



ACTivate!

ACTS newsletter
Spring edition

ACTS INC AUSTRALASIAN CAMPUSES
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY



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Building the Case for Change -
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ACTS Conference Wrap Up

“Sustainability as Core Business: Building the Case for Change”



Delegates at the 2011 ACTS Conference dinner

The 2011 ACTS Conference was hosted by the University of Adelaide at the National Wine Centre, South Australia, between 28 - 30 September. The theme for the conference “Sustainability as Core Business: Building the Case for Change” aptly addressed this challenge faced by the tertiary sector by exploring how sustainability fits into core business and providing tools and techniques to enable the required change.

With a panel of distinguished keynote speakers, the conference was attended by over 120 delegates, engaging with presentations on a wide variety of topics addressing campus sustainability and education for sustainability. The conference brought together leaders, academics, sustainability-focused decision makers, environmental managers, engineering and technical staff, and students from the tertiary education sector, business and government throughout Australia and New Zealand.



From left to right: Hon Paul Caica MP, Minister for Environment & Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water; Ellen Sandell, National Director of Australian Youth Climate Coalition; and Rob Bookman AM, Chairman, Confederation of the Australian International Arts Festivals.

As part of the new international collaboration efforts, Leanne Denby (ACTS President) facilitated an open session to draw input into the national and international tertiary education response for Rio + 20. Jimmy Brannigan, a representative from ACTS international sister organisation Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) hosted a productive session on how to create Net Positive Leadership in your organisation. From tips on using social media to create change for sustainability right through to practical ideas on how to build sustainability into the core business of Learning and Teaching, the 11th international ACTS conference was as diverse as it was inspiring.

ACTS Conference Wrap Up

The highlight of the conference was the Conference Dinner, where delegates enjoyed a hard-earned night of celebration. The food and wines were a delicious accompaniment to celebrating the achievements of the Green Gown Award Australasia award winners. The Retro Photo Booth was also a hit and delegates danced the night away at the beautiful National Wine Centre.



Pascaline Owers, VP TAFES, in the Retro Photo Booth



Delegates at the 2011 ACTS Conference Dinner


The conference wrapped up with a sector update and a LiFE Performance Management Tool overview at the University of Adelaide on Friday 30 September. Some delegates chose to kick off the long weekend by attending one of two conference field trips – a sustainability tour of Adelaide or a biodynamic winery tour in Norton Summit.

“I would recommend the ACTS conference to anyone, at any level, who is interested in sustainability and sustainable practices in Tertiary Institutions” said Carlene Kirvan, Executive Assistant to the Dean of Arts from Macquarie University.

All in all it was a successful, fun-filled and inspiring conference though which delegates created and strengthened networks, and gained insights, motivation, and ideas to further embed sustainability into the core business of their respective institutions. We’re looking forward to the next ACTS Conference in Brisbane from 26th - 28th of September, 2012!



2012 ACTS CONFERENCE - Brisbane, Queensland
Save the date: Wednesday 26th - Friday 28th September, 2011

 Including 2012 Green Gown Awards Australasia Applications open 13 June 2012 - www.acts.asn.au

A HUGE thanks to our Conference Sponsors!

Dancing the night away at the Conference dinner



Green Gown Awards Australasia

The winners of the 2011 Green Gown Awards Australasia (GGAA) were announced at a fabulous dinner and award ceremony at the prestigious National Wine Centre of Australia, in Adelaide, South Australia on 29 September 2011. The evening was addressed by internationally renowned guest speaker and environmental activist Jon Dee – founder and Managing Director of Do Something! The Award submissions were subject to strict judging by a panel of independent experts, comprising representatives from 21 organisations, including Universities Australia, TAFE Directors Australia, DEEWR and industry experts such as Siemens and InterfaceFLOR. The judges were extremely impressed with the quality and standard of entries, and congratulated the efforts of all who submitted and were involved with the Award scheme.

2011 saw the introduction of three new categories, open to all Australasian tertiary education institutions, bringing the total to six Award categories:

Continuous Improvement - Institutional Change

Continuous Improvement - Specific Area

Learning and Teaching

Student Initiatives and Campaigns

TAFEs and Smaller Institutions

Plus: **ACTS Awards of Excellence** (specifically for ACTS members, recognising their sustainability achievements, be it large or small!!)

12 Institutions were recognised for their excellent initiatives, with all winners details below. The overwhelming atmosphere of the evening was excitement as delegates enjoyed their evening, with feedback such as "the Green Gown Awards was a great night!". A real effort was made to ensure the event was as sustainable as possible, with locally sourced food, sustainable decorations and recycled award trophies.

With plans to increase the number of categories in 2012, whilst maintaining consistency with the UK awards there really should be a category for everyone. Please keep an eye on our website and bulletins for news of the 2012 Awards due to launch in winter next year. So if YOU are making positive changes in sustainability around your institution then get yourself recognised and spread the word!



About the Awards

The Green Gown Awards Australasia is the first and only Award Scheme dedicated to recognising excellence in sustainability within the tertiary education sector in Australia and New Zealand. The Awards aim to recognise those institutions that are leading the way within sustainability, providing a real and very positive platform for others to aspire to.

Founded and launched in the UK in 2004, the Green Gown Awards are now in their 7th Year and have become THE most prestigious recognition of sustainability best practice in universities and colleges across the UK. Driving on this success and keen to embrace international collaboration, ACTS formally launched the Green Gown Awards Australasia in 2010. Now in 2011, the Awards have grown, with three more categories to recognise and reward sustainability excellence and share international best practice.

Winners celebrate with their recycled glass trophies at the 2011 ACTS Conference Awards Dinner



Green Gown Awards Australasia - Winners!

Congratulations!

Continuous Improvement - Institutional Change: **La Trobe University**



Since establishing its Sustainability Task Force in 2009 La Trobe University has appointed a Pro Vice Chancellor (Sustainability) and developed sound governance and management processes. Since the production of La Trobe's first sustainability report, significant environmental and social benefits were achieved in 2010 and the sustainability targets and actions set in the report have been incorporated into University planning and performance management of the VCs direct reports to drive behaviour change and performance improvements. The addition of a Research Fellow in Education for Sustainability Development is a direct result of the project. The judges thought that this was an excellent example of sustainability across the whole institution, with measurable outcomes, powerful internal communication and strong leadership and direction from senior management.

Highly Commended: **TAFE NSW Northern Sydney Institute**

Awarded for their "Sustainable Education" project - a holistic approach to embed sustainability within the institution and the curriculum.



Continuous Improvement - Specific Area: **University of Canterbury**

The University won for its Okeover Stream Restoration and Community Engagement Project, which impressed judges with its committed, long term approach. Significant restoration and extensive research has been conducted along the site over 15 years to transform it from a muddy, weed-infested drain to a teaching space with flourishing plants, rock eddies and pools. The University recently collaborated with the regional council to do a whole catchment (comprising 800 households) stream care project. The university has won awards for this project locally which in turn has given the institution encouragement to continue further developments. It has created a model of community driven stream care for other Christchurch streams. The judges felt that this was an excellent example of long term continuous improvement and shows strong environmental commitment in a local area. This initiative could be highly replicable in a similar ecological area and would be a great teaching tool for future students!



Highly Commended: **Victoria University**

Victoria University implemented its "Limit One Song per Shower Please!" water saving program that has saved 76,300 kL since 2006.

Learning and Teaching: **RMIT**



Over the last three years RMIT University textile design academics have creatively explored and re-examined textile design practice through the 'Curriculum Change to Embed Sustainability' project. The innovative project has shown leadership by providing graduates with the knowledge, skills and capabilities necessary to practice in a sustainable way as well as to be relevant, employable and visionary, with the capacity to influence change and be the future leaders of the fashion and textile industry within Australia and internationally. The judges felt that this initiative showed real evidence on the processes of how to teach sustainably (learning, up skilling), with evidence of how to measure student learning and with a strong collaboration with the local community. It showed a deep commitment to embedding sustainability within its curriculum and they felt it showed real promise for replicability elsewhere.

Highly Commended: **Australian National University**

- "Campus & community as classrooms for learning and teaching sustainability".
- & Swinburne University of Technology**
- "Vocational graduate certificate in education & training for sustainability".



Green Gown Awards Australasia - Winners!

Congratulations!

Student Initiatives and Campaigns: **The University of Adelaide**



In 2011 a student, University, and infrastructure collaboration delivered the Sustainable Transport Pledge at O'Week to encourage students to travel to campus by bike, public transport or by walking. This initiative asked new university students to pledge to travel to campus in a sustainable manner with a public declaration and rewarded them with a small prize. The pledge photos were promptly uploaded onto the sustainability Facebook page for students to tag themselves. Almost 700 pledges were taken by student volunteers. The social media element of this project helped cement individual pledges through a public display of commitment. The judges felt that this was an excellent model for engaging students and embedding sustainable transport behaviour. Methods of promotion and engagement were excellent and it appeared a fun energetic way to engage students with sustainability. The judges felt it was a model that could be highly replicable for other sustainability initiatives across campus.



Highly Commended: **Curtin University**

Awarded for the University's student driven, inclusive community vegie garden spanning 600m² and supported by only one volunteer staff member.

TAFE & Smaller Institutions: **TAFE NSW New England Institute**

Northern Inland Sustainable Business Network (NISBN) is an exciting initiative aimed at providing practical and local assistance to business as they embark on the sustainability challenge. Developed by New England Institute of TAFE and 4 other supporting organisations the NISBN covers 13 Local Government areas. Achievements of the NISBN include facilitating sustainable master classes and other training (such as sustainable manufacturing, carbon accounting, energy auditing and business sustainability), as well as initiatives targeting carbon footprints, energy/resource efficiency, alternative energy and industry development/workforce up-skilling. The judges felt that this was an impressive example of a holistic approach to sustainability across the whole institution. Highly replicable, great for sharing best practice with other institutions and very strong example of collaborative partnerships with community and business. The judges were very impressed with the results achieved in 12 months.



Highly Commended: **TAFE SA Regional Institute**

Awarded for implementing the TAFE SA regional Green Print program for workplace education and environmental sustainability.

ACTS Award of Excellence: **Charles Sturt University**



Charles Sturt University (CSU) is committed to sustainability and is actively working to both reduce the impact of its operations and to act as a leader to engage staff, students and the wider community to reduce their own environmental footprints. CSU has established formal targets as part of its strategic plans covering GHG emissions, energy and water use, waste production, biodiversity, and engagement of students, staff and its neighbouring communities in relation to improving the sustainability of actions. CSU has been aggressively pursuing its targets. For example, in 2010 CSU achieved a 47% reduction in water use (compared to 2006 baseline data) and a 34% improvement in vehicle fleet fuel efficiency. 2010 also saw the establishment of a \$3 million internal loan to provide funding for energy and water saving initiatives, amongst other fantastic initiatives! CSU was voted for by you - ACTS Members.



For more detailed information on any of the winners initiatives, please visit www.acts.asn.au for the Winners Brochure.

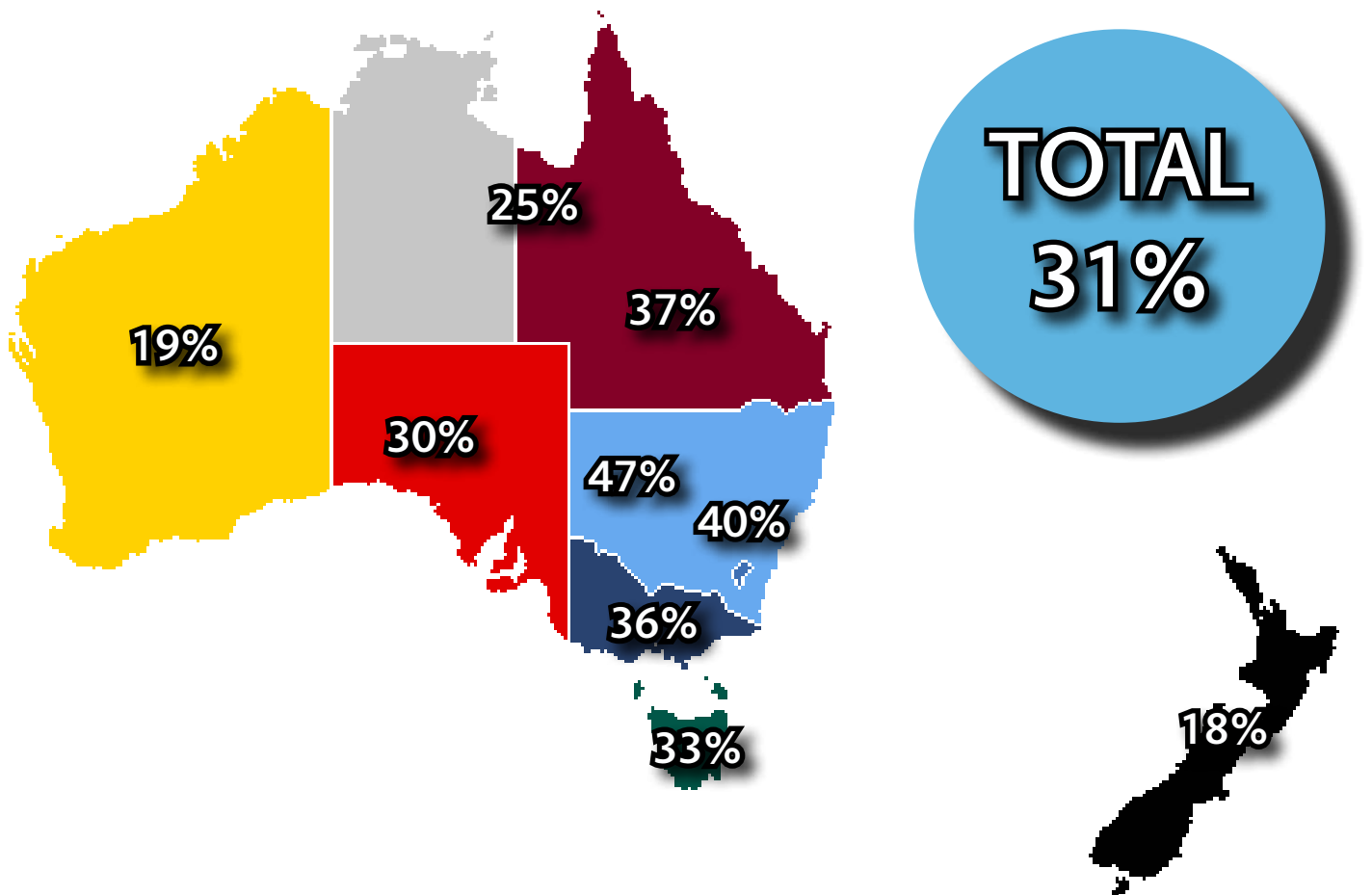


All photos from the evening are on our facebook page: www.facebook.com/ACTSinc

Membership Summary

2011: A Year of Unprecedented Growth

ACTS is fast becoming the sector champion for improving and promoting sustainability in the further and higher education sector. Representing 43 universities, TAFEs and polytechnics within Australasia, equating to 31% of the sector, ACTS has seen unprecedented growth in membership since incorporating in 2006. Whilst the majority of our current sign ups are from Universities, ACTS is working hard to increase TAFE representation. The map below shows our member representation statistics in each of the regions (NZ; NT & North QLD; South QLD; Regional NSW & ACT; Sydney Basin; VIC; SA; WA; TAS).



Welcome to Our Newest Members

ACTS extends a warm welcome to our most recent members who have signed up this spring season of 2011:

- Central Queensland University
- Gordon Institute of TAFE
- Wodonga Institute of TAFE
- Massey University (NZ)
- University of Canberra
- TAFE SA - Regional
- The University of Sydney
- AUT University of Technology
- Eastern Institute of Technology (NZ)



Welcome to New ACTS Team Members

The 2011 ACTS Annual General Meeting held in Adelaide on Wednesday 28 September saw the re-election of all board members bar one. ACTS thanks Carol Adams for the time and effort she has given to ACTS as the Vice President of Universities over the past year. The meeting also saw voluntary nominations for previously uncovered Regional Director roles. ACTS welcomes the new team!



Jonathan Phesant
Vice-President of Universities, ACTS

Jonathan Phesant is the Director at University of Adelaide's Office of the Vice-President. Jonathan has been involved with ACTS as the Regional Director for South Australia with the External Partnerships portfolio, and as a host for the recent and very successful ACTS Conference. "I believe that the Higher Education and VET sectors need a structured forum to promote sustainability across research, teaching and campus operations," said Jonathan, "ACTS provides this governance as well as a mechanism to share ideas, reward successes and build collective momentum for behaviour change." Jonathan was elected and warmly welcomed to the Executive Board as the Vice-President Universities at the ACTS Annual General Meeting in Adelaide on Wednesday 28 September.



Lesley Stone
Regional Director for New Zealand

ACTS would like to welcome Dr Lesley Stone, Sustainability and Environmental Coordinator for The University of Auckland to the newly created Regional Director - New Zealand position. "I am an environmental scientist specialising in organisational learning and change for sustainability. I have worked in tertiary education for 18 years, mostly in New Zealand, but with a couple of years in Australia and as a visiting fellow in The Netherlands and Sweden. My current role is to facilitate implementation of The University of Auckland's commitments with regard to sustainability and environmental performance improvement." In creating this new position ACTS envisions greater collaboration and networking with the New Zealand tertiary education sector.



Corey Peterson
Regional Director for Tasmania

ACTS would also like to welcome Corey Peterson, Sustainability Manager at the University of Tasmania to the newly created Regional Director - Tasmania position. "I have been active in the education sector for decades whether as a student, research assistant or employee. My Masters degrees in Environmental Science and Public Administration have enabled me to combine my personal and professional interests and allowed me to be active in sustainability issues generally, but specifically in Tasmania since arriving via an Antarctic research vessel in 1996. I am President of Sustainable Living Tasmania, a graduate of and mentor in the Tasmanian Leaders Program and led MacKillop College's award-winning sustainability efforts in water conservation, renewable energy projects, and food garden for many years before moving to the University of Tasmania as Sustainability Manager in 2010.

LiFE Performance Management Tool



LEARNING IN FUTURE ENVIRONMENTS

The new sustainability in tertiary education performance management and improvement tool LiFE (Learning in Future Environments) is set to launch in January 2012. The tool is being developed with input and collaboration from colleagues across Australia, New Zealand and the UK (with the UK's version released in November - www.thelifeindex.org.uk), and will provide guidance on how to navigate an institution through its sustainability journey.

The LiFE Index is a comprehensive online tool consisting of frameworks for progressing sustainability and social responsibility in an institution through four main categories:

1. Leadership and Governance;
2. Learning, Teaching and Research;
3. Partnerships and Engagement;
4. Operations.

LiFE Performance Accreditation will also be offered as an independent review, assessment and accreditation process that will help your organisation gain the most value from the LiFE Index. Participants will have their performance independently reviewed and verified by experts and will receive a bespoke report detailing how they can improve their performance. LiFE Performance Accreditation will have several key innovations and features:

Innovation Awards

Our Innovation Peer Review Group will assess exceptional performance and award participants who demonstrate innovation in social responsibility and sustainability.

Promote Your Efforts

Institutions are working hard to improve social responsibility and sustainability performance. The annual accreditation will be a positive promotion tool for every institution and will be promoted throughout the national and international media.

Independent Verification

Independent verification is central to achieving credibility. By having an institution's performance reviewed by independent experts, this shows how serious universities and TAFEs are about improving social responsibility and sustainability.

Benchmark Your Progress

The entire tertiary sector is looking to lead on social responsibility and sustainability performance. Performance Accreditation will provide benchmarking opportunities for organisations against similar institutions at a local, national and international level

The LiFE Index is being developed to help TAFEs and universities continually improve their performance in social responsibility and sustainability. The Index will imbed a comprehensive array of tools and resources into an Improvement Centre, which will be available to all participating institutions. The website has recently been launched through which you can find out more information about the tool in preparation for its launch.

For more information on [the LiFE Index](http://www.thelifeindex.com.au), visit:

www.thelifeindex.com.au

Member Spotlight

Member Spotlight

Sunshine Coast TAFE



As the 2011 Queensland Training Awards Large Training Provider of the Year, Sunshine Coast TAFE (SCT) is the premier provider of Vocational Education and Training (VET) on the Sunshine Coast and has firmly established a strong reputation for the quality of its education and training for industry, individual and communities. With more than 17,000 enrolments, they are registered to deliver over 340 qualifications supporting a diverse range of industry training groups. They are the supervising Registered Training Organisation (RTO) for more than 3,500 trainees covering over 40 different qualifications, delivered by more than 300 teachers and trainers and supported by 250 corporate employees.

The SCT recognises itself as a significant player in creating the Sunshine Coast's vision as Australia's most sustainable region and have a vision to be a leader in education for sustainability and sustainable operations. To achieve this they have implemented a holistic, three-pronged approach to incorporating sustainability into operations and educational offerings:

- **Sustainability Discovery Centre** – a community asset providing a range of innovative multimedia and hands-on discovery stations enabling people to think about sustainability and giving them the option to rethink their sustainable practices.
- **Education for Sustainability** – giving students and staff an understanding of sustainability and ways to implement innovative solutions throughout their businesses, communities and lives.
- **Sustainable operations** – carrying out a baseline assessment of resource use, energy and water consumption and waste generation and implementing a proactive action plan of technology coupled with behavioural change to reduce SCT's footprint.

For more information on Sunshine Coast TAFE's

ACTS Member Spotlight, visit:

www.acts.asn.au/members-spotlight

Excel with ACTS Scholarships

ACTS offers staff and student conference and development scholarships. Here we explore the experience of two staff recipients of the 2012 Conference Scholarships.

Dr. Anne Sibbel, RMIT University

"This conference showcased original research, innovative programs and practices, theoretical and conceptual advances, and professional issues relating to higher education and sustainability. In particular, many presentations were about teaching sustainability, ways to motivate professional colleagues of the need for change, and the barriers to institutional change within universities. This conference offered many opportunities for networking and exposure to diverse and innovative ideas which are not always shared through conventional routes such as professional journals. It raised and attempted to address the important questions about the roles and responsibilities of universities in promoting cross disciplinary practice, in knowledge construction, and in service to their local and global communities."



Brett Sharman

Project Manager, Sustainability, Griffith Business School

Communications Manager, Asia Pacific Centre for Sustainable Enterprise

"Being charged with integrating sustainability into a tertiary education institution is an exciting mandate. The sector's potential to shape society through teaching, research and engagement activities, as well as the sheer operational size of campuses, place our institutions in a pivotal role in transitioning towards a more sustainable future. But for these same reasons championing campus sustainability can also be a daunting, bewildering, and at times, lonely task.

So it was with a mix of enthusiasm, thirst for inspiration and search for comradeship that I attended my first ACTS Conference. Being a relative newbie to campus sustainability, I eagerly jumped from session to session, revelling in people speaking my language and lapping up the myriad sustainability approaches shared by presenters and delegates alike.

For me, the opening keynote address by Ellen Sandell, national director of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) was the highlight of the conference. Her intimate story of passion and entrepreneurialism in forming AYCC was enthralling and a testament to her comment that when it comes to sustainability you need to be willing to innovate and embarrass yourself.

While there were many other interesting presentations, I left many of them wanting to know more. More in terms of not just what someone is doing, but rather the stuff around how they got there, the factors behind actions chosen and things that didn't work, which you rarely get by reading sustainability websites and resources.

Campus sustainability goals must be bold and be core business to really engage people and effect the desired and necessary changes. My hope is that tertiary education institutions will take heed of the growing number of corporate, social and individual enterprises, both large and small, that have successfully begun the process of making sustainability core business, and that future ACTS conferences will reflect the sector assuming a greater leadership role in the sustainability challenge."



For more information on [ACTS Scholarship Opportunities](http://www.acts.asn.au/programs-and-initiatives/acts-scholarships/), visit:

www.acts.asn.au/programs-and-initiatives/acts-scholarships/

Look forward to further feedback from Development Scholarship winner Kay Ollett & Student Conference Scholarship winner Melissa May in our next issue of ACTivate!

Jeremy Baskin



ACTS welcomes Jeremy Baskin to our ever-growing network of sustainability experts. Jeremy has been appointed as La Trobe's Principal Research Fellow: Education in Sustainable Development.

La Trobe University is pleased to announce the appointment of Jeremy Baskin as Principal Research Fellow: Education for Sustainable Development. Jeremy brings to the role a range of experience in sustainability related teaching and research in Australia, UK and South Africa.

Jeremy's previous role was Australia Director of the University of Cambridge's Programme for Sustainability Leadership (CPSL) where he was responsible for the Australian Senior Executives' Seminar of the Prince of Wales's Business & Sustainability Programme. He also worked with companies and non-government organisations designing and delivering sustainability learning programmes.

He has a particular interest in sustainable business practice, managing climate risk, ethical supply chains, and corporate anti-corruption initiatives. He has an academic background in politics, history, corporate governance and ethics and has taught postgraduate courses in Business & Sustainability and Managing Climate Risk. In a previous life he was a public policy advisor to the Mandela government in his home country of South Africa.

Jeremy's role at La Trobe University will include working in consultation with faculties and other key stakeholders to:

- implement **new cross faculty undergraduate majors / minors** in social responsibility and environmental sustainability and postgraduate degrees;
- develop and deliver **professional development to assist staff** in embedding social, environmental and economic sustainability into the curriculum;
- develop **Executive Education programs in sustainability** and promote **multidisciplinary research** on Education for Sustainable Development.

Jeremy started the role on 10 November, 2011 and is based at the Melbourne campus in the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability).

Jeremy will also be working with the five Faculty Sustainability Coordinators: Trevor Budge (HUSS), Noel Gough (Education), Katherine Legge (FSTE) and Suzanne O'Keefe (FLM) and Glenda Verrinder (FHS). The Faculty Sustainability Coordinators are working on identifying subjects with sustainability content and designing sustainability majors and minors from existing subjects.



ACTS welcomes Jeremy to the sector and we look forward to following his developments and insights in this unique role.

Generations
SUSTAINABLE FUTURES. TOGETHER.