IN THIS ISSUE

Story Writing in Remote Locations (SWIRL) Program
New Research in a New Era Training Program 2007
Postgraduate Experience Annual Feedback Forum & Scholarship News
Specialist Research Training for VU Students
Research Funding from Victoria Police
Recent Events and Appointments in CHTR
Australian Research Council College of Experts Appointment
RQF Update
Forum: Aspects of the Linkage Project Scheme from an ARC Perspective
Upcoming Grant Opportunities

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RESEARCH MATTERS

OCTOBER 2007

STORY WRITING IN REMOTE LOCATIONS (SWIRL) PROGRAM

A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY LITERACY AND TEACHER EDUCATION

This national research project, conducted by Victoria University, investigates the experience and outcomes of participants involved in the Story Writing in Remote Locations (SWIRL) Program. On September the 5th, the project team was granted permission to conduct research with Indigenous community schools in the NT. The project is a 3 year funded project and is in its initial phase of data collection. The SWIRL project also involves a consortium of national agencies including Australian and State/Territory governments, IBM and Edith Cowan University.

HISTORY OF SWIRL

SWIRL is a program that provides preservice teachers with the opportunity to experience and teach in a remote Indigenous setting for a period of 4 weeks of the year. The SWIRL program is in its twelfth year of operation. From the onset, the impetus for SWIRL emerged from an absence of Indigenous literature in remote schools. It was noticed that the literature available for Aboriginal children to learn to be literate in rural and remote areas was the same as the literature available to mainstream children in capital city schools. There were no stories that included local themes, Aboriginal culture, and there were no pictures in the books that included Aboriginal children’s faces – everything was mainstream, and so, non inclusive.

SWIRL has a number of key stakeholders that include IBM, the School of Education at Victoria University, the Aboriginal communities, Northern Territory Government, Northern Territory Department of Education, Youth work students at Victoria University, local teachers and schools in the Northern territory and young people in the community. Nurturing collaborative partnerships assist in ensuring that each participating group recognizes the valuable and critical contribution of others.

The VU preservice teachers are given an opportunity to deliver a holiday program that focuses on enhancing the literacy levels of young Indigenous students who attend SWIRL; it involves student teachers working in remote communities for one month on holiday programs in which children take part in activities and then document their experiences in booklets and other media such as video, animation, artwork and photographs. The power of ICT within the SWIRL program is paramount. When children write their stories they are encouraged to document their experiences into booklets and use technology to create talking books, video captions, animations, artwork and photographs. Through the use of emerging technology, local Indigenous children produce digital and print versions of their communities’ stories; children, are able to document their day to day activities and in the process feel a sense of pride and self worth about the importance of their culture and rituals.

Over the past twelve years, SWIRL has built up an archive of many hundreds of Indigenous children’s stories that are a unique teaching aid for local schools in that they preserve stories and processes that might otherwise be lost. By encouraging young people in the SWIRL communities to record aspects of their lives, the project has helped to improve local literacy levels. This is because the stories include local children’s lives, and this is shown to be a powerful tool to engage them in learning to be literate.

RESEARCH AIMS

This project reflects on and examines the current practices of the SWIRL program. The outcomes of this research will provide important information about the effectiveness of the program to empower young
people’s lives. The impact of the SWIRL program in building social capital at both the individual and group level is also a central area of concern.

Findings from this research will help to promote sustainable models of practice for literacy-based programs in remote and regional areas. The Victoria University Project Team is the founder of the SWIRL Lawry Mahon (SWIRL Co-ordinator - School of Education) and includes Dr Tarquham McKenna (Manager of the Project - School of Education), Dr Marcelle Cacciattolo (School of Education), Karen Jackson (Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit), Assoc Professor Mark Minchinton (Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit) Jo Williams (Access and Success Project) and Mark Davies (Research Assistant).

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the research team members Tarquham (Phone 99193371), Lawry (9919 4192) or Marcelle (9919 7575).

• Managing Effective Grants Applications (Monday 19th Nov. 9.30 AM)
• Understanding and Managing Research Ethics (Monday 19th Nov. 2.30 PM)
• Understanding and Managing Commercialisation and Intellectual Property (Tuesday 20th November 2.00pm—4.00 PM)

Registration is essential:
Please log onto:
http://wcf.vu.edu.au/postgraduatetraining
Or contact Nicole Drage on 9919 4521.

POSTGRADUATE EXPERIENCE ANNUAL FEEDBACK FORUM

The annual Feedback Forum on the Postgraduate Experience for 2007 will be held on Wednesday, 5 December from 3:30 - 6:30 pm in Cityscape, Footscray Park Campus. This year the forum includes two new guest speakers. Professor Elizabeth Harman, Vice Chancellor and President, will speak to research students and supervisors on the relationship between 'Making VU' and postgraduate research, and Professor Linda Rosenman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Region) will explore 'The RQF and its Impact on Postgraduate Research at VU'. Additional topics to be discussed include key issues arising out of the 2007 Progress Reports and plans for supporting research students and outcomes in 2008. There will be a raffle with prizes for both students and supervisors followed by an end-of-academic-year social event.

POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

The Postgraduate Research Scholarship scheme has been revised to help strengthen VU’s ability to develop greater concentration in areas of strategic research focus, to work more effectively across the University’s Institutes, Faculties and Research Centres, to recruit outstanding research students and to attract further external industry and community support for scholarships. One recent development in this area has been the funding of two specialist scholarships in Sports Science contributed by the Western Bulldogs. Congratulations to Professor Terry Roberts and Professor Mike McKenna for their success in bringing these significant Victoria University-Western Bulldogs Sports Science scholarships to VU.

The Office for Postgraduate Research this year also introduced an Early Offer Round for APA scholarships. Up to five Australian Postgraduate Awards were offered, and the scheme was advertised nationally. Two offers were made to outstanding students and the remaining applicants have been encouraged to apply for the normal scholarship round which closes on 31 October 2007.

SPECIALIST RESEARCH TRAINING FOR VU STUDENTS

The OPR hosted three specialist research training workshops for students in August/September. The first, a series on 'Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language: roles, responsibilities and expectations', was offered by the internationally well-known scholar on research education and training, Dr Brian Paltridge of the University of Sydney, and was aimed particularly at our international research students. The second, a session titled 'Publish or Flourish: negotiating the transition from thesis to refereed publications', was offered to humanities and social science doctoral researchers by ARC Postdoctoral Fellow Dr Amanda McDonald (French Studies, University of Queensland and Centre for Cross-Cultural Research, ANU) and VU’s Associate Director of Graduate Research, Dr Michele Grossman. The final series, a 3-day intensive on qualitative and quantitative research methods with a strong grounding in research and knowledge theory, was offered by Dr Delwyn Goodrick, a researcher and research educator with particular expertise in health, psychology and education. All three of these specialist training workshops were fully booked out and highly stimulating and successful for those research students who attended.

DEMystifying THE THESIS

**You must be able to attend both full days to register to this program.

Date: 22nd & 23rd November 2007
Time: 10am - 5pm
Venue: Cityscape Restaurant,
Building K, Level 5, Footscray Park Campus.

This two-day workshop will cover the following topics:
* Getting the most out of your supervisor
* What is a thesis?
* Developing a Research Question
* The Literature Review: When to start and when to stop
* Finding your voice in what you write (when to start and when to stop)
* The architecture of a thesis
* Writing and correcting chapters (a self-help approach)
* What examiners look for

ARE YOU GIVING A PRESENTATION IN RELATION TO YOUR RESEARCH OR AT AN UPCOMING CONFERENCE OR FORUM?

If you are, please let the Media area of Marketing and Communications know and give them your contact details. This will help if there are any media enquiries about your presentation and give the Media area an opportunity to prepare a media release if appropriate.

Contact Christine White, Media Manager MCD, 9919 4322, christine.white@vu.edu.au

NEW RESEARCH IN A NEW ERA TRAINING PROGRAM 2007

The Office for Research and the Office for Postgraduate Research are pleased to inform researchers that the New Research in a New Era training program will offer a suite of training presentations designed for research staff and students.

The program offers two consecutive days of presentations that will provide researchers with an opportunity to develop practical skills whilst undertaking research related activities at Victoria University.

The New Research in a New Era training program will be held 19 & 20 November. Topics include:

Date: 22nd & 23rd November 2007
Time: 10am - 5pm
Venue: Cityscape Restaurant,
Building K, Level 5, Footscray Park Campus.

This two-day workshop will cover the following topics:
* Getting the most out of your supervisor
* What is a thesis?
* Developing a Research Question
* The Literature Review: When to start and when to stop
* Finding your voice in what you write (when to start and when to stop)
* The architecture of a thesis
* Writing and correcting chapters (a self-help approach)
* What examiners look for
RESEARCH FUNDING FROM VICTORIA POLICE

Two researchers in the Faculty of AEHD have successfully achieved competitive external research funding from Victoria Police for a collaborative research project titled ‘Don’t Go There: Young People’s Perspectives on Community Safety and Youth Policing’ (October 2007 – October 2008).

The two Chief Investigators are Dr Michele Grossman (School of Communication, Culture and Languages) and Assoc. Prof. Jenny Sharples (Wellness Promotion Unit, School of Psychology). Their winning proposal is supported by a research grant of $99,060 from the Chief Commissioner’s Youth Fund of Victoria Police and a VU out-of-cycle grant for collaborative research of $28,000.

This project will collect data from over 500 young people between 15-19 on issues around community safety, public spaces, criminal activity and police-youth consultation and cooperation in the Brimbank LGA of Western Melbourne. There is a particular focus on selected groups of CALDB young people in the study and the project is expected to produce models for ongoing strategies to promote youth-police consultation mechanisms that are both responsive to cultural diversity and locality and adaptable for other regions in and beyond the state of Victoria.

AROUND THE BAY

Motivated by two Office for Research staff members, the pictured team braved the 100 km Round the Bay cycle ride coordinated by Bicycle Victoria.

RECENT EVENTS AND APPOINTMENTS IN CHTR

‘Unless the issue of climate change is tackled with single minded persistence, the tourism industry will suffer dire consequences and the impacts will be experienced most by the poorest countries’ said Geoffrey Lipman during his inaugural Adjunct Professorial address entitled “Tourism and Climate Change: Beyond the Triple Bottom Line”. Lipman, who is the Deputy Director General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) was presented with an Adjunct Professorship in the Centre for Hospitality and Tourism Research (CHTR) by the Vice-Chancellor at an industry function co-sponsored by the CHTR, Victoria Tourism Industry Council and TTF Australia.

“Geoffrey Lipman’s extensive high level contacts around the world will be invaluable in helping open doors for the CHTR in its move into the international tourism research field” said Professor Leo Jago, Director of the CHTR. “In particular, Geoff’s knowledge and passion regarding action that the tourism industry needs to take to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change will be vital in support of the Centre’s specialisation in this field”. The CHTR recently appointed Professor Terry DeLacy who is a specialist in the impacts of climate change and the Centre has already undertaken research on this topic with the Sri Lankan Government. The Sri Lankan Minister for Tourism presented this research at the recent UNWTO World Summit on climate change.

L-R: Adjunct Professor Geoffrey Lipman, Professor Elizabeth Harman, and Professor Leo Jago.

US CONFERENCES FOR VE TEACHERS

VE Multimedia teacher Stefan Schutt presented a paper at this year’s ACM SIGCHI Creativity and Cognition conference in Washington, DC. The paper, which refers to Stefan’s postgraduate research project, is called: “Spinning Stories: the development of the Small Histories project as an online facilitator of My Life Stories”:

http://portal.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=1254960.1254974

Stefan and fellow teacher Miles Menegon also presented a workshop at the 2007 Communities and Technologies conference at the University of Michigan as part of the workshop day: “Public Practices, Social Software: Examining social practices in networks in publics”. The workshop was led by international online ‘social media’ expert Danah Boyd from the University of California, Berkeley (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danah_Boyd).

Meanwhile, DEST is seeking part-time Advisors for the RQF to provide additional support to the RQF Assessment Panels. If you are interested to be an RQF panel Advisor, please contact relevant VU internal panel leaders or deputies, or the VU RQF steering committee. The internal closing date for express of interests for RQF panel advisor is Monday, 12 November 2007.

A VU RQF open forum has been held on 3rd Oct 2007, with a large number of VU staff in attendance involved in some lively discussion. If you want to obtain a copy of the presentation, please visit the website:

For VU researchers who anticipate being involved in the Institutional submission, the RQF steering committee strongly encourage you to update your details on the VU research databases:

1. Information to be entered on database: http://research.vu.edu.au/RQFMS/rfe.php

* Best 6 publications (journal publication are a STRONG preference)

2. Individuals to begin collating:

* Esteem measures – consistent with panel specific guidelines

* Impact examples – consistent with panel specific guidelines

A future open forum is planned for: Wednesday, November 14 from 2:30-5:30 pm in City Flinders. If you have any further questions regarding RQF and VU preparation, please contact RQF steering committee.

**RQF COPYRIGHT UPDATE**

DEST recently announced that Institutions participating in the RQF will be authorised under section 183(1) of the Copyright Act 1968 to copy or reproduce material, and make it available to DEST assessors.

Copyright material covered includes:

- Literary works, such as books, journal articles and conference papers;
- Performance works, such as plays, songs and works of art;
- Media formats, such as sound recordings, films, videos and media broadcasts.

This is effective as of 16th October 2007.

The agreement sits alongside a previously negotiated agreement with specific publishers, such as Elsevier, Blackwell, Taylor & Francis, CSIRO, Sage and others, to cover the use of published material for RQF purposes.

The authorisation is specifically for the purpose of the RQF.

DEST has also confirmed their expectation that in the long term publicly funded research should be made available to the general public in open access repositories. DEST states that “where the Institution or researcher owns copyright, or where copyright permission has been granted to make outputs publicly available, material should be stored in an ‘open access’ repository.” VU has a commitment to making research available through open access, within the constraints of copyright. The VU open access repository can be accessed from http://eprints.vu.edu.au/

Full details of this agreement can be viewed from the DEST site at:


**NHMRC BOOK LAUNCH**

CEO of the National Health and Medical Research Council, Professor Warwick Anderson, launched a new book—Great minds in Australian research, which highlights the work of 10 of Australia’s most eminent medical researchers including locals Professors Judith Whitworth and Tony McMichael.

**SYNOPSIS OF PUBLICATION:**

Today, thanks to Australian medical researchers, we live in a world were cochlear implants give sound where there was silence, vaccines for cervical cancer exist and a glass of bacteria infested broth taught us that this bacteria can cause stomach ulcers. The outstanding researchers profiled in 10 of the Best - Great minds in Australian research have effected change in health and medical research in this country as well as internationally either through their groundbreaking research and their dedication to research policy. It is a privilege to be able to introduce you to these researchers who have such an important and largely unacknowledged role in the health of every man, woman and child in our country.

**FORUM: ASPECTS OF THE LINKAGE PROJECT SCHEME FROM AN ARC PERSPECTIVE**

An ARC Linkage Forum is to be held at Victoria University on Thursday, 15 November 2007. Dr Ian Mackinnon, Executive Director, Engineering and Environmental Science from the Australian Research Council is to make a presentation. Ian is to discuss what the ARC looks for in an ARC Linkage proposal and various issues relating to partner organisations. There will be an opportunity to ask questions after the presentation. Venue and time to be confirmed.

**UPCOMING CONFERENCES**


www.ausnano.net/conn2008


Link:


**UPCOMING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

**2008 COOPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE (CRC) SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The 2008 Cooperative Research Centre selection round is expected to commence in December 2007. Limited information currently available from DEST - more info to follow.

The Victorian Government’s CRC Support Program provides grants to assist consortia that are applying for Commonwealth CRC funding. These grants will be offered in two stages and are designed to offset costs associated with business concept case development (stage 1) and full business case development (stage 2). The first round of grants to support stage 1 applications will be for amounts up to $20,000.

Applications that are led by Victorian industry participants and/or provide strong economic benefits to Victoria will be preferred.

Grant guidelines and application forms can be found at: http://www.business.vic.gov.au/BUSVIC/STANDARD//pc=PC_60955

For more information please refer to the grant guidelines if you require further information.

The lodgement date for the first round of grants is 5:00 pm Wednesday 14 November 2007.

**AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH RESEARCH FUND (ARHRF)**

The Australian Rotary Health Research Fund (ARHRF) is calling for applications in the following areas:

- Research grant investigating Leukaemia
- PhD Scholarship investigating Bowel Cancer
- PhD Scholarship investigating Gastrointestinal Cancer
- PhD Scholarship investigating Suicide in Men

Applications are available to download from the following website: http://www.arhrf.org.au/

The closing date for all applications with the Office for Research is 4 January 2008 and with the agency on Friday, 11 January 2008.

**THANK YOU:** To all who contributed to the content of the Research Matters bulletin.