



# Update

## *on the first phase*

**Volunteering to Learn** aims to identify how the learning outcomes are achieved in various forms of volunteering available to university students and to share good practice for program development to enhance student learning through volunteering.

In this first phase the project team focussed on identifying the range of volunteering taking place across Australia, and on establishing some initial themes for research into student volunteering. Additional funding from the state government Department for Local Government and Communities has enabled workshops which have enhanced this identification of themes through creating opportunities for sharing different perspectives, models and concerns. This pilot also developed the instruments for the next stage of interviews and a flyer outlining the early research results and literature. This flyer will be available for download shortly.

The project has engaged people and interest is building. At The National Volunteering Conference, 60 people attended the project workshop and presentation in Adelaide. The workshop enabled dissemination of information about the project, and offered an opportunity for the research team to develop relationships with key members of the volunteering sector. Letters to Engagement Australia and ACEN and to all the State Volunteer Centres have alerted

them to the project and their responses have been positive.

The project has progressed well, with the desk audit to map the alternative models of student volunteering now complete and this is currently being distilled into a simpler format. This matrix has revealed the complexity and variability of student volunteering programs and arrangements across the universities in Australia. A review of the literature, which informed the initial framework of the desk audit, has produced a database. As there is a lot of interest in this area this literature review will be ongoing with *terminologies in use* as one of the foci. With ethics approved the project is set to commence interviewing..

An abstract has been submitted to the IAVE world conference on volunteering to be held in Australia in 2014. In addition ACEN will host an event at Murdoch University early in semester 2 to which local stakeholders will be invited, and an abstract has been submitted for the ACEN conference to be held in October of 2014. An abstract has been accepted for IAVE World Volunteer Conference in September 2014 and other conference abstracts are being prepared. These activities enable initial testing of some of the findings, as well as raising the profile of the project.

An evaluator has been appointed to provide feedback to the project team and Assoc. Professor Phillip's evaluation report gives an independent view of the project and the credibility of the research process. A reference group guides the project from the volunteering sector and it is anticipated that both the evaluator and reference group members will have an important role in ensuring this project's outcomes are relevant and useful to the volunteering sector.

If you would like to become involved or be added to our mailing list please contact our project manager, Ms Linda Butcher on 08 9360 2350 or email [l.butcher@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:l.butcher@murdoch.edu.au) or the project leader Megan Paull on 08 9360 6040 [m.paull@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:m.paull@murdoch.edu.au)