

Swinburne University of Technology

Discussion Paper

**SWIN
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SWINBURNE
UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY

A SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

Opportunities and Challenges

August 2010

SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

Consultation Process

What: You have been invited by the Vice-Chancellor of Swinburne University of Technology, Professor Ian Young, to participate in the Swinburne consultation process to develop a Social Inclusion Action Plan.

This document contains consultation questions and a draft set of social inclusion goals.

When: The consultation process is open for three weeks from 16 August 2010 to 03 September 2010. Your feedback on the draft social inclusion goals and your contribution to the consultation questions will be used to develop the Swinburne University of Technology Social Inclusion Action Plan.

Where: Please provide your feedback on the consultation questions in electronic format to: <http://blogs.swinburne.edu.au/vcnews> or email socialinclusion@swin.edu.au

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
1 The purpose of this paper	4
2 Why develop a Social Inclusion Action Plan?	5
2.1 The social inclusion agenda	5
2.2 The increasing economic importance of higher education	5
2.3 Commonwealth and State Government targets	7
3 Supporting social inclusion	8
3.1 The concept of social inclusion	8
3.2 The multiple dimensions of social exclusion	8
3.3 Sustained action to address social exclusion	9
3.4 Creating social inclusion	11
4 Swinburne social inclusion goals and strategy	12
4.1 Linking Swinburne's strategy to the broader public policy agenda	13
5 Swinburne's current contribution to the social inclusion agenda	14
5.1 Swinburne's strategic context	14
5.2 Provision of vocational and further education qualifications	15
5.3 Pathways to higher education participation	15
5.4 Engagement and learning initiatives for disadvantaged groups	16
5.4.1 Targeting jobless families with children	16
5.4.2 Closing the gap for Indigenous Australians	18
5.4.3 Engaging people from outer-metropolitan and rural and regional communities	20
5.4.4 Improving outcomes for people living with a disability	21
5.5 Evidence-based research and evaluation	22
6 Commonwealth Government policy and funding targets	23
6.1 Measuring low-SES participation rates	23
6.2 Swinburne's performance against Commonwealth Government targets	24
6.3 Commonwealth Government funding to support change	24
6.4 Implementation timeframes	25
7 Development of Swinburne's Social Inclusion Action Plan	26
7.1 Creating a multidimensional plan	26
7.2 Next steps	27
8 References	28
9 Appendix 1 – Social inclusion and higher education: Key policy documents	30
9.1 Commonwealth Government	30
9.2 Victorian Government	30
9.3 International	30
10 Appendix 2 – Swinburne's Social Inclusion Action Plan consultations process	31
11 Appendix 3 – Participation of Indigenous students in higher education and participation of low-SES students in higher education	32

INTRODUCTION

This discussion paper outlines the challenges and opportunities for Swinburne University of Technology (Swinburne) in responding to the emerging social inclusion policy agenda in Australia and provides the platform for developing a *Social Inclusion Action Plan* for the University. The paper takes the *Swinburne Statement of Direction 2015* as its central reference point, which articulates a vision to develop 'graduates ready to meet the challenges of competitive business environments and rapidly changing communities'. And it explores the University's contribution to building a more cohesive, better educated and more productive Australia.

The discussion paper presents evidence that points to the need for Swinburne to put in place a multidimensional approach to social inclusion – one that drives and supports research and teaching initiatives across the university and across sectors. Internal relationships as well as external partnerships and alliances with other organisations providing programs addressing social disadvantage and its impact on educational participation will all be important.

This discussion paper also forms an important part of negotiations with the Commonwealth Government for the 2011 funding and performance agreement for higher education. This consultation process will assist the University to identify strategies and initiatives it can adopt to increase the participation rate of people from low socioeconomic status (SES) groups in tertiary education programs.

This paper has drawn on relevant social inclusion literature, Australia's United Nations (UN) commitments, Commonwealth and Victorian Government policy, and consultation with key internal and external university stakeholders. This consultation is detailed in Appendix 2.

It provides an overview of the Commonwealth Government's social inclusion and higher education policy objectives, including changes to funding and performance arrangements for higher education in Australia. It refers to allied policy initiatives being progressed by the Victorian Government including the *Report Advising on the Development of the Victorian Tertiary Education Plan* and the *Stronger Futures for All Young Victorians* paper on transition of young people from school to further education and work. It also places the discussion of social inclusion in the context of the broader United Nations Millennium Development Goals. A list of the key policy documents pertinent to the development of the strategy and action plan are listed in Appendix 1.

The discussion paper presents evidence that points to the need for Swinburne to put in place a multidimensional approach to social inclusion – one that drives and supports research and teaching initiatives across the university and across sectors.

Swinburne already has a range of initiatives aimed at social inclusion and some are profiled in this document to encourage discussion and seek your input.

Data referenced in this document is drawn from information on the public record and, in particular, analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data on low-SES participation in higher education by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), and by the Centre for Education, Employment and Training (CEET). It also includes some unpublished Swinburne data on low-SES and indigenous enrolments listed in Appendix 3.

Commonwealth Government and Council of Australian Government targets for attainment and participation by 2020:

- Halve the proportion of Australians aged 20 to 64 years without a certificate level III qualification;
- Double the number of higher qualification completions (diplomas and advanced diplomas);
- Halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 or equivalent attainment;
- 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at the undergraduate level will be of people from low-SES background and;
- Raise the proportion of young people achieving Year 12 or equivalent qualification to 90 per cent by 2015;
- 40 per cent of all 25 to 34-year-olds will hold a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2025.

1 THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER

This discussion paper lays the foundation for developing the *Swinburne University of Technology Social Inclusion Action Plan*, which will respond to broader government policy initiatives, be aligned with the University's strategic objectives and build on existing initiatives.

It outlines evidence and discussion and poses a series of key questions to help inform the next phase of development of the plan.

This discussion paper is organised to:

- describe the social inclusion policy agenda and explores Swinburne's current teaching and research strengths in relation to social inclusion;
- provide an overview of the Commonwealth Government's new funding and performance arrangements in relation to targets for low-SES participation, including implementation details. It also compares Swinburne's low-SES participation rate to other universities in Victoria and Australia and outlines the funding that will be provided to support universities to increase low-SES participation rates; and
- outlines the key issues for Swinburne in developing effective multidimensional social inclusion strategies and recommends next steps for the development of the *Swinburne University of Technology Social Inclusion Action Plan*.

2 WHY DEVELOP A SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN?

2.1 The social inclusion agenda

Across the world governments and large organisations – including educational institutions – are adopting social, economic, education and community approaches that contribute to more cohesive and productive communities. This broadly termed ‘social inclusion agenda’ is a response to a widening gap between those who live in poverty and those who have plenty. This gap is not just economic. It is a gap in access to information, to social networks and services, to food security, to technology, to health and wellbeing, to educational opportunities, and ultimately to meaningful and secure employment.

The Commonwealth and Victorian Governments are both focused on addressing the multidimensional nature of disadvantage that is experienced by socially excluded individuals and groups in our community. Evidence shows that a lack of education is a key factor in reinforcing social exclusion, which impacts on the productivity and prosperity of our whole society. As a result, both governments are working to increase educational opportunities, including opening up more tertiary education opportunities to people from low-SES groups.

2.2 The increasing economic importance of higher education

In 2008 the Commonwealth Government appointed a panel to review the higher education sector in Australia. The purpose was to examine the sector’s ‘fitness for purpose in meeting the needs of the Australian community and economy and advise on options for reform (DEEWR, 2009 [a], p.3)’. The panel was chaired by Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley AC and it reported in December 2008 with the Commonwealth Government’s response following in 2010.

The Bradley Review concluded that the Australian economy is becoming increasingly reliant on a highly educated, knowledge-based workforce. Research cited in the review suggests that over the working lifetime the financial gain generated for a university graduate is more than \$1.5 million or 70 per cent greater than someone whose highest qualification is Year 12 (NATSEM, 2008, p.1).

The report goes on to suggest that the issue for lower skilled people will not only be income forgone, but also shrinking employment opportunities.

The review recommends that urgent action be taken to build the country’s overall qualification levels in order to be able to meet emerging skills demands. To support this, it points to evidence that structural changes in the economy over the next decade will result in growth in jobs that rely on higher education attainment. At the same time there will be an increase in the skills needed within occupations to meet national productivity targets (2009 [a], p.15).

This broadly termed ‘social inclusion agenda’ is a response to a widening gap between those who live in poverty and those who have plenty.

2 WHY DEVELOP A SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN?

The Bradley review recommended that urgent action is taken to build the country's overall qualification levels in order to be able to meet emerging skills demands.

The challenge for the university sector is to increase the proportion of people in the community with higher education qualifications.

Over the next 10 years overall employment growth is expected to be 1.6 per cent, however projected growth for the better educated will be significantly more. It is predicted that growth for those with:

- a diploma qualification will be 1.8 per cent
- an undergraduate qualification will be 2.9 per cent; and
- a postgraduate qualification will be 3.6 per cent (Bradley Review: p.15)

There will also be a need to increase productivity as Australia's population ages, placing additional social and economic pressures on the nation. Commonwealth Government policymakers project that by 2050, 2.7 working-aged people will be supporting each Australian aged 65 years and over. This compares to 5 in 2010 and 7.5 in 1970 (Attorney General's Department, 2010).

The challenge for the university sector is to meet the emerging demand for knowledge workers by increasing the proportion of people in the community with higher education qualifications. An important part of this is increasing the participation rates of lower SES groups in higher education, which has the flow-on effect of reducing the risk of entrenching current levels of disadvantage.

The (now) Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard, in her speech to the Australian Higher Education Conference, argued that many young people from low-SES groups are ready and willing to take on the challenge of higher education. She called on universities to respond to the needs and aspirations of low-SES students.

There is evidence that once students from low-SES backgrounds enter university they have a similar rate of success to others. As a group they may need additional support along the way but the current retention rate of low-SES students is about 97 per cent (Bradley Review: p.30). A similar picture emerges from Swinburne's data on progression rates for students moving into higher education.

Figure 1: Progression rate by SES category, 2005–2009

Jurisdiction and SES cohort	Progression (%)				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Swinburne					
Low-SES students	82.7	86.2	85.0	85.8	82.7
Medium SES students	87.5	88.6	88.0	87.9	86.8
High SES students	87.3	87.6	87.7	90.1	87.1
Victoria					
Low-SES students	86.3	86.8	86.2	86.3	n/a
Medium SES students	88.7	89.0	88.6	88.7	n/a
High SES students	89.8	90.3	89.9	90.0	n/a
Australia					
Low-SES students	86.3	86.1	85.7	85.8	n/a
Medium SES students	87.9	88.0	87.6	87.9	n/a
High SES students	89.8	90.0	89.8	90.1	n/a

Source: Swinburne University of Technology Strategic Planning and Quality Unit.

Evidence suggests that the desire of young people from low-SES families to go to university is not reflected in the proportion gaining access to higher education. Lower aspirations are no doubt a factor in lower rates of participation in higher education; however, research into the aspirations of students in Years 9 and 10 conducted in 1999 reported in the Bradley Review show there is still a gap between those who look to attend university and those who make it. The research study found that 42 per cent of low-SES students aspire to participate in tertiary study compared to 72 per cent of higher SES students. However, higher SES students are three times more likely to actually undertake higher education studies.

2.3 Commonwealth and State Government targets

The Commonwealth Government has taken the significant step of embedding targets for the participation of low-SES groups into performance and funding agreements with universities. This policy shift responds to the recommendations of the Bradley Review. At a state level, government funding will also be available to support increases in higher education participation, including in outer-metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

It is in this context that this discussion paper explores how Swinburne can respond to the emerging social policy agenda and position itself to negotiate performance and funding agreements with the Commonwealth Government and seek funding support from the Victorian Government and other bodies.

Commonwealth Government and Council of Australian Government targets for attainment and participation by 2020:

- Halve the proportion of Australians aged 20 to 64 years without a certificate level III qualification;
- Double the number of higher qualification completions (diplomas and advanced diplomas);
- Halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 or equivalent attainment;
- 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at the undergraduate level will be of people from low SES background and;
- Raise the proportion of young people achieving Year 12 or equivalent qualification to 90 per cent by 2015
- 40 per cent of all 25 to 34 year olds will hold a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2025.

3 SUPPORTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Commonwealth and Victorian Governments are responding to these challenges by seeking to increase the educational attainment of individuals in order to enhance their life chances.

3.1 The concept of social inclusion

We all have an interest in building a society where all individuals and communities can contribute to, and benefit from, our country's abundant economic and social opportunities. When parts of our community are disadvantaged and not able to fully participate in social, educational and economic life it undermines our social cohesion. By this we mean the social capital we all share – the networks that rely on trust and reciprocity to create a cooperative, productive and inclusive society.

With its roots in the United Kingdom and the European Union, the concept of social inclusion was first reflected in Australia through *Growing Victoria Together* (2001) (Department of Premier and Cabinet, Government of Victoria) and *A Fairer Victoria* (2005) (Department of Premier and Cabinet, Government of Victoria) strategy that has underpinned and driven investment in much of the Victorian Government's place-based community development and planning initiatives. The concept also aligns with the UN Millennium Development Goals aimed at a globally equitable, inclusive and sustainable approach to economic growth and social improvement. A core objective of the eight goals is to 'uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level ... especially the most vulnerable' (UN General Assembly: 2000: p.1). This reflects concern about the widening gap between nations in the face of globalisation and climate change.

Australia is no exception. The (now) Prime Minister, The Hon. Julia Gillard, cited the co-existence of 'poverty alongside plenty' as the driver of the Commonwealth Government's social inclusion agenda (Hayes, A, Gray, M and Edwards, B (2008), p.6 Australian Institute of Family Studies Report: *Social Inclusion: Origins, Concepts and Key Themes*), which is articulated in the 2009 *A Stronger, Fairer Australia* policy statement (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet [DPMC]).

A key aspect of this agenda is to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged Australians. At the individual level, the goal is for more skilled and empowered people with greater personal economic security, higher levels of education and enriched social relationships. At a national level, there is recognition that those who are left behind tend to need social support instead of being able to engage in work and social life and by doing so help create social capital and a strong, productive and growing economy.

In the next 10 years Australia will face some growing challenges. The first of these is the emerging 'knowledge-based economy' that will demand a higher skilled workforce with a larger overall proportion of higher education qualifications. The other is our ageing community. We will see a decreasing proportion of the population working and contributing to what will be increasing costs for social services, health, education and infrastructure.

The Commonwealth and Victorian Governments are responding to these challenges by seeking to increase the educational attainment of individuals in order to enhance their life chances. Funding and performance targets for higher education are being directed to driving productivity, participation and growth and improving the life circumstances of those at risk. The Commonwealth Government strategy is primarily to increase the entrenched low participation of those from lower SES groups.

3.2 The multiple dimensions of social exclusion

Levitas, Hayes and Gray et al (2008) propose that 'social exclusion is a complex and multidimensional process that involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, good and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of the society' (p.5).

This view is supported by recent research examining data from the ABS General Social Survey, which concludes that socially excluded groups are more likely to:

- be dependant on government support as their major source of income;
- lack access to a motor vehicle;
- have multiple children; and
- be unable to access the internet at home.

The study also indicates that most of these factors tend to have a greater impact on women (North and Ferrier, 2009).

Sir Tony Atkinson (in Hayes and Gray et al, 2008: p.4) makes the point that exclusion is not simply the result of current or transient circumstances (like being out of a job) but results from long-term and often intergenerational factors. In addition, an individual's low socioeconomic status has been shown to have implications not only for their life experience but also for their life expectancy. Children born in the most disadvantaged families live on average between two and four years less than children born in the least disadvantaged 20 per cent of families (DPMC 2009: p.8). Further, the factors leading to social exclusion can become embedded and be sustained across generations. Research suggests that breaking the cycle of exclusion for an individual can produce positive flow-on effects for their family and the community as a whole. It follows then that the multiple dimensions of exclusion need to be considered in developing initiatives to address disadvantage.

In 2006, an independent review of social inclusion initiatives in the UK by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation provided some insights into the development of successful social inclusion strategies. It suggested that UK policies have been most successful in addressing wide exclusion, but there is concern that the most disadvantaged families have not benefited from the investment.

The UK Minister of Communities and Local Government defined the following social exclusion dimensions:

- **Wide exclusion**, where a large number of people are excluded on a single or small number of indicators;
- **Deep exclusion**, where entrenched exclusion is based on multiple or overlapping dimensions; and
- **Concentrated exclusion**, where a set of problems are geographically concentrated.

Miliband, D. (2006) *Social exclusion: The next steps forward*. London: ODPM in Hayes and Gray et al p.5

These lessons suggest that to have a positive impact on the deeper dimensions of exclusion a 'web of services' that 'address multiple disadvantage' (Saunders, P., Naidoo, Y., & Griffiths, M. (2007) in Hayes and Gray et al, 2008: p.12) need to be present. Figure 2 illustrates this 'web of services' related to social exclusion factors and educational participation.

3.3 Sustained action to address social exclusion

Addressing the deeper dimensions of social exclusion, while more challenging, is also likely to result in sustained change that extends beyond the individual to their family and community. For example, encouraging a parent to acquire a qualification that prepares them for work also helps raise the aspirations of their children.

Significantly, evidence also suggests that neighbourhood characteristics are less important than individual and family characteristics when it comes to factors leading to social exclusion.

3 SUPPORTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

Neighbourhood effects, in isolation from other characteristics, are relatively small; however, the concentration of disadvantage in particular areas does indicate the need for place-based interventions (Hayes, Mathew *et al.* 2008: p.19). Therefore, strategic interventions that are targeted to areas of high disadvantage will need to be part of the mix in the Swinburne University Action Plan.

The recently released Kwong Lee Dow Report (Skills Victoria [2010], *Expert Panel on Tertiary Education: Report Advising on the Development of the Victorian Tertiary Education Plan*, Department of Industry, Innovation and Regional Development, Melbourne) highlights the challenge for Victoria in lifting levels of higher educational attainment in outer-metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. These areas also have significant numbers of people from low-SES backgrounds relative to Victoria as a whole. The report recommends action in outer-metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria be aimed at:

- lifting school achievement and completion of Year 12 or equivalent;
- raising aspirations for higher education;
- enhancing entry prospects; and
- reducing the practical barriers to higher education entry.

Figure 2: Social inclusion strategies contributing to educational participation and progression



- Swinburne areas of operation
- Community service, health, government and other agencies responsible

3.4 Creating social inclusion

To address the multiple disadvantages that lead to exclusion, successful social inclusion strategies work with individuals and communities to build on what they currently know in order to develop their skills, confidence and capabilities. At the same time it is important to link individuals to networks and services in the community that help them be more self-reliant in finding the support they need. An individual may need a number of supports to take up opportunities (such as education and employment) and find a pathway to the material, personal and social resources they need.

This strength-based approach is consistent with student-centred learning models that seek to identify the existing learning capability and experience of students and build on it. For instance, many successful strategies working with diverse communities and Indigenous Australians work from a base of respect for cultural knowledge and the opportunities for shared learning.

This also aligns with the Commonwealth Government's stated commitment to ensure every individual has the capability, opportunity and resources to participate in the economy and their community, and to take responsibility for shaping their own lives (DPMC, 2009: Foreword). Implicit yet central to this vision is the balancing of rights and responsibilities. This is the right to expect and receive the benefits available in a prosperous society on one hand; while recognising the responsibility to contribute to one's own and the community's benefit on the other.

While admirable, achieving this vision also presents significant challenges as it means lifting the economic, health, employment and social aspirations and experience of the country's most disadvantaged people.

The Commonwealth Government social inclusion initiatives focus on addressing the needs of those experiencing 'deep exclusion'. Action is in six priority areas:

1. Targeting jobless families with children to increase job opportunities, improve parenting and build capacity
2. Improving the life chances of children at greatest risk to disadvantage
3. Closing the gap for Indigenous Australians
4. Breaking the cycle of entrenched and multiple disadvantage in particular neighbourhoods and communities
5. Reducing homelessness
6. Improving outcomes for people living with a disability or mental illness and their carers

4 SWINBURNE SOCIAL INCLUSION GOALS AND STRATEGY

A successful Social Inclusion Action Plan will include goals and performance measures that are embedded in all levels of university planning, funding and reporting. A set of social inclusion goals will guide the detailed planning and ongoing implementation of Swinburne's strategy.

The draft goals are:

Socially inclusive culture

To draw on the leadership, commitment and knowledge of the University to create a socially inclusive learning and research culture in which students take up social, educational, environmental and economic opportunities.

Teaching and learning

To ensure the design, delivery and promotion of our education and training programs includes social, learning, environmental and economic pathways for all students.

Support services

To provide a range of services to support students within the university that will help build their confidence, social engagement, ability to access information and learning skills and support educational attainment.

Research

To build on Swinburne's international reputation for innovative social research in order to increase our knowledge and capacity to address social and economic disadvantage and build a socially inclusive society.

Partnerships and networks

To participate in a multidimensional response to social exclusion in partnership with other educational, community and government organisations both domestically and internationally.

People development

To support staff and students in the creation of a socially inclusive culture that facilitates educational access and attainment for all students.

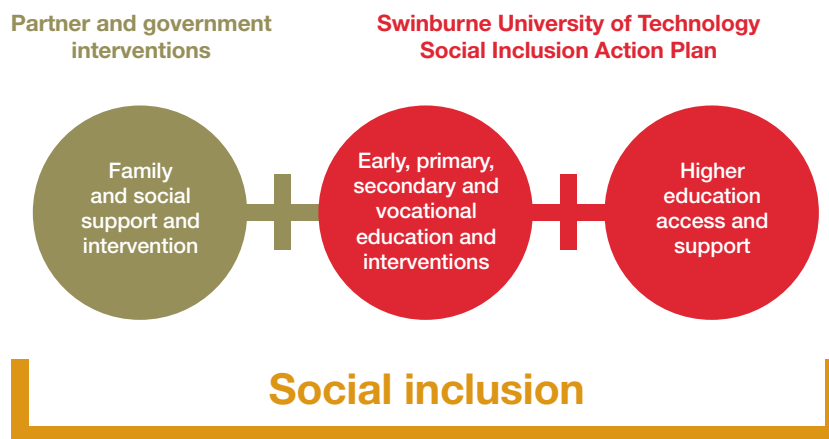
Social and educational innovation

To take an innovative approach to the development of educational initiatives that are forward-thinking, adaptive and positive in challenging social exclusion.

4.1 Linking Swinburne's strategy to the broader public policy agenda

Swinburne's multidimensional response to social inclusion will focus on building the aspirations, engagement and participation of disadvantaged individuals in school education, vocational education and training, and higher education. As illustrated in Figure 3, improvements in educational participation and attainment will depend on interlinking initiatives that address exclusion and create social inclusion.

Figure 3: Linking Swinburne's Social Inclusion Action Plan to the broader social inclusion agenda



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Discussion paper question

- How appropriate are the draft goals proposed to guide the development of Swinburne's Social Inclusion Action Plan?

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5 SWINBURNE'S CURRENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA

5.1 Swinburne's strategic context

Promotion of social inclusion is aligned with Swinburne's commitment to a sustainable future that relies on the integration of environmental, economic and social policy. This approach is underpinned by a belief that broad-based access to educational opportunity is pivotal to the creation of a just, cohesive and sustainable future for us all.

There are two strategic perspectives for Swinburne in creating social inclusion. Maintaining a socially cohesive and productive society is consistent with Swinburne's broader educational objective of equipping students to address the sociocultural, environmental and financial sustainability challenges of the future. The University also has a strategic objective in its *Statement of Directions 2015* to promote an inter-sectoral approach that maximises learning pathways via VET to higher education (PhillipsKPA (2006), p.62).

Swinburne also has strategic priorities for staff diversity and inclusion in the form of the *Indigenous Employment Strategy* which aims to increase educational and employment opportunities of Indigenous Australians and the *Pay Equity Plan 2008–2012* which aims to decrease the gender pay gap at Swinburne. These strategies are aligned with Swinburne's commitment to social inclusion.

The Centre for Social Impact (CSI) is a unique partnership between Swinburne University of Technology, the University of New South Wales, the University of Melbourne and the University of Western Australia. The mission of the CSI is to create beneficial social impact in Australia through teaching, research, measurement and the promotion of public debate. And through this Centre, we are signatories to the the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative.

The PRME is inspired by internationally accepted values such as the principles of the United Nations Global Compact. It seeks to establish a process of continuous improvement among institutions of management education in order to develop a new generation of business leaders capable of managing the complex challenges faced by business and society in the 21st century.

Through this mechanism, Swinburne has declared its willingness to progress the implementation of the following principles to:

- develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy;
- incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact;
- create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership;
- engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value;
- interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges; and

- facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

5.2 Provision of vocational and further education qualifications

As well as providing vocational qualifications directly related to employment, Swinburne provides opportunities for individuals to raise their educational achievement through progression from Certificate I to Advanced Diploma qualifications in its TAFE Division. Swinburne's Vocational Learning Framework is designed to give our TAFE students a smooth transition to working life. At the heart of the framework is personalised learning. Each student's learning needs are identified and corresponding learning and career pathways support plans established. The model's underpinning principles are: building a skilled workforce; lifelong learning, guidance and assessment; learning for participating in an internationalised world; and quality.

5.3 Pathways to higher education participation

By taking advantage of its structure as a dual-sector institution, Swinburne provides increased opportunities for people who are traditionally under-represented in higher education through pathways, recognition of prior learning, articulation and credit transfer arrangements.

Guaranteed Entry Scheme

Swinburne is the first university in Australia to offer students a guaranteed pathway from entry-level certificate courses through to postgraduate study. Once enrolled, students are guaranteed a place and entry into the next level qualification in their chosen field at Swinburne. Nearly 50 separate VET qualifications across key fields are covered by credit transfer arrangements that provide recognition towards relevant higher education awards.

The first intake of students to take up the Guaranteed Entry Scheme (GES) will commence undergraduate studies in 2012. Upon satisfactory completion of a TAFE diploma or advanced diploma, students will automatically be eligible for a Commonwealth Supported Place in a Swinburne degree course, with credit granted for units completed during TAFE studies.

Swinburne's success in transitioning students from TAFE to higher education is significant. Around 29 per cent of Swinburne's higher education enrolments come from TAFE-based admissions.

Reverse articulation offer

The University has also started the first reverse articulation offer to students who have not completed their higher education qualification. This allows students who did not complete a year or two of their degree to have their credit or learning mapped back to a Certificate IV, diploma or advanced diploma, as appropriate. In this way students still receive an accreditation even if it is not at the level originally intended and may be encouraged to remain engaged in education.

5 SWINBURNE'S CURRENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA

Swinburne has a number of initiatives designed to provide a more inclusive environment within the university and in the broader community as well as being engaged in research that is contributing to the important evidence base about creating social inclusion.

5.4 Engagement and learning initiatives for disadvantaged groups

The University delivers a range of targeted programs to engage people from disadvantaged groups in learning, allow them to acquire recognised skills and prepare them for work. Swinburne has a number of initiatives designed to provide a more inclusive environment within the university and in the broader community as well as being engaged in research that is contributing to the important evidence base about creating social inclusion.

This section profiles a selection of activities that reflect the breadth of social inclusion education, training and research initiatives currently in progress or under development across the University.

5.4.1 Targeting jobless families with children

Young Mums/Childcare

The Young Mums/Childcare Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) program is a recent Diversity@Work Award winner, which is helping young women aged 15 to 20 who are expecting or have a baby, to train and enter the workforce. The program is unique in that it encourages young women to bring their babies to class.

Participants completing the course gain a Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning at intermediate or senior level as well as credit toward a Certificate III in Children's Services and a pathway to further study or work. This includes vocational competencies as well as personal development skills, work related skills and English and maths. In this way, young women learn skills and gain access to parenting expertise.

The young women are also supported by Swinburne's First Stop program, with a worker following them through their program and offering individual support and career advice. The program is building links into the community with students being referred to the program from services such as Anglicare, the Department of Justice, Department of Human Services and local maternity hospitals.

The success of the program is clear. In the 2008 program, seven out of eight (98%) young women who enrolled completed the year and six went on to further education. Eleven students from the 2009 cohort have continued this year and all have indicated they are planning to continue studies in 2011 – mostly nursing and childcare courses. A further 21 young women have enrolled in 2010.

Supporting parents, guardians and carers with Learning for Life

Swinburne University, Emberin and The Smith Family have jointly agreed to develop and pilot a program to complement the existing Smith Family's Learning for Life programs. Smith Family programs support almost 30,000 disadvantaged children as they transition between home to school and from school to further study or workforce entry.

The Smith Family's nationwide network of Learning for Life workers link children with literacy support, mentoring, tutoring and personal development initiatives, in addition to Smith Family financial scholarships that assist with school expenses such as uniforms, books and excursions. The Learning for Life Mums (LfLM) Project will

directly support the female guardian/mother of the Learning for Life learner, assisting with breaking the cycle of second and third generational low educational attainment.

The LfLM project will deliver a learning resource that combines different modules of learning with every day practical examples of competence to ensure that participants obtain an accredited qualification.

Raising aspirations and qualifications of the surrounding support system will have many positive effects for disadvantaged children and families. Research has provided extensive evidence of the correlation between parental educational achievement and the educational engagement and achievement of children.

Making a Difference Project

The Making a Difference Project seeks to build the aspirations of Year 9 students in the Yarra Valley at a critical period in their secondary education to go on to higher education. A number of students who were not realising their potential are now taking on leadership roles in their schools. The program engages and encourages young people by exposing them to tertiary study through involvement in a work-integrated component completed by third-year Swinburne students in the Faculty of Higher Education in Lilydale.

KIOSC and VET in Schools

The Knox Innovation Opportunity and Sustainability Centre (KIOSC) project is a partnership with seven secondary schools in Melbourne's outer eastern suburbs. It will encourage students to pursue educational pathways in traditional and emerging vocational areas that can lead to higher education. The program will show students a range of 'green careers' and renewable technologies as well as opportunities available in a range of scientific and technical careers. Activities will be targeted to the different interests of Year 7 to 9 and Year 10 to 12 students.

Funding of \$10.5 million has been gained through the Commonwealth Government's Trade Training Centre in Schools Program for the construction and fit-out of a new facility at Swinburne's Wantirna campus. This facility will help educate students about sustainable careers through programs that create real world opportunities. The Green Technology Centre will offer students engineering, manufacturing, laboratory and electrical qualifications.

Providing a vehicle for high-achieving students to move into first-year university is a key aspect of the project with students gaining enhanced credit and transition skills.

First Stop and targeted youth programs

Other initiatives seek to work with young people who are disengaged from education and provide them with opportunities to re-enter education and prepare for further learning or work. First Stop is a Swinburne TAFE youth employment, education and training resource centre which targets out-of-school or disengaged people aged 15 to 24. Young people visiting First Stop develop an individualised training plan and are provided with advice and support to enable them to implement their plans.

A number of the young people taking advantage of the First Stop services end up undertaking training in one of Swinburne's targeted youth programs. More than 600 students are involved in a range of VCAL, VCE and youth-specific Certificate of General Education for Adults (Youth CGEA) courses at Swinburne.

5 SWINBURNE'S CURRENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA

Swinburne acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which the University's campuses are built.

5.4.2 Closing the gap for Indigenous Australians

The University is committed to social, economic and social advancement of the traditional owners and other Indigenous Australians who suffer multiple disadvantages as a result of the loss of their traditional lands and life.

As well as supporting Indigenous students studying in a range of courses across the University, Swinburne is putting in place a range of education programs targeted specifically to the needs of Indigenous Australians.

Traineeships

The broad-based Youth Initiatives programs include programs providing training to Indigenous trainees who are studying a range of qualifications at Certificate II to Certificate IV.

Recently there has been strong engagement in traineeship programs. The program is supported with culturally appropriate materials and direct liaison with employers to help students gain employability skills. An innovative and well received cross-cultural competency has been designed and added to all Indigenous traineeship courses. This involves students sharing cultural knowledge and experiences with indigenous students in Canada.

Indigenous hemispheres: Being Aboriginal in Australia and Canada

The Conference Board of Canada, in collaboration with the International Partnership Network (IPN) awarded Swinburne University of Technology the 2010 Global Best Award in the category Building Learning Communities. The award celebrated outstanding and effective business, education and community partnerships that significantly impact on the communities in which they operate.

The program, *Indigenous hemispheres: Being Aboriginal in Australia and Canada* directly connected students in Australia and Canada ('face-to-face' via SKYPE internet technology) to allow students to explore the cultural perspectives of Indigenous Australians and indigenous Canadians through their own voices. Students gained international perspectives on the issues and concerns that impact on their daily lives and experiences as members of First Nation communities. The program facilitated direct and personal dialogues between students located in Australia and Canada and the study unit provided online learning where students were able to interact and learn about the history, culture, tradition, identity and contemporary socioeconomic situation of indigenous peoples in both hemispheres.

There has also been strong participation in programs that work with organisations to help them meet their indigenous employment strategies. These organisations include the Australian Football League and the ANZ Bank.

In the ANZ program, business traineeships are generally designed as year-long programs. However, students who undertake the Certificate II in Business can combine it with completing Years 11 and 12. On completion they will be offered full-time positions as Certificate III Trainees within the ANZ Bank, the main recruiter of Indigenous trainees from Swinburne at present.

The Certificate III in Financial Services is also being provided across rural Victoria to trainees within the ANZ Bank. Three trainees have already been offered full-time positions with the bank and two such students are now doing Certificate IV courses through Swinburne.

The Victorian Aboriginal Community Association Limited (VACSAL), Bert Williams Aboriginal Youth Services (BWAYS) and Swinburne University of Technology have worked together to deliver Certificate IV and Diploma of Youth Work for a number of years. As a result of this partnership there are over 40 qualified indigenous youth workers. Through this partnership, the Wurreker award winning program for Indigenous Youth is currently being delivered. This innovative program in Certificates I, II, III in Mumgu-dhal tyama-tyt has re-engaged indigenous young people who are no longer in mainstream educational settings.

Business and community services qualifications

Swinburne delivers a number of Certificate IV and Diploma programs in the business and community services areas in partnership with Indigenous organisations and communities. For example, Swinburne has been delivering governance training over several years in partnership with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations. Over 340 students have undertaken non-accredited and accredited training in Indigenous Business Governance. The Certificate IV in Governance has a retention rate of 95 per cent and provides a pathway into diploma and then advanced diploma qualifications. This program provides successful participants with a guaranteed pathway into the Bachelor of Social Science.

Indigenous employment strategy

In 2009, Swinburne developed a framework for increasing the educational and employment opportunities of Indigenous Australians, the *Indigenous Employment Strategy*. This has four reinforcing goals to increase the responsiveness of the University to the needs of Indigenous Australians. They are to:

- Increase employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians in the University through on-the-job training and the nurturing of a supportive and diverse culture;
- Increase postgraduate educational opportunities for Indigenous Australians;
- Increase the numbers of Indigenous employees in the University; and
- Increase awareness of cross-cultural and Indigenous issues through diversity awareness training.

The strategy's goals are supported by a number of broad-ranging recommendations that will contribute to the development of Swinburne's Social Inclusion Action Plan. Options that are anticipated in the strategy include:

- Increasing participation of Indigenous Australians in research through targeted academic scholarships for postgraduate studies. These would include sessional teaching opportunities to build the academic skills of participants, supported by an Indigenous Methodologies Master Class;
- Increasing participation of Indigenous Australians in the governance of the University;
- Targeted human resources strategies that include the review of recruitment and retention strategies, offering secondments from peak Indigenous organisations, adopting employment conditions that are culturally responsive and building networks with Indigenous organisations; and
- Providing career pathways through traineeships that can lead to permanent jobs.

5 SWINBURNE'S CURRENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA

It is proposed that strategies would benefit from the involvement of past Indigenous students who can promote educational opportunities to other Indigenous Australians. The strategy will also consider the additional support Indigenous students might need, such as more personalised support, provision of scholarships and cross-cultural training of staff and managers.

Indigenous knowledge

The Faculty of Design has taken up the challenge of building understanding of Indigenous culture across the University by establishing CIKADA – a research concentration focused on indigenous knowledge and design anthropology.

The research concentration is led by Dr Norman Sheehan, who brings a wealth of knowledge gained as an artist and academic, and will explore cultural issues through the lens of Indigenous knowledge.

5.4.3 Engaging people from outer-metropolitan and rural and regional communities

The participation of rural and remote students is consistently proportionately below that of other students in Australia.

The development of innovative teaching and learning models will allow Swinburne to maximise the higher education options it can offer students in the outer Melbourne areas. This will support students in areas where the University currently only has VET campuses, and in areas where the engagement in higher education is traditionally low.

Swinburne is addressing this through expanding the entry pathways to offer some new solutions for low-SES students, including those in rural and remote areas. The University is working towards all pathways having clear entry and exit points (diploma, advanced diploma and degree) and Swinburne has also extended its Guaranteed Entry Scheme to rural partners where support can be provided to ensure a full tertiary education experience.

Where appropriate, tailored VET qualifications will be delivered in parallel with higher education qualifications in regional areas. For example, a psychology degree with a Certificate IV in Mental Health or an Engineering Degree with a Diploma of Sustainability. This will assist students to gain employment in their intended industry while continuing to study for their degree. It also gives students more experience and information about their future career choices and potentially an earlier decision about the suitability of their career choice.

5.4.4 Improving outcomes for people living with a disability

Disability support services

Swinburne's disability support services provide advice and support to students studying in programs across the university. Learning Support Services include: adaptive assessments for exams, adaptive technology, specialised equipment, alternative format course material, direct support staff, resources and information.

Swinburne has developed two programs to meet the special learning needs of people with intellectual and/or learning disabilities and those with developmental delay or specific disorders such as autism.

Courses in work education and transition education

Swinburne offers two courses specifically targeted at developing the work readiness and employability skills of people living with a disability and providing opportunities for social connectedness.

The *Certificate I in Work Education* provides post-school vocational training, focusing specifically on vocational planning and work readiness skills with practical placements as part of the course. Students participating in the program are helped to become ready for work in mainstream jobs involving routine, predictable, repetitive and proceduralised tasks under supervision or to undertake further vocational training. Some students are also linked with employment agencies.

Students are well supported during and after the program and class sizes are small (approximately eight students in each). On completion the students are invited to regular student reunions every five years to provide social support and reinforcement.

The *Certificate I in Transition Education* is designed to identify areas for individual skill development, and to develop learners' skills so they can move into an independent adult role in the community. The certificate aims to empower people to make life choices by providing learning that is experiential and relevant. It also provides participants with knowledge and skills which will enhance their continued education and employment prospects. On completion of the course, students either continue with further vocational training and/or gain entry into paid employment and/or voluntary work.

Certificate I in Work Education includes vocational electives for one day per week over 12 months. As part of this program, students detail, clean and polish the Swinburne University car fleet and buses. This practical activity develops employability skills through teamwork and learning the workplace administration of the vehicles.

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Discussion paper questions

- Which existing Swinburne initiatives could be strengthened to increase the educational engagement of disadvantaged cohorts?
- What opportunities exist to develop new initiatives that address educational engagement of socially disadvantaged groups?
- How can we work with schools and VET providers in outer-metropolitan, regional and rural areas to increase the transition of their students into higher education?
- Which localities should be given priority in the University's Action Plan?
- Which groups should Swinburne prioritise in its employment strategies?

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5 SWINBURNE'S CURRENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA

5.5 Evidence-based research and evaluation

Swinburne is well placed to ensure its strategic work on social inclusion is evidence-based. The University's Institute for Social Research is the largest of its type in Australia and focuses on broader social inclusion work. The Institute runs a large number of externally funded social projects each year, valued at millions of dollars. It also conducts around 40 postgraduate projects. Its work centres on flagship issues, currently: sustainable cities, democracy and justice, and creativity and communications.

The sustainable cities flagship encompasses projects in the areas of social housing and homelessness. Current projects include the relevance of housing submarkets for social housing, the experience of homeless women and the impact of housing processes on economic and social disadvantage, including the effectiveness of government policies and programs.

Investigations in democracy and justice cover a range of topics including a study of Australian and New Zealand responses to refugees. Another is looking at how community policing strategies can be integrated into police work with African-Australian communities while a third is examining electoral reform.

Research into creativity and community has a number of projects. One is looking at the impact on marginalised young people of participation in the *Youthworx* community radio, a five-year collaboration with the Salvation Army and SYN_FM. Another project is looking at the digital divide and how it influences public access to information and communications infrastructure. A third study is considering the role of local media in remote Indigenous communities, the ways it assists with Indigenous content development and how it contributes to national narratives.

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Discussion paper questions

- Are there new or priority areas of research into social inclusion that Swinburne should explore?
- If new funding can be secured for Swinburne, what services should be prioritised?

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6 COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT POLICY AND FUNDING TARGETS

The Commonwealth Government responded to the Bradley Review with a 10-year plan to reform higher education. The overarching objectives of the plan are to extend the reach and enhance the quality and performance of the higher education sector.

This objective of extending the reach is reflected in two key goals:

- To increase the educational attainment of the population so that by 2025, 45 per cent of all 25 to 34 year olds will have a qualification at bachelor level; and
- To increase the participation of groups currently underrepresented in education so that by 2020, 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at undergraduate level are people from lower SES backgrounds.

The reforms, which include changes to higher education funding arrangements, seek to build the capabilities and skills of the workforce as a whole and improve the life circumstances of individuals.

6.1 Measuring low-SES participation rates

When it comes to increasing the proportion of low-SES people undertaking higher education in Australia, enrolments have remained static at around 16.5 per cent since 2003 (Phillimore and Kosky, 2010, p.i). Accurately measuring these participation rates is now an increasingly important part of this endeavour.

To date the Commonwealth Government has used the so-called 'postcode method' as its primary way of measuring SES. Ranking of universities in Australia has relied on 'those students whose permanent home address code falls within the lowest 25 per cent of postcodes as coded by the ABS Socioeconomic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation (IEO)' (Bradley Review, 2009: p.34).

The Commonwealth Government recognises that being location-based, the SEIFA IEO cannot capture all factors that relate to individual circumstances. For instance, students who move away from home to study are likely to list their address as where they are living rather than their parents' address. This means if an institution has enrolments of a higher number of low-SES students who live in a middle or higher SES area, it is not picked up.

To address this, a number of options for sourcing data that will better describe an individual's circumstances are being explored and a staged approach to developing and implementing a new measure is in place. In 2010, SEIFA IEO data has been supplemented by Centrelink data on income support. Collection of data from enrolling students about their parent's occupation and educational attainment has also commenced. An announcement on the measure to be adopted is expected in 2011.

6 COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT POLICY AND FUNDING TARGETS

6.2 Swinburne's performance against Commonwealth Government targets

Swinburne still needs to improve its performance in attracting low-SES students. An analysis by the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy ranked universities against the proposed Commonwealth low-SES participation targets. It ranked Swinburne 33 out of 38 in Australia based on its 2008 low-SES participation rate for undergraduate students of 10.1 per cent. This is also the second lowest in Victoria¹, with only Melbourne University at 7.3% scoring a lower rating. Swinburne is also second from the bottom in ranking relative to other post-1988 universities, with only the University of Canberra (5.1%) having a lower percentage of low-SES students (Phillimore and Kosky: 2010).

6.3 Commonwealth Government funding to support change

As part of reforms, Commonwealth Government performance funding will be available to higher education institutions that meet agreed targets. In 2010, funding to support low-SES participation targets will be about 2 per cent of teaching and learning grants, and will increase to about 3 per cent in 2011. By 2012, equity funding will reach 4 per cent of teaching and learning grants, broadly in line with the recommendations of the Bradley Review.

Performance funding is designed to provide targeted support for teaching and learning initiatives that have a direct link with the Commonwealth Government's policy objectives. The Government has provided \$394 million in new funds to support improved performance plus existing funding of \$39 million for Equity Support Programs. The funding will go towards:

- \$108 million – for partnerships that link universities with schools and VET providers. This will support initiatives in the areas of low-SES, Indigenous and regional and remote students; and
- \$325 million – for student loading based on the number of low-SES students enrolled in institutions.

Funding and performance targets are supported by restructured student income provisions that target assistance to low-SES and regional and remote students and reduce economic barriers to their participation in higher education.

The Government has not given a firm indication of how the 20 per cent low-SES target (distributed across the higher education sector in Australia) will be calculated for each jurisdiction or institution.

A paper prepared for the Australian Technology Network of Universities has canvassed four possible options for distribution. This includes:

- a flat 20% or more per institution;
- system-wide weightings where each institution has a standardised increase over current performance;
- percentages tied to institutional type; or
- linking increases to the proportion of low-SES populations in each state (Phillimore and Kosky, 2010).

¹ Swinburne University of Technology data indicates for all higher education students (both undergraduate and postgraduate students) that there were 1,125 students in 2008 with slightly less in 2009, 1,200 students. In both years this equated to 9.5% of domestic students.

In preparation for negotiations with the Commonwealth Government by end of 2010, Swinburne must model its ability to meet the targets (including yearly increases in student enrolments) and form a view on its preferred approach to the calculation and application of the targets.

A new national body, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) will be charged with driving this social inclusion and quality agenda. It will:

- accredit providers;
- encourage best practice;
- simplify current regulatory arrangements; and
- promote greater national consistency.

6.4 Implementation timeframes

The negotiation of low-SES and overall participation targets with the Commonwealth Government will be in two stages:

Stage 1

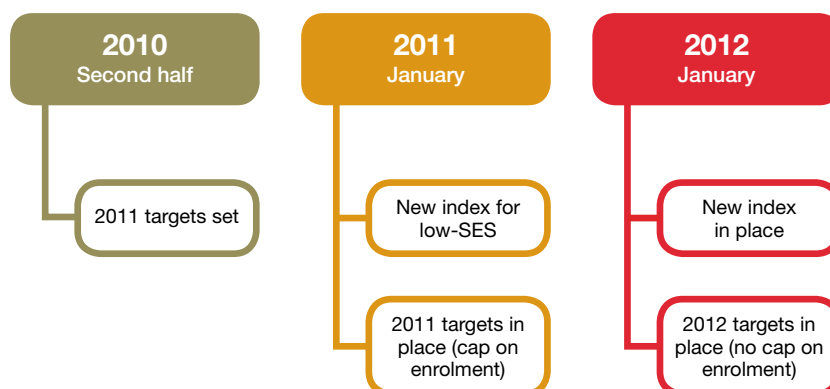
Early 2010: The Government has announced its intention to develop interim indicators based on the 'postcode method'.

By end of 2010: universities will negotiate 2011 performance and funding agreements that include low-SES targets to be achieved by 2012. This will include transition funding for 2011 for institutions to put in place initiatives to help them meet the agreements. This will include programs with schools and VET providers to increase higher education aspirations of low-SES students, including Indigenous, regional and remote students.

Stage 2

In 2011 the new indicators for measuring low-SES participation will be established and targets agreed for 2013 and beyond. Additional funding in 2012 will depend on both meeting the agreed targets in 2011 and negotiation of further performance targets for 2013 and beyond. This is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Funding and performance agreement timeframes



7 DEVELOPMENT OF SWINBURNE'S SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

7.1 Creating a multidimensional plan

The outcomes of the social exclusion experience in the UK, EU and Australia point to the need for social inclusion strategies to be multidimensional. Improving higher education participation of under-represented groups will require a number of reinforcing initiatives. In addition to action within the university, it will be important to develop partnerships with other organisations and agencies which have the expertise and resources to help students overcome barriers and set their aspirations, and then successfully complete higher education studies.

A range of measures will be needed to increase participation. To achieve short-term gains the focus will be a mix of strategies that strengthen the impact of existing work being done by Swinburne and partner organisations to:

- maximise the number of students accessing the Guaranteed Entry Scheme;
- consider how existing pathways initiatives within the University can be better targeted and focused to pull lower SES student into higher education;
- extend the delivery of programs that are working well in one area to others;
- extend existing work with Indigenous communities on education initiatives; and
- improve retention rates of existing low-SES students.

Achieving a material change in the low-SES rate by 2020 will require a detailed strategic review of the catchment area, student data for Swinburne and overall state trends. This may help with identifying opportunities in regional and rural areas with schools and VET providers. Work with not-for-profit organisations with an interest in social capital building may also be fruitful.

Given the overall low ranking of Swinburne in relation to low-SES student participation, caution should be taken in relying on a change in the measurement of low-SES to significantly increase participation rates.

In the longer term, achieving substantial change is likely to rely on innovations that are a strategic leap into new directions that are not reflected in current delivery. These kinds of actions will take more time to design, test and measure success.

7.2 Next steps

It is proposed that the next steps towards development and implementation of the action plan are to:

- circulate this Discussion Paper to Swinburne staff, students and stakeholders and encourage input on specific initiatives for low-SES, women, Indigenous Victorians and disability groups that could be progressed as part of the Action Plan;
- develop a consultation plan that includes discussion with Schools and VET providers in outer-metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria and with key not-for-profit organisations;
- establish an internal data working group to model Swinburne's potential growth opportunities, analyse Year 12 completion and transition to further study patterns across Victoria and consider other data that can inform development of initiatives;
- draft and refine proposed social inclusion initiatives and investigate potential funding sources to support their development;
- progress development of initiatives that link to the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development strategic directions on transitions for young people to education and work; and
- identify potential partners in the school and TAFE sectors, in Government and the not-for-profit sector and philanthropic organisations.

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Discussion paper questions

- How can we build partnerships with community and government organisations working with disadvantaged communities to increase educational engagement?
- What services need to be provided to students and staff to support the increased participation of students from lower SES and disadvantaged groups?

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9 APPENDIX 1 – SOCIAL INCLUSION AND HIGHER EDUCATION: KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS

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9.2 Victorian Government

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9.3 International

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10 APPENDIX 2 – SWINBURNE’S SOCIAL INCLUSION DISCUSSION PAPER CONSULTATION PROCESS

Date	Consultation
Nov–Dec 2009	<p>University-wide participation in workshop to explore social inclusion issues and opportunities for Swinburne.</p> <p>Working groups established at the workshop met and prepared issues papers on the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recruitment and engagement ■ Raising aspirations and progression ■ Teaching learning and progression
Feb–April 2010	<p>University-wide consultations with key stakeholders including Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellors and other members of the Executive Group and senior managers.</p> <p>External consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Department of Planning and Community Development ■ Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs ■ Office for the Community Sector ■ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
April–Aug 2010	<p>Social Inclusion Steering Committee established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stephen Beale, Vice President (Student and Corporate Services) ■ Linda Brown, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director TAFE (Chair) ■ Russell Crawford, Dean Faculty Life and Social Sciences ■ Fiona Graham, Executive Director, School for Sustainable Futures ■ Shirley Leitch, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic ■ Andrew McFarland, Director Student Services ■ Jeffrey Smart, Pro Vice-Chancellor International
April–Aug 2010	<p>Indigenous Round Table</p> <p>A Swinburne roundtable was convened by Linda Brown, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director TAFE, involving members of the Senior Executive Group and key stakeholders across the organisation to discuss Indigenous issues. Members of the round table met twice to provide information on current initiatives at Swinburne, including research and support services.</p>
June & Aug 2010	<p>Swinburne Executive Group consulted on Draft Discussion Paper.</p>
Aug 2010	<p>Ian Young, Vice-Chancellor, invites staff, students and stakeholders to provide feedback on the development of the Swinburne University Action Plan.</p>

11 APPENDIX 3 – PARTICIPATION OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION OF LOW-SES STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Data provided by Swinburne University of Technology, Strategic Planning and Quality unit.

Participation of Indigenous students in higher education at Swinburne

Nationally, the level of Indigenous participation in higher education has been reasonably stable in recent years – Indigenous students generally account for 1.2–1.3% of all domestic higher education students (Table 1). However, there are major differences between the various states and territories. For example, in most years, Indigenous students represent 14–16% of the total domestic headcount in the Northern Territory, compared with 1.5–1.7% of the headcount in Western Australia and only 0.5–0.6% of the headcount in Victoria.

At the same time, Indigenous students are accessing higher education at an increasing rate – that is, they steadily account for an increasing percentage of commencements. Australia-wide, Indigenous commencements accounted for 1.58% of all domestic commencements in 2008 – up from 1.49% in 2005, and in Victoria the increase over the same period was more pronounced (from 0.55% to 0.70%). Further, when the figures are corrected for the proportion of Indigenous individuals in the population (to produce a measure called the ‘participation ratio’), Victoria performs well above the national average. At Swinburne, however, the level of Indigenous participation in higher education remains very low even by Victorian standards.

Table 1: Access rates, participation rates and participation ratios for Indigenous students in higher education, 2005–2009¹

State/territory	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Access rate² (%)					
Swinburne	0.24	0.24	0.39	0.28	0.17
Victoria	0.55	0.64	0.66	0.70	
Australia	1.49	1.49	1.51	1.58	
Participation rate³ (%)					
Swinburne	0.18	0.20	0.26	0.27	0.22
Victoria	0.52	0.56	0.58	0.60	
Australia	1.20	1.25	1.29	1.20	
Participation ratio⁴					
Swinburne	0.33	0.36	0.46	0.48	
Victoria	0.95	1.02	1.02	1.05	
Australia	0.58	0.59	0.61	0.60	

¹ Data for undergraduate and postgraduate students are combined.

² Access rate = the percentage that *commencing* Indigenous students represent of the *commencing* domestic student population.

³ Participation rate = the percentage that Indigenous students represent of the *total* domestic student population.

⁴ Participation ratio = the participation rate of Indigenous students ÷ the proportion of Indigenous students in the relevant population (i.e., the Swinburne, Victorian or Australian student population)

Indigenous participation at Swinburne by broad field of education

At Swinburne, only c. 25–30 Indigenous students are enrolled in higher education study at any one time (Table 2). Historically, enrolments in management and commerce programs have accounted for almost half of these enrolments, but recent years have seen slowly increasing participation in creative arts and engineering programs.

Table 2: Indigenous students (n) in higher education at Swinburne by broad field of education, 2005–2010 YTD

Broad field of education	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 YTD
Creative arts	4	4	3	5	6	9
Engineering, etc.	1	1	4	4	5	5
Health	1	1	1	0	0	0
Information technology	1	1	2	1	0	0
Management and commerce	8	7	9	12	10	5
Natural and physical sciences	1	0	1	3	1	1
Society and culture	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other/no information	12	8	9	6	5	7
Total	28	23	29	31	27	27

Participation of low-SES students in higher education at Swinburne

Nationally, the level of low-SES student participation in higher education has increased slowly in recent years to c. 15% of all domestic students (Table 3). However, there are major differences between the various states and territories. For example, in most years, low-SES students represent >30% of the total domestic headcount in Tasmania, compared with c. 20% in Queensland and South Australia, c. 12.5% in Victoria and c. 4% in the ACT.

At the same time, low-SES students are *accessing* higher education at an increasing rate. That is, they account for a (slowly) increasing percentage of *commencements*. Australia-wide, low-SES commencements represented 15.1% of all domestic commencements in 2008 – up from 14.7% in 2005. At Swinburne, the increase in participation rate over the same period has been more pronounced (from 8.9% to 9.5%), but it remains low by Victorian and national standards. Even when the level of participation is corrected for the relative proportion of low-SES students in the population, Swinburne's 'participation ratio' for low-SES students remains comparatively low.

11 APPENDIX 3 – PARTICIPATION OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION OF LOW-SES STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Table 3: Access rates, participation rates and participation ratios for low-SES students in higher education, 2005–2009¹

State/territory	Low-SES student access and participation in domestic cohorts				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Access rate² (%)					
Swinburne	9.4	10.0	9.0	10.0	9.7
Victoria	12.5	12.7	12.9	13.3	n/a
Australia	15.5	15.7	15.9	16.1	n/a
Participation rate³ (%)					
Swinburne	8.9	9.2	9.1	9.5	9.5
Victoria	12.2	12.2	12.3	12.5	n/a
Australia	14.7	14.8	15.0	15.1	n/a
Participation ratio⁴					
Swinburne	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	n/a
Victoria	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	n/a
Australia	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	n/a

¹ Data for undergraduate and postgraduate students are combined.

² Access rate = the percentage that *commencing* low-SES students represent of the *commencing* domestic student population.

³ Participation rate = the percentage that low-SES students represent of the *total* domestic student population.

⁴ Participation ratio = the participation rate of low-SES students ÷ the proportion of low-SES students in the relevant population (i.e., the Swinburne, Victorian or Australian student population)

Low-SES student access to higher education by broad field of education

At Swinburne, students from low-SES backgrounds access programs in engineering, IT, natural & physical sciences and health comparatively more than they access programs in other broad fields of education (Table 4). Broadly, this reflects state and national patterns. For example, low-SES students represent c. 17% and c. 15%, respectively, of domestic engineering and natural & physical sciences commencements – both in Victoria and nationally (Table 4).

Table 4: Low-SES student access to higher education by BFOE, 2005–2009

	% low-SES students (of total domestic commencements)				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Swinburne					
Architecture & building	4.8	12.5	5.2	8.2	5.8
Creative arts	6.9	7.8	9.7	8.5	8.8
Education	–	–	–	–	5.3
Engineering, etc.	12.9	13.5	11.9	13.8	13.0
Health	16.1	18.5	9.1	14.3	10.7
Information technology	11.1	10.2	10.4	10.8	12.5
Management & commerce	7.6	8.1	7.2	10.0	8.9
Natural & physical sciences	13.5	11.1	8.3	11.5	11.1
Non-award	7.5	5.9	2.7	6.1	13.2
Society & culture	9.7	11.1	9.9	7.0	7.3
Victoria					
Architecture & building	7.3	8.2	9.2	8.2	n/a
Creative arts	8.6	8.8	9.7	9.1	n/a
Education	14.6	14.2	14.1	14.8	n/a
Engineering, etc.	14.9	15.4	15.5	17.5	n/a
Health	13.1	13.7	13.9	14.3	n/a
Information technology	16.1	16.1	15.3	15.8	n/a
Management & commerce	11.4	11.9	11.9	12.6	n/a
Natural & physical sciences	14.6	14.0	14.3	14.7	n/a
Non-award	11.5	10.9	11.9	13.7	n/a
Society & culture	11.7	11.9	12.3	12.2	n/a
Australia					
Architecture & building	10.5	10.5	11.2	11.3	n/a
Creative arts	12.3	13.1	13.0	13.7	n/a
Education	18.7	18.6	19.4	19.7	n/a
Engineering, etc.	16.4	16.0	16.1	17.2	n/a
Health	17.2	17.0	17.2	17.8	n/a
Information technology	16.0	16.0	15.3	15.4	n/a
Management & commerce	12.5	12.9	12.9	13.6	n/a
Natural & physical sciences	15.2	15.2	15.1	15.1	n/a
Non-award	12.3	12.6	12.6	14.4	n/a
Society & culture	14.2	14.6	14.8	15.0	n/a

¹ Access rate = % low-SES students in the commencing domestic student population.

11 APPENDIX 3 – PARTICIPATION OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION OF LOW-SES STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Low-SES student participation in higher education by broad field of education

Discounting the health study area, for which there are few enrolments in higher education programs at Swinburne, the broad fields of education for which there is greatest low-SES student participation are engineering, IT and natural & physical sciences. This reflects access data for the University, and the national picture. Swinburne has few enrolments in education, a field characterised by strong low-SES student participation at many Australian universities.

Table 5: Low-SES student participation in higher education by BFOE, 2005–2009

	% low-SES students (of total domestic enrolments)				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Swinburne					
Architecture & building	6.3	10.1	7.8	9.0	8.3
Creative arts	6.8	7.0	8.8	8.7	8.6
Education	2.6	–	3.2	–	9.7
Engineering, etc.	12.8	12.8	11.8	12.1	12.6
Health	14.9	12.6	13.6	17.1	16.0
Information technology	9.1	10.3	11.2	11.8	12.4
Management & commerce	7.2	7.3	7.4	8.4	8.4
Natural & physical sciences	11.1	10.9	10.4	10.6	10.7
Non-award	6.2	4.8	2.3	5.8	13.0
Society & culture	8.0	9.0	8.5	7.5	6.9
Victoria					
Architecture & building	7.9	7.8	8.1	8.1	n/a
Creative arts	8.8	8.6	9.2	9.1	n/a
Education	14.3	14.0	14.0	14.7	n/a
Engineering, etc.	14.8	14.4	14.5	14.8	n/a
Health	13.0	13.1	13.3	13.5	n/a
Information technology	15.1	15.3	15.4	15.8	n/a
Management & commerce	11.7	11.7	11.9	12.1	n/a
Natural & physical sciences	13.5	13.4	13.6	13.6	n/a
Non-award	11.3	10.4	11.2	13.3	n/a
Society & culture	10.8	11.0	11.4	11.4	n/a
Australia					
Architecture & building	10.1	10.1	10.8	11.2	n/a
Creative arts	11.8	12.0	12.1	12.6	n/a
Education	19.0	19.0	19.4	20.0	n/a
Engineering, etc.	14.8	14.7	15.0	15.6	n/a
Health	16.4	16.3	16.5	17.0	n/a
Information technology	16.0	15.5	15.7	15.7	n/a
Management & commerce	12.5	12.7	12.8	13.1	n/a
Natural & physical sciences	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.3	n/a
Non-award	12.3	12.2	12.3	14.2	n/a
Society & culture	12.9	13.1	13.5	13.8	n/a

¹ Participation rate = % low-SES students of total domestic student enrolments.

SWINBURNE SOCIAL INCLUSION GOALS AND STRATEGY

A successful Social Inclusion Action Plan will include goals and performance measures that are embedded in all levels of university planning, funding and reporting. A set of social inclusion goals will guide the detailed planning and ongoing implementation of Swinburne's strategy.

The draft goals are:

Socially inclusive culture

To draw on the leadership, commitment and knowledge of the University to create a socially inclusive learning and research culture in which students take up social, educational, environmental and economic opportunities.

Teaching and learning

To ensure the design, delivery and promotion of our education and training programs includes social, learning, environmental and economic pathways for all students.

Support services

To provide a range of services to support students within the university that will help build their confidence, social engagement, ability to access information and learning skills and support educational attainment.

Research

To build on Swinburne's international reputation for innovative social research in order to increase our knowledge and capacity to address social and economic disadvantage and build a socially inclusive society.

Partnerships and networks

To participate in a multidimensional response to social exclusion in partnership with other educational, community and government organisations both domestically and internationally.

People development

To support staff and students in the creation of a socially inclusive culture that facilitates educational access and attainment for all students.

Social and educational innovation

To take an innovative approach to the development of educational initiatives that are forward-thinking, adaptive and positive in challenging social exclusion.

DISCUSSION PAPER QUESTIONS

- How appropriate are the draft goals proposed to guide the development of Swinburne's Social Inclusion Action Plan?
- Which existing Swinburne initiatives could be strengthened to increase the educational engagement of disadvantaged cohorts?
- What opportunities exist to develop new initiatives that address educational engagement of socially disadvantaged groups?
- How can we work with schools and VET providers in outer metropolitan, regional and rural areas to increase the transition of their students into higher education?
- Which localities should be given priority in the University's Action Plan?
- Which groups should Swinburne prioritise in its employment strategies?
- Are there new or priority areas of research into social inclusion that Swinburne should explore?
- If new funding can be secured for Swinburne, what services should be prioritised?
- How can we build partnerships with community and government organisations working with disadvantaged communities to increase educational engagement?
- What services need to be provided to students and staff to support the increased participation of students from lower SES and disadvantaged groups?

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The information contained in this document was correct at the time of printing (August 2010) but is subject to alteration or amendment without notice by Swinburne.

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