

## Introduction

The Third International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy was held at the Manly Pacific Hotel in Sydney, Australia from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2006. This Symposium built on those held in Ottawa and Vancouver in 1999 and 2001 respectively and the OECD conference held in Toronto in 2003. The Symposium was also informed by the outcomes of three 2004 reviews of Career Guidance by the Organisation for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD), the European Commission and the World Bank.

The Symposium was funded, and strongly supported, by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). The Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) was contracted by DEST to organise the Symposium and Col McCowan, Manager of Queensland University of Technology Careers and Employment, was sub-contracted as convenor.

The President of CICA, Peter Tatham, chaired the Symposium Steering Committee which consisted of six Australian representatives and four international members who had been heavily involved in the previous Symposia. The Committee communicated regularly via teleconference, email and a secure web discussion forum.

A draft Vision paper was written by Mary McMahan and Christine Haines and finalised by members of the Steering Committee. This was posted on the web site and the six themes contained in it became the reference point for the Symposium.

An invitee database was developed including details for key government personnel in the education and employment sectors in 56 countries, previous attendees and representatives of related professional groups and organisations. Attendance was conditional on sending a team of no more than four people consisting of policy, research and practitioner representatives, as well producing a country paper based on a minimum of two themes listed in the Vision paper to a maximum of 1500 words. The final participant list totalled 100 people including representatives from twenty two countries and five organisations together with the organising group.

Country papers were provided by 16 countries and organisations. Four Synthesisers, Christine Haines, Mary McMahan, Richard Sweet and Prof Tony Watts, were appointed to synthesise the papers and develop stimulus material and questions to address at the Symposium. The six original themes addressed by teams in their country papers were slightly modified as a result of the synthesis, and were built into the Symposium program as specific sessions. Each theme was addressed by an input session, reference to the appropriate synthesis paper, group work based on specific questions, followed by a forum and then comments from the rapporteurs. In some instances the input was provided by a panel of experts, in others by an interview of an expert and in others by a lead presentation by an expert. There were two variations to this process throughout Saturday and Sunday. One was the introduction of a panel chaired by Richard Sweet to highlight the issues around diversity encountered in developing countries. The other was the introduction of an Interest group session at the request of the participants.

Steering Committee members participated as session chairs, facilitators and rapporteurs. Four members of the Careers & Employment service, and an audio-visual expert from the Queensland University of Technology, and DEST representatives became the organising and support group for the symposium. Eleven members of CICA volunteered as group work monitors. Full audio-visual and office facilities were established.

The Symposium was officially opened on the evening of Friday 21 April by The Honourable Pat Farmer, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education, Science and Training and began with a welcome by Peter Tatham the Symposium Chair. The "Symposium torch" was passed from the Canadian to the Australian team in a fun, informal ceremony.

By the end of the Symposium country teams and organisations developed individual country and organisational action plans. A Communiqué was also developed and approved by all participants. An

Addendum to the Communiqué was added post-Symposium to reflect action already taken by a collaboration of the country teams from developing countries.

The Symposium was closed on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> of April by The Honourable Julie Bishop, Minister for Education, Science and Training and an evaluation was conducted. The evaluation was extremely positive with an overall rating of 9.027 on a 10 point scale.

A key to the success of the Symposium was the extensive opportunity for formal and informal networking, enhanced by the rich social program and activities. Country teams first mingled formally with an activity on the opening night, followed by an informal social and mixing activity later that evening. The groups rostered for each session throughout the Symposium comprised a mix of representatives from different country teams and these were changed after each set of three sessions together. A relaxing boat trip on Sydney harbour was held on Saturday night and a formal dinner on Sunday night. The sense of comradeship and fun was reinforced throughout the event by the relaxed style of the Symposium Chair, the positive attitude of participants, frequent injections of humour and the generous contribution of entertainment by QUT staff member, and talented singer, Catherine Garino at the formal dinner.

This DVD contains the print material in one section, the photos in another, and in the third section the video record, Powerpoint presentations, synthesis papers and group work are presented together for each Session in turn. The Contents page provides a summary of, and access to, the material.

The web site [www.edu.au/careers/is2006](http://www.edu.au/careers/is2006) will be maintained until the 2007 Scottish Symposium group establish a replacement site.