



THE EIDOS INSTITUTE RESEARCH AGENDA AND REVIEW

LIFE | WIRED | SUSTAINABLE | COMMUNITY | SAFE

2010-2011

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Eidos Institute is an independent and collaborative public policy think tank.

We harness the intellectual capacity from the university sector to deliver quality public policy research and thinking to government and non-government decision makers.

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EIDOS INSTITUTE

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RESEARCH AGENDA OVERVIEW

At a time when governments rely increasingly on evidence-based research to inform public policy, Eidos' capacity to connect good research with enlightened policy and available funding is second to none.

Eidos brokers teams of academics and consultants from within its membership, as well as from its national network of associates, in order to deliver large-scale and long-term projects of importance. Our emphasis on quality research ensures good policy outcomes.

PURPOSE

The Eidos Research Agenda 2010-11 establishes a framework for research, development and diffusion projects advancing issues of importance to Australian productivity and well-being.

The research program aims to build an evidence base to support policy development and implementation. It will deliver the evidence we need to answer these questions:

- + What will our future workforce look like?
- + What are Australia's skill and knowledge requirements? How many places will be required? And where?
- + Where will we source these skills? Should we import or create them?
- + What are the institutional arrangements that best create and maintain skills and knowledge?
- + How do we measure social and economic indicators like productivity and well-being?

RESOURCES

Eidos invests annually in human capital research projects aimed at improving investment in people and productivity.

Eidos and its partners support this research agenda through:

- + Leadership and strategy, especially by the Director
- + Program review, including through the Research Congress and the Senior Advisory Council
- + Providing infrastructure, including the Human Capital Gateway
- + Advising on best-practice methodology, including by ABS statistical advisors
- + Delivering access to data, including the OESR and ABS

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Board has established an Executive Advisory Council to “provide advice and recommendations to the Board on the use of the resources available for network activities”.

The Executive Advisory Council members are nominees from within the senior executive of the partner agencies. They meet twice a year to make recommendations on the election of Directors, approval of variations to constitution, receiving corporate documents such as annual reports, financial statements and corporate plans, and other activities consistent with the Network Rules.

The Senior Executive Advisory Council is chaired by Eidos Director, **Emeritus Professor Colin Power AM**.

The current members of Eidos’ Executive Advisory Council are:

- + **Professor Thomas Martin**, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research), Australian Catholic University.
 - + **Professor Jennelle Kyd**, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation), Central Queensland University.
 - + **Professor Sharon Bell**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor - Research & International, Charles Darwin University
 - + **Professor Ned Pankhurst**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation), Griffith University.
 - + **Professor Sandra Harding**, Vice-Chancellor, James Cook University.
 - + **Professor Ken Bowman**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Queensland University of Technology.
 - + **Professor Jerry de la Harpe**, Executive Director, Knowledge Partnerships, University of Melbourne.
 - + **Professor Mike Calford**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) The University of Newcastle.
 - + **Professor Iain Watson**, Academic Dean and Head of School Professor of Finance, University of Queensland
 - + **Professor Andrew Flitman**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Swinburne University of Technology.
-

THE FRAMEWORK

The Eidos Research Program seeks to advance the evidence base by investing in a range of activities, including:

POLICY-GENERATIVE RESEARCH

- + Research in this area will focus on current and future issues of concern to governments and industry.
- + The research initiatives will provide constructive advice on what works in the policy environment.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POPULATION MODELLING

- + Aims to address the dearth of modelling to support policy evaluation, particularly in relation to economic outcomes.
- + Social modelling is critical to the identification and assessment of the policy levers available to governments, and the results of policy implementation.
- + Demographic modelling is required to understand future social and population trends.

INNOVATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

- + Continuous improvement through rapid implementation of what works.
- + Research will inform policy options based on evidence.

RESEARCH AND POLICY CAPACITY BUILDING

- + The development of emerging researchers is critical to the capacity of the research sector to inform and influence public debate.
- + The capability of policy officers will be enhanced through coaching and targeted access to easily-digestible facts and research results.
- + Collaboration between policy and research staff is critical to focusing on priority issues and the timely diffusion of new ideas.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

- + The presentation of meta-data on a themed basis will make data access more efficient and ensure relevant data is better shared.
- + Linking researchers to catalogues and information registries, and to librarians and knowledge professionals, will improve their understanding and use of available data.

PART A: POLICY GENERATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS

Policy-generative research projects typically ask one clearly-articulated research question. They are funded through an annual competitive funding round, and by issuing research briefs throughout the year. Research projects may vary in length from a few weeks to a few years.

Projects should consider new ways to analyse and develop responses to the challenges of government, acknowledging that past solutions may not work in the future. In particular, there is a need to investigate demand-side solutions which focus on the capacity of communities and individuals to contribute to the solution, such as was achieved with the Queensland Water Commission's Target 140 water consumption policy.

Eidos' preference is for projects to use existing data sets, particularly the opportunities arising from Census 2006.

Suggested projects, categorized by the life stages of an individual, might investigate:

- + **Gestation and birth** - The impact of low birth weight outcomes on social and educational development.
- + **Preschool** - A literature review of the costs and benefits of pre-school, incorporating available measures of early childhood development.
- + **School** - The effectiveness of teachers in schools.
- + **Transitions from school and university to work** - The pathways and options for transitions from schooling.
- + **University** - The progress of milestone measures recommended by the 1991 Finn Review, with particular emphasis on Indigenous and disadvantaged groups.
- + **Work** - Determinants of under-employment or, job-skill alignment.
- + **Beyond formal work** - Role of the aged in productive activity and eldership.
- + **Regional** - Scenarios of regional industry, occupations and skills.
- + **Community** - Solutions to growing concerns about the impact of some teenage behaviours.

PART B: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, OR POPULATION MODELLING PROJECTS

All policy is based on at least some form of conceptual model, which is often not explicit. Projects in Part B will be targeted to issues that are important, relevant and timely.

Economic, social and population modelling projects are aimed at synthesising existing data and research into models that may be used to test policy initiatives or future scenarios. Part B also seeks to develop capacity in researchers and policy makers in the development and use of modelling.

Priorities for 2010-11 include:

- + Macro-modelling of the impact of social and economic programs on human capital outcomes.
- + Population-based modelling of supply and demand.
- + Simulation models for social programs to support scenario analysis.

Specific projects may include the following:

- + **Gestation and birth** - Model the determinants of poor versus good birth outcomes.
- + **Preschool** - Develop a model of birth to prep, including milestones and programs from the literature, and meta-analysis of data.
- + **School** - Develop models for key milestones across the schooling experience.
- + **Work** - Build population-based labour supply models; produce labour supply and demand projections.
- + **Work** - Model the determinants of workforce participation.
- + **Regional** - Develop population-based local area models of employment and skills.

PART C: INNOVATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Projects in Part C will focus on the development and diffusion of ideas generated by research. They aim to translate theory into practice. These projects are aimed at enhancing productivity and well-being through improved policy and strategy.

These projects will translate the research data into tangible solutions that drive high performance in governments and businesses. They will develop and test approaches for the implementation of policies that make a difference.

Priority areas for 2010-11 include:

- + Rapid implementation of selected government policies.
- + Application of human capital theory to business and industry.
- + On-the-job human capital formation strategies that work.
- + Business/tertiary education partnerships that deliver enhanced productivity.

Across the life course, these projects may include:

- + **University** - aligning business and industry needs to educational outputs.
- + **Work** - retention strategies that drive improved productivity.
- + **Work** - human capital formation for innovation.
- + **Regional** - regional and local labour supply and demand.
- + **Community** - community engagement for sustainability and productivity.

PART D: RESEARCH AND POLICY CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Research and policy capacity building activities aim to develop the skills and resources of policy officers and researchers, through a collaborative and supported environment. These activities include conferences for early researchers and training workshops and laboratories that foster policy and research interaction.

Priorities for 2010-11 include:

- + Evidence-based policy development.
- + Evaluation capabilities in economic and program analysis.
- + Policy skills development.
- + Approaches for systematic review of policy submissions.

These may be achieved through:

- + An annual Summer School for policy analysts.
- + The "Emerge" annual conference for emerging policy researchers.
- + A cadet program for developing policy officers.
- + Accessing and using statistics for policy development.
- + Providing briefings and opinion based on research program.
- + Working with modellers on specific policy issues.
- + Holding workshops on economic evaluation methodologies.

PART E: INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Information dissemination is central to Eidos' philosophy of open source information and our aim of providing an evidence base for policy development.

The most critical element of Part E is the publication of meta-data as an aid to the discovery of relevant data for research and analyses.

Projects aim to establish and further develop the comprehensiveness and accuracy of data and research information disseminated through the Human Capital Gateway.

Priorities in this part for 2010-11 include:

- + Further developing technical infrastructure, using open source technologies, that can be maintained and optimised over time.
- + Developing an initial suite of key indicators that can be subsequently added to and enhanced.
- + Developing context-specific links to existing data, as well as policy and research outputs.
- + Generating wider exposure for published metadata.

Some specific data projects that may be undertaken include:

- + **Gestation and birth** - The identification, documentation and collation of key data.
- + **Preschool** - Identifying, documenting and linking data to current milestone indicators, tests (including addressing the data issues of the Australian Early Development Index, or AEDI), for Queensland.
- + **Beyond formal work** - developing non-monetary "productivity" measures.
- + **Community** - Developing and specifying local area measures of human capital and assessing the need for longitudinal surveys.
- + **Regional** - Creating a synopsis of changing regional industry and occupations data.

ATTACHMENT ONE: EIDOS INSTITUTE RESEARCH REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Section One summarises the evolution of the Eidos Institute Research Agenda from 2003 to 2011. It details the number of completed and current projects funded under each theme and research area.

Section Two provides a stock-take of the research evidence base, theme by theme, with a particular emphasis on the contribution of completed Eidos Institute research.

Each sub-section identifies the current projects that will extend the evidence base in relation to the policy research aim.

Web links for completed projects are included to provide rapid access to the research reports if you are viewing this document on-line or as an electronic copy. If you are viewing a hard copy, please refer to the tables in Section Four, which list the Project Codes, Project Titles and Key Findings.

A full listing of Eidos Research Projects is available at research.eidos.org.au

SECTION 1: EVOLUTION OF THE EIDOS RESEARCH AGENDA

THEMES AND RESEARCH AREAS 2003-2011

The Eidos Research program aims to investigate human capital via large-scale diagnostic research, evaluation and policy development. Go to humancapitalgateway.org for more information.

The Eidos Research Agenda is structured into Research Themes (Table 1) and within these, 'research areas' (Table 2).

The themes of the Research Agendas from 2003 to 2011 are detailed below.

TABLE 1: EIDOS RESEARCH AGENDAS RESEARCH THEMES 2003 - 2011

THEME #	RESEARCH THEME
1	Life
2	Wired
3	Sustainable
4	Community
5	Safe

The policy research theme 3 'Sustainable' was a renaming of the theme 'Green' in 2006.

The research areas, within each research theme, that have been used from 2003-2011 are detailed in the Table below, along with the number of projects undertaken (including completed and current projects) in each research theme and area.

TABLE 2: RESEARCH GROUPS AND RESEARCH AREAS BY NUMBERS OF COMPLETED AND CURRENT PROJECTS

RESEARCH GROUP #	RESEARCH AREA	COMPLETED	CURRENT	TOTAL
1	LIFE	17	0	17
1.1	Early Years	2	0	2
1.2	Middle Years	2	0	2
1.3	Secondary Years	1	0	1
1.4	Post Schooling	6	0	6
1.5	Workforce	4	0	4
1.6	Seniors	2	0	2
2	WIRED	1	0	1
2.1	Measuring Technology	1	0	1
3	SUSTAINABLE	4	0	4
3.1	Enhancing Leadership	1	0	1
3.2	Sustainable Systems	3	0	3
4	COMMUNITY	7	0	7
4.1	Community Engagement	5	0	5
4.2	Human Services	2	0	2
5	SAFE	0	0	0
Total		29	0	29

SECTION 2: COMPLETED AND CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

RESEARCH THEME 1: LIFE

The following is a list of the completed and current projects for each research area within Research Theme 1: Life. For each completed project, there is a brief summary of the key findings. For projects in progress, the project's purpose is also included.

RESEARCH AREA 1.1 EARLY YEARS

1.1.1 Preparing Early

This project evaluated the impact of a full-time preparatory year of schooling on school management and school communities, curriculum and pedagogy, resourcing, children's learning outcomes and development, and children's preparedness for compulsory schooling. It also identified the key components that impact on the effectiveness of a preparatory program in relation to policy decisions at a systemic level and school management decisions at a local level, and highlighted key considerations for the Queensland Government's implementation of a full-time preparatory year across all sectors. It also commenced a longitudinal monitoring of the impact of these initiatives on children's learning and development using a range of measures, and provided schools participating in the Preparing for School trials with feedback throughout the trials.

1.1.2 Setting Them Up for Strong Futures: Education as a Key to Social Capital and Human Capacity Building for Indigenous People

The project identified a number of attributes that are essential for Indigenous children if they are to be successful in education and gaining employment. It also found a large number of activities that would result in the attainment of these attributes through schooling and in the community. A key finding is the vast amount of "grey" literature on activities that may attribute to improved outcomes. Further work is needed to bring together the evidence on relevant programs, evaluate the success of all initiatives, confirm the full suite of services and to identify appropriate service delivery agents to enhance outcomes for Indigenous children and youth.

RESEARCH AREA 1.2 MIDDLE YEARS

1.2.1 Marching to a Different Beat: A Review of the International Literature on Youth Camp Initiatives

This research examined the International Literature around the philosophies, principles, processes and outcomes of Youth Camp initiatives in reducing offending and re-offending behaviours and increasing the success of rehabilitation efforts for young people coming in contact with the youth justice systems. The research found:

- + The effectiveness of all Youth camp initiatives is uncertain.
- + Wilderness and adventure camps have a greater likelihood of generating long term behavioural changes than boot camps.
- + More holistic programs that work in a whole range of contexts in the young people's lives are more effective.

RESEARCH AREA 1.3 SENIOR YEARS

1.3.1 Advantage through structured flexibility - Operations of Schooling Review

Maintaining the current operations of schooling can impact significantly in ensuring the advantaged continue to display the best outcomes while the less well off become even more disadvantaged. The review delivered a comprehensive theoretical model that mapped the relationships amongst operational aspects of schooling and identified moderating and mediating relationships known to be of relevance when predicting student outcomes. These outcomes included social, behavioural and academic indicators of success.

The study proposed new theoretical perspectives on operations of schooling to break the mould of current practice and contribute to improved, equitable and sustainable outcomes for students. The key concept of "structured flexibility" conceives of schools as physical or virtual precincts incorporating multiple phases of schooling and potentially with community-based sub-schools that may include horizontal or vertical groupings. In the proposed approach, fluid and flexible attendance patterns and timetables are provided to meet the needs of different student groups, and precincts are architecturally designed to be pedagogically sound and technology rich. The study also suggests that savings from larger, more efficient precincts, usually found in urban areas, be transferred to higher cost, smaller schools and virtual precincts, and to large poor quality educational institutions.

RESEARCH AREA 1.4 POST-SCHOOLING

1.4.1 Taking a Break - School to Higher Education Transitions in Queensland

The report examines six terms of reference considering the transition of students from Year 12 to higher education studies in Queensland. It focuses on current trends in student enrolments in Queensland and other states and territories in Australia, the impact of alternative pathways on student enrolments, issues affecting student enrolments and the applicability of the current transfer rate measure.

- + There is a trend for Year 12 students in Queensland to choose pathways other than direct entry to higher education.
- + Many high-achieving Year 12 students are opting not to enrol in higher education.
- + Multiple pathways exist through which students participate in higher education by a relatively young age.

There is a lack of Queensland-based evidence that considers location, cost, socio-economic status and students' aspirations and perceptions of themselves as learners, and the impact on students' participation in higher education. The current transfer rate measure does not facilitate comparisons to be made at both the national and international level.

1.4.2 A fair go beyond the school gate? - Systemic factors affecting participation and attainment in tertiary education by low SES group

The project investigated the systemic factors affecting participation and attainment in tertiary education by Queensland students from low socio-economic status backgrounds in order to inform policy development and address professional skills shortages.

Current literature demonstrates that students from LSES backgrounds are significantly under-represented in post-secondary education and training. Further those students who do not participate are distributed proportionately over the lower vocational certificate end of the spectrum.

A myriad of reasons exists for why students successfully participate and progress in higher education. No single factor operates in isolation. Economic costs play a significant role in the decision to participate in higher education. A combination of educational opportunities and subject choice during school years, along with access to reliable and supportive advice from a range of sources represent a powerful set of enablers.

Barriers include low-level literacy levels, deficiencies in teaching and learning support, lack of parental experience of higher education, and limited educational resources at home.

Systemic policies and practices that boost participation and attainment fall into 3 general categories: provision of financial assistance, awareness raising and capacity building.

1.4.3 Attraction and retention of suitably-qualified specialist roles in Queensland schools

This project investigated the barriers and enablers in attracting and retaining suitably qualified professionals to specialist teaching and non-teaching roles in Queensland State Schools. The project, funded by Department of Education, Training and the Arts, used survey instruments and focus groups of four sub-groups involving year 10-12 students, higher education students, current staff in specialist teaching and non-teaching roles and non-teaching professionals.

Critical to choosing a teaching career were job security, balance between work and home, personal fulfilment, helping people, cost and length of training, career pathway and collaborative processes in schools. Better targeted information would also help people opt for a career in education. IN rural and remote areas there are challenges in isolation and a need for peer review and support, mentoring and professional development, and career paths. A number of recommendations are made to enhance recruitment and retention.

1.4.4 Indigenous Higher Education School to University Pathways Project

The purpose of this research is to identify and support Indigenous secondary students who are willing to make the transition to university education. To also raise the aspirations, confidence and educational outcomes of Indigenous secondary students. Finally, to build pathways for Indigenous students in rural and/or remote areas of Australia.

1.4.5 Scenario Analysis of Queensland's working age qualification profile to 2020

The Department of Education, Training and the Arts funded a project to develop and evaluate a range of scenarios that detail the future qualification profile by Queensland's working population by year of age and by sex. The project developed a spreadsheet model to capture the historical structure in the data and to make statistical projections. The model is to be used to predict VET places in Queensland, with projections on a yearly basis up to 2020.

1.4.6 Identifying Skills Deficiencies in Bahrain's Labour Market (Labour Fund)

The Kingdom of Bahrain is currently reshaping its future with three key reform movements – economic, labour market and educational system. The study focused on what the Kingdom of Bahrain's labour market requires in terms of skills and occupations over the next 10 years.

The study provided a comprehensive analysis of 13 areas of economic activity, including summary of current market situation, comparison with relevant International developments, analysis of trends, and estimates of future skills gaps. A series of consultations and a regional conference were used to develop future scenarios and action plans.

RESEARCH AREA 1.5 WORKFORCE

1.5.1 Effective Models for Employment Based Training: Fundamentals for Effective Outcomes

This project examined effective employment based training (EBT) models within a formalised contract of training at the Australian Qualification Certificate III level and above. The focus of the research was around arrangements to maintain a balance between learning experiences in educational institutions and the workplace. The findings of the research suggest the push for contracts of training at higher VET levels may not be the preferred option for industry. Improved course based options with added work experience components might be the better way to proceed or at least offer viable options for RTOs to pursue.

1.5.2 Workforce Transitions: Occupational Mobility in Queensland

The aim of this project was to examine the occupational mobility of workers in Queensland. There was a focus on professional and trade occupations within the industry sectors of civil construction, automotive and aged care to demonstrate the methodology on sectors of current policy relevance.

The predominant worker/job characteristics found to facilitate occupational mobility were never married, engaged in work-related certificate courses, previous job having been temporary/casual, and penalty rebates/bonuses. Conversely, the characteristics that were found to discourage occupational mobility included age, educational attainment of part certificate, hours worked, years worked after returning to workforce, current pay above award, promotional opportunities with current employer. There were different motivations for the three sectors investigated, with Aged Care sector motivated by enjoyment of tasks and flexible employment to stay with an employer. Automotive sector and Civil Construction were motivated more by income-related reasons. Job security was also important for Automotive sector.

1.5.3 The Importance of Qualifications: Credentialism in the 21st Century

The purpose of the project was to examine the nexus between formal qualifications and employment in the workforce. A survey of 300 employers in Queensland across three industries and seven categories of employees obtained information on the use of qualifications and experience in recruiting.

The majority of employers consider formal qualifications as essential for job recruitment, with 85% valuing them as mandatory/very important. TAFE modules and short courses were more valued in construction and trade. There was consensus that relevant industry experience was an important attribute. Employers' trust in qualifications was influenced by their experience with employees with those qualifications, Australian qualifications and the type and level. Concerns with TAFE level qualifications included the move to competency training has downgraded the skill level of tradesmen, the quality of trainers and the perception that it was too easy to become licensed in some trades.

1.5.4 Strategies to Minimise the Impact of Challenging Times on Training

The purpose of this project was to identify the most effective strategies that the construction industry could put in place to ensure that apprentices and trainees continue to be employed during an industry downturn. The project, commissioned by Construction Skills Queensland, involved a literature scan, a scenario planning workshop and the development of operational recommendations. It identified that companies need to adopt a proactive long term approach to the inevitable cyclical fluctuations. Strategies include more flexible training pathways, upward mobility of apprentices/trainees, flexible content of training, gap- flexible year, establishment of a construction training academy and extensive marketing campaigns.

RESEARCH AREA 1.6 SENIORS

1.6.1 Productive Ageing Scoping Project

National Seniors Australia funded a project to develop a framework or a 'Chart of Accounts' that measures the economic and social contributions of older Australians who are 55 years & over. Findings from a review of key data, literature and policy documents informed the development of a 'Chart of Accounts'. Users can identify and calculate the contributions made by older Australians as well as the loss to the economy and community for not utilising the knowledge and skills that these people have built up over a lifetime. Users can also track changes in the contributions made by older Australians over time, and make predictions about future contributions by using existing data as the baseline.

1.6.2 National Seniors Consulting Gateway

The National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre commissioned Eidos in partnership with Central Queensland University to investigate the feasibility of establishing an online gateway that links retired and semi-retired policymakers, academics and researchers (who are NSA members) to work opportunities offered by Eidos and its eight university members. Through the gateway, the Eidos Institute and the National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre aim to engage NSA members in a dialogue to find and implement solutions to the challenge of human capital facing the future of Australian society.

RESEARCH THEME 2: WIRED

The following is a list of the completed and current projects for each research area within Research Theme 2: Wired. For each project there is a brief summary of the key findings.

RESEARCH AREA 2.1 MEASURING TECHNOLOGY

2.1.1 Measuring Technology

In Queensland, "Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF): ICT's for Learning" outlines a significant change in emphasis for Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), moving from a focus on hardware standards, towards a focus on learning. An important part of this strategy has been the development of a performance measurement instrument to determine the level of ICT integration in the curriculum. An evaluation of the ICT Integration Performance Measurement Instrument (The Instrument) identified:

- + The instrument requires modification to comply with a 20 item model and improvements be made to the wording of the items and the quality of the examples.
- + The interface design and display of results needs modification.
- + Strategies need to be developed for enabling and supporting teachers to engage effectively and knowledgeable with the instrument.

RESEARCH THEME 3: SUSTAINABLE

The following is a list of the completed and current projects for each research area within Research Theme 3: Sustainable. For each project there is a brief summary of the key findings.

RESEARCH AREA 3.1 ENHANCING LEADERSHIP

3.1.1 Enhancing Leadership for the Future

This project delivered a learning experience that developed the leadership capability of aspiring leaders and supports a mentoring culture across the education Queensland. The Enhancing Leadership for the Future (ELF) project provided development opportunities for a group of aspiring principals from Education Queensland and develops the mentoring capability amongst experienced principals.

RESEARCH AREA 3.2 SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS

3.2.1 Teacher Education for Sustainability Project

The Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) funded a project to pilot mainstreaming sustainability into pre-service teacher education. The project was in partnership with Eidos Institute and ARIES, the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability. This project was a combined action-research and whole-of-system approach which sought to engage actors and decision-makers across the teacher education system, including Federal and State government agencies, teacher accreditation bodies, curriculum bodies, teacher educators, schools and community-based organisations engaged in sustainability within formal education.

The research indicated that the Mainstreaming Sustainability model is able to facilitate organisational and systemic change over time, if individuals have the conceptual and personal capacities to facilitative change, that is to be a key agent of changes, and where there is good understanding of systemic change and opportunities for leveraging change within systems.

3.2.2 Queensland Water Infrastructure Sustainable Infrastructure Delivery Indicators Project

This scoping study produced an overview of the proposed evidence-based quantitative and qualitative reporting system required to formally verify the implementation success of QWI's socio-economic vision for sufficient water infrastructure projects.

RESEARCH THEME 4: COMMUNITY

The following is a list of the completed and current projects for each research area within Research Theme 4: Community. For each project there is a brief summary of the key findings.

RESEARCH AREA 4.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1.1 Beyond Rhetoric: University-Community Engagement in Victoria

This overview of community engagement principles and strategies in Victorian Universities includes a discussion of various organisational, social and policy factors that influence the efficacy of community engagement. There was significant inter-university diversity in engagement strategies and emphasis largely due to different histories and campus locations, and the different ways in which universities define and relate to their multiple communities. Evidence found that educational, social and economic benefits of community engagement will be undermined by higher education policies which emphasise competitiveness, commercialization and cutbacks.

4.1.2 In Search of Evidence: Measuring Community Engagement

The project investigated the practicality of using currently collected and published information to report against a set of indicators of the type and extent of community engagement activity in Victorian Universities.

The International literature search resulted in six sets of indicators and proposals that could prove useful in the development of a set of indicators for community engagement. These were evaluated for relevance, reliability, transparency, availability, auditability and cost.

The research suggests that at present there is insufficient information reported to even superficially understand the level of community engagement being undertaken by a university. This is not as a result of the indicator sets. Real reporting of achievements against stated intention only takes place to a very limited extent.

4.1.3 Community Consultation for Strategic Futures

This project facilitated eight community consultation and engagement forums on South East Queensland with Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islanders to identify barriers and opportunities for improving vocational outcomes in remote areas. The consultation process identified:

- + the system needs to engage parents in early childhood as the foundation for later learning;
- + there is inconsistency of advice and information given to students, parents and the community;
- + it is important to foster positive relationships between parents and schools; and
- + better systems are needed for the transition of students across levels of schooling.

Further research is needed into the impact of mobility on students, the promotion and progression of Indigenous leaders in education, and the employment and retention of Indigenous teachers.

RESEARCH AREA 4.2 HUMAN SERVICES

4.2.1 Cost-Benefit Analysis of Models of Human Service Delivery

The study undertook a review of the literature on the costs and benefits of alternative models of government investment in human service delivery based on national and international evidence. It found that:

- + there is a near absence of information on the relative effectiveness of alternative approaches to procuring human services;
- + there is unlikely to be a one size fits all approach to selecting from among alternative delivery strategies; and
- + establishing, implementing and reviewing a methodology for assessing alternative approaches by government offers an opportunity for continuous improvement in achieving outcomes.

4.2.2 Intensive Behavioural Support Team

Queensland University of Technology in collaboration with Central Queensland University and The University of New England were successful in tendering with Eidos to undertake a project by Disability Services Queensland. The Project involved an evaluative research on Intensive Behavioural Support Teams initiative in the Greater Brisbane and Moreton regions, measuring outcomes, program integrity and program implementation.

FUTURE THINKING

Over the past five years Eidos has developed a respected methodology for ongoing policy reform. As a public policy think tank free of an ideological bent, Eidos is a unique entity on the Australian political landscape.

Eidos has been taking steps to expand its horizons at an international level. Our work in South Africa and Abu Dhabi has confirmed the fluidity and flexibility of our network model. Expansion in the traditional sense equates to a tangible increase in size, structure and operations. In our case however, we are proposing that the expansion and evolution of the Eidos networking model and method will require an emphasis on 'light' networking and emerging innovative organisational models.

The central challenge facing our knowledge society in the coming decade is the increasing complexity of issues relating to public welfare and public policy. Policy formulation is not a static process, and our response to it must account for this sense of fluidity. Providing a medium which allows for previously disparate arms of government, industry, business and academia to intertwine, Eidos is seeking to transition into a more flexible entity which tailors its response to suit this current climate.

Our work to this end has been supported by a number of governmental and non-governmental organisations, reflecting our desire to engage with both the public and private sphere in the name of co-operative and collaborative responses to social policy issues.

The projected establishment of Eidos South Africa in February 2011 is a case study in the internationalisation of the Eidos model. South Africa and Australia share a number of links in the area of higher education. In a global marketplace where the interface between private and public is breaking up and the relationship between universities and industry is evolving to new and varied heights, the time is ripe for expansion at an international level.

Over the past five years Eidos membership has doubled. The attraction of universities to contribute to and participate in the Eidos process and method as been its commitment and provision of quality member services. University membership with Eidos and the kind of higher education mind-merge it affords represents a cost-effective and practical way of enhancing the global clout of our education system. Connections and collaborative partnerships form the basis for exchanging ideas, innovation and trail-blazing research.

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