

Not for publication

Office for Learning and Teaching

Grants program

Progress Report - January 2015

State-based Promoting Excellence Networks – Victoria/Tasmania

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Please refer to the document, *Project Management Information*, available on the OLT website, <http://www.olt.gov.au/grants-and-projects/project-management>.

1 Progress against specified outcomes and deliverables

1. Maintaining and sustaining an active VTAS network.

The VTAS network consists of a core project team of four Victorian/Tasmanian higher education institutions – Monash University, La Trobe University, Swinburne University and the University of Tasmania, and we have continued to receive strong support from our adjunct project team member RMIT.

Two showcase events were hosted in the second half of 2014, “Failure as a Pathway to Success” at Deakin University in June 2014 and “Creative forms of teaching evidence” at Victoria University in November 2014. Seven of the VTAS network institutions have now hosted workshops and Monash will host the final workshop in June 2015 under the current funding agreement. Each of the institution’s events has been beneficial for the professional development of PE staff and academic staff interested in OLT programs and ensuring a broad dissemination of information across large numbers of staff.

The project team attended meetings on 22 August and 30 September 2014. These were planning meetings ahead of the November and December events. Our project support officer maintained frequent communication with the various project team members involved in both workshops via email.

2. Continued PE staff supporting and training.

On 11 and 12 December 2014, the University of Tasmania hosted a professional learning event for VTAS Promoting Excellence staff entitled “Promoting Excellence in Partnership: Reflect, View and Resolution” held at the Sandy Bay Campus in Hobart which was a great success. (Annexure 1).

As well as representatives from Monash, RMIT, Swinburne, LaTrobe, and UTAS, we extended the invitation to other state-based networks and were fortunate to have representation from NSW, SA/NT, QLD and WA: Ms Brondalie Martin (University of Wollongong), Dr Jurg Bronnimann (Batchelor Institute), Dr Fernando Padro (University of Southern Queensland) and Andrea Fraser (University of Western Australia).

Ms Ellen Poels from the Office for Learning and Teaching provided an overview of the aims and objectives from a network perspective and participated in all the round table discussions on day 2.

3. Professional development relating to sharing of systems, knowledge and processes that contribute to optimising learning and teaching.

On 6 November 2014, Victoria University hosted the second 2014 event, entitled “Creative forms of teaching evidence workshop” at their city conference centre in Melbourne. (Annexure 2) The workshop invited a range of experts and leaders in the area, with presentations from Professor Denise Chalmers from the University of Western Australia (Keynote), Joy Whitton (Monash) and Melody West (UTAS), Kate Coleman (Deakin University) and a panel of three previous winners of the OLT Prime Minister’s Award for

Teaching Excellence (Professor James Arvanitakis, Associate Professor Mafhuz Aziz and Professor Stephen Barkoczy).

Attendance was excellent with 106 registrations. Feedback from the survey post workshop netted 47 responses was very positive. (Annexure 3). There was overwhelming support for these type of events as networking opportunities and for extending connections with other members of VTAS, but we need to look more carefully at the venue space and the types of activities.

4. Fostering collaborations between VTAS and interstate PE networks.

Each of our events in 2014 has engaged at least one member from state-based networks across Australia which has fostered continued collaboration with our interstate colleagues.

In addition, three members of the VTAS network also participated in the National OLT PEN network meeting hosted by the NSW-ACT network in Sydney in November 2014 which included discussions of how to demonstrate value of the network to key stakeholders and how to sustain network beyond the life of the funding agreements.

5. Enabling post-project dissemination, engagement and therefore impact of research project outcomes and resources

The VTAS website continues to provide the most effective form for post-project dissemination platform for all network institutions. VTAS events continue to include poster sessions and presentations by grant holders from time to time in its annual calendar of events.

6. Developing a sustainable social media presence for the network.

The Wordpress platform for the VTAS Network website (<http://vtasnetwork.com/>) was viewed 4,700 times in 2014. There were 28 new posts, with the most popular being the November "Creative forms of teaching evidence" workshop. Through a targeted campaign to invite workshop registrants to become friends of the network, our email followers to the website has increased to 147. Because email notifications are sent each time a new post is uploaded, it remains the most effective form of communication for our network. For a small licence fee this website will be able to be sustained post OLT funding if desired.

Need to strengthen our social media presence by promoting the VTAS network through Twitter feeds at events.

2 Review of Progress

2.1 Major achievements against schedule/ project brief

We have exceeded our expectation of four project team meetings, with nine having been scheduled in 2014, and more scheduled for 2015. This has been in part due to having a dedicated paid support officer engaged on the project. Within tight budget constraints we

have also been able to run an extra workshop in November which was outside the planned activities for the network.

We continue to have strong attendance at all our network events which is very encouraging and feedback is positive. We continue to have a well-visited website which effectively provides a platform for dissemination of projects and a sharing of resources.

2.2 Lessons learnt

Through a more targeted strategy around feedback, more responses have been received post events which is pleasing. We now need to focus on the ensuring that feedback, where possible, is taken on board to ensure quality of events is maintained.

Allowing overbooking of maximum registrations has proved successful, but the careful selection of venue space to cater for larger numbers needs to be addressed.

2.3 Challenges met

As we are sure will be the case with all state-based networks, it has become apparent that financial support from the Office for Learning and Teaching is critical to the continuance of the VTAS network. The project team institutions have indicated that further funding of such events is not possible post OLT funding.

2.4 Indicate if and how these challenges will have an impact on the outcomes, the timeline or the budget?

Challenges will not impact timeline or budget.

2.5 In terms of the planned deliverables, what is your estimation of how far the project has progressed? Please indicate percentage below:



3 Formative Evaluation

3.1 What formative evaluation processes are being used?

The project team collects data at the end of each network workshop in the form of survey responses from attendees. Also the core VTAS PEN team has regular reflective meetings that aim to address the challenges and lessons learnt.

3.2 What have you learnt from these processes thus far?

We are providing a great networking opportunity for attendees, but need to look carefully at the types of activities that are engaged in to facilitate this.

Sustaining the network remains challenging.

4 Events

Provide details of events held during the period. Events include workshops, forums or colloquiums involving participants outside of the project team.

Event Date	Event title, Location (city only)	Brief description of the purpose of the event	Number of participants	Number of higher education institutions represented	Number of other institutions represented
22.8.14	Project Team Mtg, Melbourne: Teleconference	Planning meeting for Nov Workshop & Prof Dev Workshop – Dec 2014	8	5	0
30.9.14	Project Team Mtg, Melbourne: Teleconference	Planning meeting for Nov Workshop & Prof Dev Workshop – Dec 2014	8	5	0
6.11.14	State-Based PEI Network Workshop – Victoria University	“Creative forms of teaching evidence”	106	9	
11/12.12.14	Professional Development Event, UTAS	Learning event for the PE staff within the Network	18	9	1 (Ellen Poels,OLT)

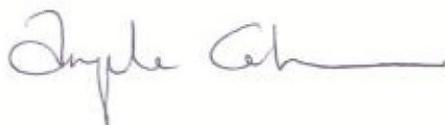
Provide details of events planned over the next six months. If you would like to publicise forthcoming events on the OLT website please email learningandteaching@education.gov.au.

5 Certification

Certification by project leader

I certify that this is an accurate representation of the progress of the project.

Project leader: Associate Professor Angela Carbone



Signature:

Date: 25 February 2015

Certification by DVC/PVC (Academic), or equivalent, or official delegate

I acknowledge submission of the Progress Report.

Full name: Professor Darrell Evans

Position: Vice-Provost (Learning and Teaching)



Signature:

Date: 26 February 2015

Please submit report via the Grants online portal: <http://www.olt.gov.au/grants-and-projects/project-management>