Strategic Review of Language, Literacy and Numeracy Training: Advice to stakeholders regarding stakeholder consultations

The South Australian, Victorian and Australian governments (the project partners) are undertaking a strategic review of government funded adult language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) training. The purpose of the review is to ensure that government investment in LLN training is effective in assisting adults to acquire the LLN skills needed to support completion of vocational education and training (VET) and participation in the workplace and modern life.

The programs in scope for the review are:

- South Australian Government funded adult LLN training (accredited training)
- Victorian Government funded adult LLN training (accredited and pre-accredited training)
- The Australian Government Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) delivered in Victoria and South Australia.

The project partners have engaged the UK National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC) at the Institute of Education, University of London in partnership with the Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne to undertake the review.

NRDC is an independent centre dedicated to research and development in the fields of adult literacy, language and numeracy and offers world-leading knowledge and understanding of key issues related to research, policy and practice in these fields. CRES is a national centre for research on post-compulsory education and training with extensive expertise in research and evaluation of education and training systems and programs. Together, NRDC and CRES offer a highly skilled and experienced project team combining local knowledge with internationally recognised expertise in the fields of adult LLN.

Why are the project partners undertaking the review?

Adult LLN skills are a key area of interest for the project partners due to their fundamental importance in underpinning social inclusion, workforce participation and productivity. Evidence indicates that a substantial proportion of the adult population in Australia could benefit from further developing their LLN skills, for example, through improving their ability to get a job, progress in their career, participate in education and training and engage with their community.

The project partners wish to ensure that their LLN programs are effective in assisting low skilled adults to acquire the LLN skills needed to participate in modern society. Although governments invest in a range of adult LLN programs, policy makers do not currently have robust information about which types of LLN programs and which policy and program management settings deliver the best outcomes for adult learners. While a significant amount of national and international research has been undertaken in the field of adult LLN in recent decades, there have been few empirical studies of program effectiveness. Through the review, governments are seeking to better understand the factors that contribute to program effectiveness and the relationships between interventions, learning activities and educational, economic and social outcomes.
**What does the review include?**

The review comprises:

1. Analysis of current government funded LLN training activity in South Australia and Victoria based on existing data, including analysis of student participation in training, the characteristics of participating students, and student outcomes from training; and

2. Research on key elements of effective LLN programs, and the policy and program management settings that support delivery of effective LLN programs, based on a national and international literature review and targeted stakeholder consultations. This encompasses consideration of the learning outcomes that should be sought from LLN training, effective LLN program curricula, pedagogy and assessment practices for various learner cohorts, the capacities required in providers and practitioners to deliver effective LLN programs and successful ways to build capacity, and the policy and program management settings which support effective learning experiences.

To support this research the contractors, on behalf of the project partners, will consult with key stakeholders to draw on their expertise and experience in relation to adult LLN provision and policy.

Following the completion of this work, the project partners may consider undertaking further research in relation to the delivery and outcomes of government funded LLN programs.

The findings of the review will strengthen the evidence base on ‘what works’ in adult LLN training, and will inform consideration of opportunities to improve government funded LLN training.