’s schools, colleges and universities; and
- **Learning for and at Work** –supporting Bristol’s citizens in their work and encouraging employers to create sustainable learning projects.

The first Partnership Board, chaired by the Mayor of Bristol, has just taken place (March 2015) and will continue to drive the ambition in the coming years by championing, commissioning, communicating and celebrating learning in the city.

More information on Bristol as a city and its actions:

- [Video on Learning Cities](#)
- [Education and skills mayoral commission](#)
- [Bristol City](#)
- [Bristol’s Resilience Challenge](#)
- [Member of PASCAL Inclusion and Entrepreneurial Learning Cities Network](#)
- [Bristol: European Green Capital](#)

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Building a 3L and 6W learning city in Hangzhou

Hangzhou's 3L (Lifelong, Lifewide and Lifedeeep) educational system and 6W (no matter Who, When, Where, Why, access to What information in Which way) learning city.



Mobile Bookstall in Hangzhou

Hangzhou, capital city of China's Zhejiang province, has made significant progress in developing a Learning City since the 1st International Conference on Learning Cities.

Hangzhou has formed a Municipal Steering Committee of Learning City Construction and an associated Executive office to involve all stakeholders across different sectors. Based on the [Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities](#) and the [Key Features of Learning Cities](#), they have drafted *The Exploration and Practice of Developing a Learning City in Hangzhou* and *The Indicator System of Learning City Construction in Hangzhou*, leading Hangzhou's journey towards becoming a learning city. In this context, a Consultation Meeting of Learning City Construction in Hangzhou was organised, inviting local and international experts, including Dr Hans d'Orville, former Assistant Director General of UNESCO's Bureau of Strategic Planning.

Based on this preparatory work, the city has been developing a 3L (Lifelong, Lifewide and Lifedeeep) educational system and is building a 6W (no matter Who, When, Where, Why, access to What information in Which way) learning city. In its 3L and 6W learning city, Hangzhou aims to build an education system that covers communities, work places and families, and stretches from pre-school education, basic education, higher education, adult education to special education and informal learning. Examples include offering Extracurricular Activities for Youth, a Credit Bank for lifelong learners, a Migrant Worker School, mobile bookstalls in public places, building digitised e-learning platforms and operating the Hangzhou Cultural and Creative Entrepreneur Incubating Project.

Looking into the future, Hangzhou's municipal government will cooperate with Universities such as Zhejiang University to establish a Research Centre of Learning City Construction. It will serve as a think tank, providing supervision and advice on building a Learning City.

More information on Hangzhou as a city and its actions:

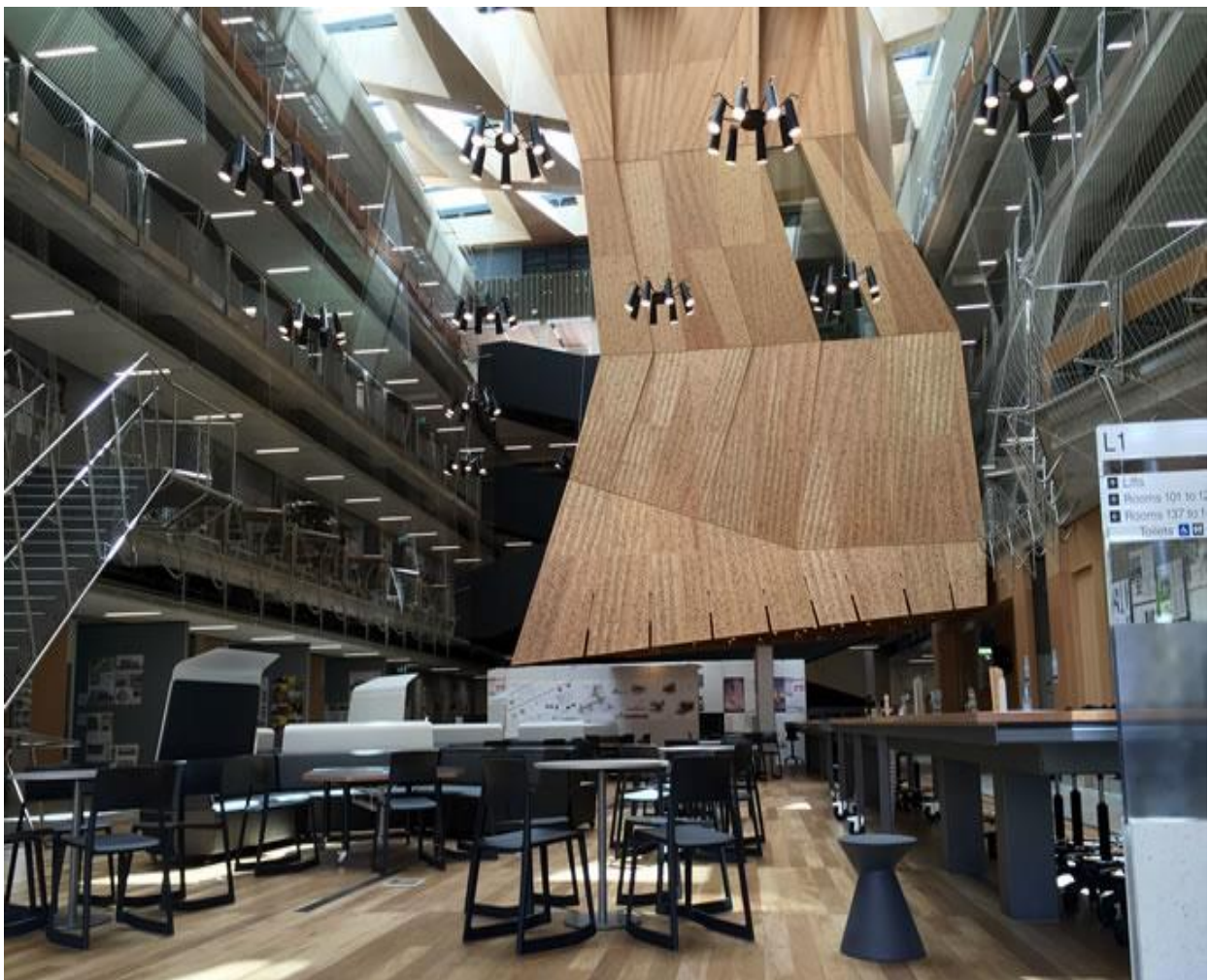
- [Report on Building a Learning City in Hangzhou](#)
- [Hangzhou City](#)

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A look at built spaces that Nurture Learning and Creativity

New Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning building at the University of Melbourne.

The University of Melbourne's new Melbourne School of Design building is a remarkable translation of a shift in pedagogy aiming to prepare students for the new challenges of the fast changing social, cultural and economic contexts. Professor Tom Kvan, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning once said that "...the building is the embodiment of the architectural and design principles explored at the Melbourne School of Design. This building practices what we teach. It's a building dedicated to pushing design frontiers and approaching challenges with innovative solutions".



The complex structure of concrete, wood, glass and zinc is much more than part of a trend to open learning spaces to more transparency and light. Just

after months of use by students and academics, it shows that this is a translation into built space of a move individual gated territories in favour of shared spaces. It is also a building serving as a living pedagogical tool for students in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, with innovative ways to use space, rethink the arrangement of corridors, the roof and building elements. Students can simply walk around the building and see not only technical elements of planning, building or architectural solutions, but how these elements impact the environment around them and, in turn, how they become part of spaces that are repositories of cultural expression and campus ethos. It is also easy for students to observe why University of Melbourne aimed and succeed to make this new building an example of sustainability and reduction of carbon footprint.

The emphasis on the place independency is what allows students and academics use new technologies to work wherever and whenever is best for them. This focus on celebrating diversity, autonomy, flexibility and creativity is clearly underlined through impressive architectural and technological solutions. The wood structure of the roof is opened by translucent gaps that allow the use natural light in the atrium. The roof is also supporting a suspended wooden structure where we find three impressive studio classrooms, placed symbolically at the core of the building. The ground floor is designed to accommodate a complex Fab Lab - where we can see through massive windows how students use 3D printing and new technologies for their models - a pedestrian thoroughfare on the axis on the campus and the Faculty Library. The main teaching levels are placed on the superior floors, in a massive atrium where walls can shift and change the classroom shapes and dimensions as needed by students and teachers. In this space corridors are not simply organising walking, but turn into learning spaces and dynamic opportunities for random encounters and serendipity, that is encouraged by a surprising transparency and versatility of spaces. Students are here invited through this unusual use of spaces and structures to explore new and seemingly impossible solutions, with ingenuity and mastery of knowledge. The university is using now a building that adds to the welcoming space filled with new technology and comfortable furniture a living invitation to embrace the enthusiasm for learning, freedom of thinking, creativity and innovation.

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Film promotes Lifelong Learning

Jess and the Mighty Journey, a new film by The Smith Family uses a real life story to highlight education as a key driver for change.

Watch the growth of a child sponsored by the organisation's Learning for Life program, which supports disadvantaged children with education.



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Glenorchy City Council LEARN Strategy

Glenorchy City Council in Tasmania has launched a LEARN (Learning, Engaging, Achieving, Respect and Networking) Strategy to provide the community with opportunities to continue learning for life.

The LEARN Strategy aims to address low participation and attainment in education and training across all age groups and create learning opportunities for the whole Glenorchy community.

‘It’s no secret that educational attainment and retention are quite poor in Glenorchy,’ the Mayor of Glenorchy Kristie Johnston says. ‘But education is so important in all areas of our lives. It underpins our success in employment, health and community wellbeing.’ Through the development of partnerships, the Council plans to improve education, training and employment outcomes for young people and encourage and support a culture of lifelong learning in Glenorchy.

‘The Council doesn’t provide educational services but we have a very important role in facilitating discussion and showing leadership,’ Ald Johnston says.

The partnerships approach guided the Strategy’s development. Over the last 2 years, Glenorchy City Council has consulted with over 200 stakeholders, including in depth conversations with 42 key education, training and employment service providers.

The Strategy is informed by Australian Bureau of Statistics research and builds on a number of government plans. The research phase of developing the strategy also involved a review of plans and approaches to establishing learning communities in Australia and overseas.

‘It was a fantastic experience for us to take part in this process and the whole Council was involved in its development,’ Ald Johnston says. ‘It was a learning process for the Council as well as for the community. Our extensive community consultation and the research we undertook stimulated conversations that had not happened before. The process was a revelation to many on our Council.’

With the launch of the Strategy complete, a Leadership Group was established to develop projects, community campaigns and other initiatives.

‘We’re already seeing differences,’ Ald Johnston says. ‘People in the community are more aware of programs available and have a better understanding of what’s on offer.’

<http://www.gcc.tas.gov.au>

- Retention rates in Glenorchy are low with 50.3% of the total adult population having left school at Year 10 or below.
- One in four of the current student population in Glenorchy continues on to complete Year 12.
- Job Service Providers in Glenorchy have reported that more than 10% of their total clients are 16–18 years of age at first contact.
- Only 35% of 19–21 year olds living in Glenorchy are attending any educational institution.

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Growing Brimbank

A collaborative approach to lifting health and education outcomes

The LEARN Strategy aims to address low participation and attainment in education and training across all age groups and create learning opportunities for the whole Glenorchy community.

The Brimbank Collaboration will use an integrated, collective approach based on the principle that good health and quality education outcomes are fundamental to individual wellbeing and critical to the creation of thriving and prosperous communities. [Find the report here.](#)

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Inovate and Prosper

Ensuring Australia's future competitiveness through university-industry collaboration

[Link to Resource](#)

[PricewaterhouseCoopers](#) , [Australian Industry Group](#) , [Australian Technology Network of Universities](#)

Source: [PricewaterhouseCoopers](#)

Source: [Australian Industry Group](#)

Source: [Australian Technology Network of Universities](#)

30 March 2015

Executive summary

The continuation of Australia's economic growth is under threat. In order to sustain the levels of prosperity we have previously experienced, we have to build on our competitive edge in key industries to remain globally competitive. Alongside these developments, Australia's higher education system is under increased pressure to become more productive and develop courses that address employability. Innovation represents the most reliable and sustainable solution to transition into a high value, high wage economy. Yet Australia ranks 29th out of 30 in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in terms of the proportion of large businesses and small to medium enterprises (SMEs) collaborating with higher education and public research institutions on innovation.

This report acts as the next level of detail to publications such as the Department of Industry's Boosting the Commercial Returns from Research report and the Business Council of Australia's Building Australia's Comparative Advantages, which have highlighted Australia's poor performance in collaborative innovation.

We present five recommendations that are a call to action to universities, industry and Government to take the necessary steps to build an innovation economy. They are not a call for additional funding from Government, rather a more effective way of using our existing resources. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) have engaged with leading figures from industry, including the

Australian Industry Group (Ai Group), and partnered with the ATN to develop this five point action plan for Government, the university sector and industry 5 that will provide incentives and impetus for collaboration.

Our recommendations include:

1. Rebalance the national research agenda to underpin Australia's economy and future prosperity
2. Create incentives for university-industry collaboration
3. Train researchers for diverse careers
4. Enhance career mobility between industry, academia and government
5. Provide incentives for co-investment in research infrastructure between universities, industry and state and federal government

Each recommendation contains a number of practical strategies for consideration by Government, universities and industry. The hope

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National Award for Albury OOSH

25 March 2015

Albury Out Of School Hours (OOSH), operated by AlburyCity, has been awarded the highest rating a service can achieve under the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care.

"This is a great achievement by the team at Albury OOSH," said AlburyCity General Manager, Frank Zaknich. "Out of more than seven thousand services that were assessed and rated throughout Australia, only 27 have been given a rating of 'Excellent'. AlburyCity is proud to deliver such a high quality important service to the local community."

Chair of Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, Rachel Hunter, said Albury OOSH received the Excellent rating for its outstanding work in creating collaborative relationships and ongoing commitment to building inclusive partnerships with children and families.

Albury OOSH actively works with a range of community and professional organisations, including the Network of Community Activities (NCA), the peak organisation for OOSH services in NSW.

"It is great to see Albury OOSH taking an active leadership role in the broader OOSH sector, seeking out and taking opportunities to share knowledge with other services," Ms Hunter said.

Albury OOSH identified that children with additional needs had limited access to services in the surrounding area. Through its involvement in the National Child Care Flexibility Trials, educators developed a number of new education and care options for children with additional needs, increasing both flexibility and access to Albury OOSH.

Albury OOSH also has a strong focus on respecting children's rights, particularly a child's right to have an opinion and be heard, and a child's right to privacy.

"Albury OOSH is inspirational in the way it promotes children's rights and decision-making ability; encouraging them to make decisions about how they spend their time at the service," Ms Hunter said.

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Securing livelihoods for all: Foresight for action

OECD Development Centre

31 March 2015

Source:

OECD Development Centre

[Link to Resource](#)

Presents five possible future scenarios for livelihoods, whose positive or negative outcomes depend on how several emerging challenges are dealt with.

Summary

The world has made good progress in improving global livelihoods. More than two billion people have emerged from extreme poverty over the last four decades. Other notable improvements include real increases in wages for unskilled workers, better life expectancy, greater gender equality and more widespread literacy. However, a number of daunting challenges threaten to undo this progress, particularly on the demographic and environmental fronts.

While outlining the status of livelihoods today, this report enumerates the main emerging trends which will have a significant impact on livelihoods in the near future. It looks at a whole range of issues: economy, technology, demography, environment, security and governance. This report presents five possible future scenarios for livelihoods, whose positive or negative outcomes depend on how several emerging challenges are dealt with. It concludes with ideas for global, national and local action that hold significant promise for securing resilient livelihoods for all.

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The Role of Higher Education in Regional and Community Development and in the Time of Economic Crisis

Caroline Carlot, Jean-Marie Filloque, Michael Osborne, Peter Welsh

About This Publication

- Set out in two main parts, this book illustrates concepts and practices covering the wide range of forms of engagement that universities can have with their regions. A number of the chapters deal with the challenging issues of our times, which have become the core concerns of politicians, funders of research, academics and civil society, including climate change, food security, youth unemployment, indigeneity, health and demography, and frames them within the contexts of rurality and the economic crisis. The collection provides variously theoretical contexts for understanding the university's role in engagement, tools for analysis, and many concrete examples of practice. All of these elements are important not only for universities, but also their regions and their multiple stakeholders.

The first part considers the role of higher education (HE) in regional and community development, with special consideration for remote or isolated regions. Examples of best practice from local initiatives, which are often the result of bringing together individuals from very diverse backgrounds and disciplines, are presented, and include the lifelong learning strategies of universities as they pertain to the development of a sustainable economy and issues of rurality. The second part considers the role of HE in a time of crisis. It builds on the recurrent and topical subject of crisis – economic, social and political – but also that related to climatic and environmental events. The chapters in this theme examine, from various angles, questions covering the roles and responsibilities of universities and the results of their research, independence and funding, elite and popular education, responsibility and awareness-raising.

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This book will be of interest to:

- individuals in universities developing outreach activity with regional

stakeholders across a range of discipline specialisms, including staff in continuing education and outreach settings;

- those in both the public and private sectors who are existing or potential beneficiaries of university outreach, who will be introduced to practices that both validate what they are currently doing and provide insight into what is possible; and

- scholars in continuing education, administrative studies and urban studies.

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The shared work of Learning

Lifting educational achievement through collaboration

Tom Bentley, Ciannon Cazaly 14 May 2015

Source: **Mitchell Institute for Health and Education Policy**

[Link to Resource](#)

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This report argues that leaving the momentum of educational improvement to the status quo will result in widening inequality and stagnation in Australia.

Key findings:

Overall, student performance in Australia is not improving. But some schools in Australia, serving highly disadvantaged students and families, are successfully using collaboration to support student achievement.

Common features of the practices in these diverse schools can be applied to strategies for wider, systemic change.

This research examines how the schools and their partners use:

- **Professional collaboration** to support, sustain, evaluate and refine professional learning, and to access expertise, data and relevant practice.
- **Local collaboration** with other schools, universities, employers and community organisations to provide structure and resources for student achievement.
- **Collaboration with students, parents and local community** to build trust and social capital.

Collaboration – the sharing of effort, knowledge and resources in the pursuit of shared goals – is created through a wide range of flexible, trust-based relationships.

The high impact schools featured in this research:

- actively seek connections and resources that create value for students;
- develop ‘local learning systems’ to translate connections and resources into concrete actions; and
- apply a consistent rationale, focused on student learning, to choose and prioritise collaborative projects and relationships.

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Insight Article

WYNDHAM LEARNING FORUM WORKSHOP

In 2013/14, 44 passionate Wyndham community representatives came together over a number of weeks to develop the Wyndham Learning Community Strategy 2014-2017. Facilitated by Wyndham City, the group was tasked with providing advice and recommendations to encourage learning in the municipality and the strategy they produced included a number of actions to do just that.

The Wyndham Learning Community Strategy was adopted by Council in May, 2014. Since then, Wyndham City has been busy putting the group's recommendations into action with the appointment of the Coordinator Community Learning in October 2014, an inaugural Education Week Breakfast planned for 20th May 2015, and the undertaking of the review of the Wynlearn Website just some of the key achievements.

The Learning Community Network reconvened on Wednesday 29th April 2015 at the Civic Centre, providing participants with an update on Learning Community Strategy achievements from Portfolio holder for Employment, Education and Training, Cr Heather Marcus. There was also a chance to hear about and contribute to the discussion surrounding strategy aims for year two."

Participants were treated to an inspiring keynote speech by Dr Shanti Wong, a highly regarded educator, researcher and consultant in the community learning field, who highlighted emerging trends in community learning

nationally and internationally. Shanti also facilitated a workshop enabling the network to collaborate on plans to achieve the Year 2 Aims of the Learning Community Strategy. Those attending were also able to make new connections and network at the event as well.

Ms Meri Ivanovska, Manager Community Transition Support at Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network, provided some reflections on Learning, Engagement and Community Participation opportunities for people with disabilities.

Learning Forum Workshops will be held annually to provide a regular opportunity to reflect on strategy achievements, share information about learning in the community and prompt potential collaborations for service provision.

For more information about the Wyndham Learning Community Strategy please contact the Coordinator Community Learning Diane Tabbagh on 8734 2600.

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The Empty Lunchbox

The experience of primary schools with students who are homeless

[Link to Resource](#)

[Download file](#)

Roy Martin

Source: Hanover Welfare Services

26 March 2015

Executive Summary

This exploratory study is the first time that the point of view of primary schools and their day-to-day experiences of dealing with student homelessness have been investigated. The findings make an important contribution to the broader evidence base on the detrimental impact of homelessness on children's education. Engagement and wellbeing are fundamental to learning. Given that homelessness can interfere with school engagement and wellbeing, it poses a major obstacle to learning.

The overall objectives of the project were to:

- Explore how schools currently identify and work with primary students who are homeless;
- Explore how schools respond and support students and what difficulties or barriers are encountered; and
- Identify the most effective ways to support the learning of students who are homeless.

Method

Two stages of data collection were involved. The first stage was an online survey and the second a telephone interview; participation in one or both was completely voluntary.

In the first stage, an email campaign was initially sent to 932 Victorian public primary schools inviting them to participate in an online survey. A total of 139 schools completed the online survey, yielding a response rate of 15%.

Of this group, 45 flagged that they had experience with students who were homeless. This group was invited to participate in the second stage of the project: a telephone interview. A total of 21 interviews were completed, which lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. All interviews were recorded and

transcribed. Findings reported here are informed by the survey and interviews.

Key findings

Diversity in school experiences

The findings highlighted a stark contrast between schools and their experiences of students who were homeless. Two distinct groups emerged: at one end of the spectrum, most (63%) of the schools that participated in the study reported that they 'never' or 'very rarely' encountered students experiencing homelessness. At the other end, a small number of the schools were dealing with the issue on a regular basis. For these schools, generally located in disadvantaged communities, homelessness was not an isolated feature, but part of a broader range of social and economic difficulties with which they had to deal.

Those schools where homelessness was common had to allocate a range of resources to dealing with that and related situations. Such schools usually had good relations with local agencies, which they accessed regularly. Other local community groups and businesses also provided valuable financial and in-kind support to these schools. Despite the assistance from local communities, providing transport, food, clothing and other supports cost money which had to be found from the school budget.

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