

Higher Education Equity Support Program (HEESP) Grant Final Report Template

1. Project Title:

Linking VCE geography students with the Bachelor of Urban, Rural and Environmental Planning program to encourage enrolments

2. Timetable – did the project proceed along the planned timelines or do you need to request an extension of timeline?

The program generally followed the program – timetable as envisaged – the program was completed by 30 September 2010

3. Participation – please provide details on numbers of students who participated in the program.

If your project involves outreach to schools please also provide details on:

- name of school/s involved in the program;

the following secondary schools were visited and personal presentations made to groups of students

- Kerang
- Castlemaine
- Rochester
- Girton College Bendigo

In addition visits were made to the following schools where presentations were made to relevant staff about the course and initiatives

- Echuca
- Swan Hill
- Catholic College Bendigo
- Bendigo Senior Secondary
- Mildura Sen Sec
- Chaffey College
- Irymple
- Trinity Lutheran
- St Josephs Mildura
- MacKillop College
- Ouyen

- grade years targeted were

Years 10, 11 and 12, schools with VCE Geography were targeted, some schools who did not have VCE Geography were visited because staff had

indicated an interest - links were made with Environmental studies programs where Geography wasn't offered

On our count 185 students attended the presentations

4. **Budget** – please indicate if all funds were spent as envisaged in HEESP application. Provide brief details of budget expenditure.

Funds were generally spent as envisaged

Funds Provided were **\$6,818.00**

Funds expended were

Casual salaries and other payments \$4850.14

Travel Costs \$ 275.26

Total Expenses \$5125.40

Balance Remaining \$1692.60

Explanation of Casual salaries. Salaries were paid for the Faculty's part time Community Liaison Officer to undertake work over and above his part time position. He undertook this HEESP task in addition to his contracted position. Funds were used for his time to arrange visits to schools and presentations to students, travel, answer questions and follow up with enquiries. He was also involved in a number of the visits to schools. In some cases he was able to combine travel with his other duties so that some travel costs were met from his normal budget, which saved considerable funds. Staff in the planning program also visited some schools - their normal salaries covered these costs

A second year student in the planning course was also mentored and she accompanied staff to the schools where presentations were made to students. This proved to be a very successful strategy as the student did an excellent job and expressed great enthusiasm for the university, the campus and the course. Direct payments were paid to her for her time.

5. **Project Aims** – was the pilot project successful in meeting the stated aims?

The aim of the project was to increase the exposure of students undertaking VCE Geography to the prospect of enrolling in the Bachelor of Urban Rural and Environmental Planning. School visits and presentations achieved this. We extended this because not all students had Geography but some schools expressed interest even without offering Geography.

The best indication we have of the success of the program is the number of students who then attended Open Day and then went onto enrol. Attendance at Open Day was up, the student who visited the schools also assisted us at Open Day and she was able to identify a number of students who she met at schools who attended All up applications (in preferences 1-4) from VCE students for our planning course in 2010 were up 55% on the previous year. While not all of these were from students in the region, we can identify students who participated in the program and who subsequently attended Open Day and applied for the course and have

been made offers. At this stage it looks as though enrolments in the first year of the course will be up about 30% from last year (with no reduction in ENTER score requirements. (in a year where it looks like overall enrolments in most courses at L a Trobe will be down). So we feel that the project has resulted in improved enrolments and has certainly increased the exposure of the course. As a result of the program a working relationship was also formed with the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria, which resulted in the Program Coordinator Trevor Budge being invited to give a keynote address at their annual Conference that was also used to promote the course.

6. **Scope for Integration** – has the pilot indicated that the activity should be integrated into your mainstream budget?

Yes and we will be doing this – this piloted program will now be mainstreamed into the role of the Community Liaison Officer and the Planning program will be contributing funds to this

7. **Project Evaluation** – did the anticipated evaluation activities occur?

What were the outcomes?

Evaluation was through the level enquiries, feedback from students and applications for places

8. **Promoting Outcomes** – who do you think would benefit from receiving a copy of the final report?