Learning and Teaching Investment Fund final report

Transforming teaching practice through professional learning for Next Generation Learning Spaces

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Office of the PVC, College of Design and Social Context

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Strategic objectives addressed:
The project aligns with the following LTIF Priorities:

- redesigning curricula around new learning spaces
- enhancing sessional staff professional development

Internal order number: 360387

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**Funding scheme**

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<td>Program Development Fund</td>
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**Acknowledgements:**

We sincerely thank the academic staff at RMIT who took the time to open our emails, engage with the professional learning approach and activities, and give us feedback along the way. We also thank RMIT University for funding this project through the 2013 Learning and Teaching Investment Fund.

**List of abbreviations:**

- **LTIF:** RMIT University Learning and Teaching Investment Fund
- **NGLS:** Next Generation Learning Space
- **PD:** Professional Development
- **NAWOS:** Not a Waste of Space (An OLT funded project that overlapped with this project)
- **SAB:** Swanston Academic Building
- **DSC:** Design and Social Context
- **SALT:** Senior Advisors, Learning and Teaching (This group is functionally equivalent to the Academic Development Groups in the Colleges of Business and Science, Engineering & Health)
- **GUSS:** Global, Urban and Social Studies
- **M&C:** Media and Communication
- **PCPM:** Property Construction and Project Management
1 Executive summary

The way we can set up this room to bring in industry professionals and have the students in groups pitch to them – it’s the kind of classroom I’ve been waiting to teach in. – Kerin Elsum, Media & Communication

Next Generation Learning Spaces (also known as Technology Enabled Active Learning Spaces or New Generation Learning Spaces) are face to face, collaborative and technology-enabled learning environments (Brown, 2005; Oblinger, 2005; JISC, 2006; Steel & Andrews, 2012). They often have flexible furniture, can seat up to 120 students in small groups of 6-10 and are designed so that students can use laptops and other technology which can connect to large digital screens on the walls for group work. The aim ultimately is that students can actively build their skills and knowledge in collaboration with others using technology and through this develop the capacity needed to work independently in new contexts.

RMIT University has made significant investments in refurbishing and building Next Generation Learning Spaces with over 90 in the University, including 64 in the Swanston Academic Building alone. Whilst some staff and students have embraced these new spaces, many have not embraced the potential these spaces offer for collaboration, technology and group work. It was, therefore, imperative to provide both timely and targeted professional development to explore with academic staff, in their disciplines, how environments could be used to capitalise on new pedagogies, digital technologies and sustainable learning designs.

This project aimed to support Higher Education and TAFE academic staff teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces development and participation in school-based peer learning networks. The peer learning networks were coordinated and supported by the College of Design and Social Context’s Senior Advisors, Learning and Teaching (SALT) in each School. Prior to leading their school peer learning network, SALTs themselves engaged in a ‘Train-the-Trainer’ approach and spent time exploring technology and pedagogies associated with Next Generation Learning Spaces. Over 200 staff engaged in the project.

Additionally, targeted ‘just-in-time and just-for-me’ professional development was provided for those teaching in the spaces. 154 academics were invited to participate in an online professional learning ‘game’ over the course of a teaching semester which involved a series of personalised emails and associated quests.

Project key achievements include:

- An increase in SALTs’ knowledge and confidence in using and supporting the use of the spaces
- Ninety-eight per cent of academics finding the 14 school network meetings worthwhile
- Seventy-eight per cent of academics reporting that they were interested in trialling a change to their teaching as a result of the meeting(s) they attended
- Seven curriculum change case studies accessible on the web
- Champions identified in schools who are keen to share examples of their practice
- A ‘gamified’ online approach to professional learning successfully implemented
- A library guide and an innovative interactive online infographic developed

The project findings reinforce views that contemporary professional learning needs to be provided in many different ways to engage diverse academics across the disciplines.
2 Outcomes

All proposed outcomes were achieved as follows:

- **Outcome 1: Enhanced knowledge (and confidence) of SALTs in supporting staff to use next generation learning spaces**

  Senior Advisors, Learning and Teaching knowledge of supporting staff to use next generation learning spaces was enhanced, with SALTs reporting increased confidence in knowledge and skills about teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces, and in helping academic staff to teach in these spaces.

- **Outcome 2: Establishing school-based peer learning networks for staff teaching in next generation learning spaces**

  Over 200 academic staff participated in the 6 school-based peer learning networks, reporting positive impacts from doing so. Sixteen expert speakers (both internal and external to RMIT) shared their knowledge and expertise about teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces. Inter-school collaboration was strengthened through joint network meetings. Additionally, the 154 staff timetabled to teach in a new generation learning space were engaged and supported with targeted professional development. Finally, School champions to continue supporting teaching in new generation learning spaces locally have been identified.

- **Outcome 3: Improved use of technology in next generation learning spaces**

- **Outcome 4: increased use of blended learning and student-centred learning**

  The use of technology, blended learning and student-centred learning was improved. Staff reported increasing their use of technology and pedagogies as an outcome of engaging in the project. Analysis of qualitative feedback indicated that they had become more aware of a wide range of technologies and different approaches to teaching, including blended learning and student-centred learning. In addition, 78% of reported that they were interested in trialling a change to their teaching as a result of the meeting(s) they attended, with an additional 15% responding that they may change their teaching.

- **Outcome 5: Documented curriculum change projects**

  Seven curriculum change projects were initiated, with many planned for implementation in semester 1 2014. Those who undertook a curriculum change project found it rewarding. Projects covered Blogging using Tumblr, supervision proforma using DropBox, AutoCAD skills using Lynda.com, exploring teaching with technology and conducting a peer review of teaching.

- **Outcome 6: Increased knowledge of how best to provide staff professional development, ‘just in time and just for me’**

  Knowledge of how best to provide staff professional development, ‘just in time and just for me’ was increased, with a sophisticated and transferable model for the professional learning of academic staff teaching in New Generation learning spaces, including sessional staff developed. Multiple and various opportunities that are just in time, self-directed and embedded in day-to-day work and performance-driven and evaluated are the most effective. Staff workplans are the key to achieving this outcome in a systemic and sustained way.

In addition, the outcomes below were achieved over and above those proposed in the original project proposal and described above:

- **Outcome 7: Blog posts and Library Guide**

  Five blog posts about teaching in new generation learning spaces were authored through the DSC teaching tomtom and a Library Guide was developed, increasing flexibility for
academics to engage in their professional learning. Posts and the library guide were accessed significantly. Together the five blog posts have registered over 1500 hits.

- **Outcome 8: Interactive infographic on Next Generation Learning Spaces**

  Along with a ‘gamified’ online approach to professional learning (the first of its kind at RMIT), the team developed an interactive infographic and session planning tool for future use by teachers and lecturers at RMIT.

- **Outcome 9: Scholarly publications**

  A number of scholarly outputs, including an internationally refereed book chapter, a report and a HERDSA news article, have been produced and disseminated.

In the next section, the project outcomes and impacts outlined above are described in detail.
3 Project outcomes and impacts

In the sections below, the project background, including synergies with other projects and project participation, and the outcomes and impacts against each of the project’s 9 outcomes are presented.

Figure 2. Staff participating in the network meeting with expert speaker Professor Gilly Salmon in the Swanston Academic Building

3.1 Project background

While Next Generation Learning Spaces vary in their exact characteristics, they typically are:

- carefully planned to facilitate interactions between groups of students;
- designed for large numbers of students and allow for flexible use and arrangement of furniture;
- constructed to enable the academic to both teach and facilitate the class from anywhere in the room; and
- technology-enabled to encourage active and open-ended learning.

Next Generation Learning Spaces are designed to prompt both academics and students to rethink their teaching and learning approaches. According to Oblinger (2005, p.14), “[a]n active, collaborative teaching and learning philosophy is often manifested in a different design. Space can either enable - or inhibit - different styles of teaching as well as learning”. Next Generation Learning Spaces are designed to increase student active learning and to support a more student-centred approach to teaching.

RMIT University has made significant investments in next generation learning spaces in the past with over 90 new or refurbished spaces. However, the teaching and learning possibilities that Next Generation Learning Spaces promise have not, on the whole, been exploited. There are many reasons for this lack of take up. Many academics have not been introduced to the space, the technology that it offers, or its potential for different approaches to teaching and learning. As such, few have had the opportunity to re-conceptualise the teaching of their discipline within this environment. It is, therefore, imperative to provide both timely and targeted professional development and explore with academics how these environments can be used to capitalise on new pedagogies, digital technologies and sustainable learning designs.

Synergy with other Learning and Teaching projects

This LTIF project builds on two other projects, the 2010 LTIF funded “Lectorial” Project, ‘Trialling the use of “Lectorials” to enhance learning and teaching in large classes’ (de la Harpe, Prentice, & Mayson, 2010) and an Office for Learning and Teaching project, “Not a Waste of Space: Professional Development for staff teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces” (de la Harpe, Fisher, Fraser, Imms, Mason & McPherson, 2011-2013).
The 'Lectorial' project pioneered the exploration of professional development for teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces and found that “[s]taff require ongoing embedded in context professional development and support in their local contexts”, specifically in the areas of using technology and curriculum and resource development. This project team ensured that this recommendation was central to the project.

The 'Not a Waste of Space' project also explored professional development for academic staff teaching in new generation leaning spaces. In this project, a voluntary online survey was conducted in Semester 1, 2012 at RMIT University. One hundred and eighty three academic staff members participated in the survey.

Preliminary analysis of the survey data (n=183 5.4% RMIT) showed that 70% of respondents reported wanting professional development to help them teach in new generation learning spaces and that staff are more willing than they are confident to teach in Next Generation Learning Spaces. It also showed that academics wanted professional development to be active and student-centred; to engage in hands-on professional development activities, have conversations with colleagues, engage in professional development with colleagues from other programs, get advice from external experts and practise in Next Generation Learning Spaces. The professional development areas that academics identified as most critical included how to teach and how to use technology.

In response to the survey, the "Not a Waste of Space" project developed a professional learning approach to teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces which included six elements, a workplan strategy, email strategy, online resources, tear-off guides, bookmarks, posters and local network meetings.

The six elements and underpinning theories are listed below.

1. **Work plans** agreed with line-managers including mid and annual review feedback are the vehicle to agree and anchor professional learning for teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces in the university system, whilst giving staff choice over their professional learning (Constructivist Learning, Behavioural Economics, Systems Thinking).

2. **Online resources** which are relevant, up-to-date, informative, immediately applicable and varied and flexible are available on demand for staff to build their capabilities, ‘just-in-time’ and ‘just-for-them’ (Constructivist Learning).

3. **Emails and quests** are ‘push’ strategies involving the use of choice architecture and the theory of planned behaviour to keep staff engaged, make it easier for them to stay involved and ‘nudge’ them to do the ‘right’ thing. Including badges and a certificate awarded to academics on achieving activities and completing the “Crack the Code” game provide evidence for use in teaching awards and/or promotions (Behavioural Economics, Gamification, Theory of planned behaviour).

4. **Tear-off guides and bookmarks** using the principles of choice architecture prompt staff in their local contexts to think about their teaching in Next Generation Learning Space and its impact on student learning (Behavioural Economics).

5. **Posters** using the principle of loss aversion encourage staff to engage in professional learning activities for teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces (Behavioural Economics).

6. **Network meetings** provide local and social networking opportunities for discussion, exploration and sharing approaches (Constructivist Learning).

For a detailed explanation of each of the six elements please see the Office for Learning and Teaching report “Not a waste of space – professional development for staff teaching in New Generation Learning Spaces” on the OLT website (http://www.olt.gov.au) or the ‘eGuide for institutional implementation’ at http://bit.ly/JJIeSi.
With the exception of using the workplan to allow staff to select their focus for professional learning (something that could not be accommodated by University systems in the time period) this LTIF project implemented the professional learning elements developed in the ‘Not a Waste of Space’ project to see how useful academics found them.

In summary, the project aimed to support HE and TAFE academic staff (including sessional staff) teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces to enhance their knowledge and skills of learning and teaching in new generation learning spaces through participation in both an online professional learning game focussed on teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces and in a school-based peer learning network.

**Participation**

The 7 DSC School Senior Advisors Learning and Teaching all participated in the project. Six of the seven schools established a school-based peer learning network for staff teaching in next generation learning spaces The School of Architecture and Design was not involved in facilitating a local network meeting as it was merging with the School of Design TAFE and sorting through other significant issues. However, the SALT responsible for the School of Architecture and Design and staff from Architecture and Design were invited to the DSC-wide events.

All academic staff in these schools were invited to join a local peer learning network. Additionally, 154 academic staff were specifically identified from timetabling data as teaching in a Next Generation Learning Space in the College of Design and Social Context and personally invited to participate in the email and gamification strategy and were contacted via email by the Pro-Vice Chancellor, DSC.

Over and above our expectations, over 200 academic staff participated in the project from across the College. Staff frequently mentioned the value in discussing the teaching opportunities with colleagues from their own (or different) schools and exploring the use in the spaces of technologies.

> [The most valuable skill/idea/concept in the session was]
> …seeing how others go about modifying/improving their teaching practices. – School Network participant, ‘Flipped Teaching’

> This is definitely the best (most useful, most energising) prof dev I’ve been to at RMIT. Thanks! – School Network participant, ‘Using Blackboard in NGLS’

Each of the 9 project outcomes and impacts are discussed in the sections that follow.

### 3.1.1 Outcome 1: Enhanced knowledge (and confidence) of SALTs in supporting staff to use next generation learning spaces

The 7 DSC School Senior Advisors, Learning and Teaching (hereafter SALTs) engaged in professional development on effective teaching and use of technology in Next Generation Learning Spaces in the semester prior to them leading their school peer learning network meetings. A ‘Train the Trainer’ approach was used, and as outlined by Good (2007, p 15) “[t]he basic premise of this model is the multistep process of training a select number of participants who will in-turn provide training for the general group”. The Train-the-Trainer model has the advantage of being economically prudent (Good, 2007; Kane, 1997). Additionally, Train-the-Trainer approaches have been shown to successfully cascade learning through organisations in an efficient manner (Culp, Gersick, Martin, Nudell, Pederson & Shankar, 2003).
The College project leaders and project manager facilitated these meetings for the SALTs to come together to identify, design and implement the bespoke hands-on professional development activities, based on locally identified needs; facilitate inter- and intra- college collaboration; prompt reflective practice; and contribute to evaluation of the project using both formative and summative methods.

‘Train-the-Trainer’ Professional Learning approach

In semester 1, 2013, the 7 SALTS had four two-hour ‘Train-the-Trainer’ meetings. Each meeting was held in a different Next Generation Learning Space so that they could become familiar with different layouts.

They attended meetings, completed online quests and presented to their peers for ten minutes (trained their peers) on one way to use a particular technology in a Next Generation Learning Space. They were also asked to undertake professional learning activity related to teaching in a Next Generation Learning Space in an area of interest to them and/or their School. Professional learning could include participating in:

- self-directed study e.g. investigate problems experienced by academics in your school in these spaces,
- a peer partnership program, or
- a module from the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning.

In addition, three DevelopME sessions were organised for SALTS covering Blackboard Basics, Blackboard Assessment and an Introduction to Google Collaboration.

SALTs were allocated half a day a week in their workload to engage in this professional learning activity. The aim of this training was to ensure SALTs were at a minimum level of proficiency and confidence around the RMIT-supported tools and technologies that support teaching in the technology-enabled spaces. An overview of the tasks that SALTS engaged in in Semester 1 is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Semester 1 tasks for SALTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attend meetings</th>
<th>Complete quests (including surveys) and provide feedback</th>
<th>Choose and complete a professional learning opportunity</th>
<th>Present a technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 1 - First steps</td>
<td>A number of quests were emailed throughout the Semester. e.g. Discussing new learning spaces with an academic in your school.</td>
<td>self-directed study e.g. Investigate problems experienced by academics in your school in these spaces</td>
<td>Present a technology for teaching in Meeting 4 that can be used in a Next Generation Learning Space to the rest of the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 2 – School network meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td>peer partnership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 3 – Different teaching approaches</td>
<td></td>
<td>module from Graduate Certificate Tertiary Teaching and Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 4 - Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all Train-the-Trainer meetings, a constructivist approach to teaching was adopted. Additionally, technology, for example phone polling, was used when relevant to familiarise SALTs with different technologies. An overview of the topics covered and activities used in the meetings is provided in Table 2.
### Table 2. Overview of SALT meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Focus and activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 1</td>
<td>Provided an overview of the LTIF project to the SALTs and discussed what role they would play in the project. It also introduced the SALTs to the resources from the “Not a Waste of Space” project and how the SALTs would undertake the activities that the academics in the School would do in Semester 2. In this way, the SALTs could then provide feedback and help to tweak resources. SALTs were given a Plus/Minus/Interesting sheet and asked to sit in on an academic in their School, teaching in a Next Generation Learning Space and write down what they found to be pluses, minuses and what they thought was interesting about the space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 2</td>
<td>This purpose of this meeting was to cross fertilize ideas about next generation learning spaces using the SALTs experience of sitting in on a class in their schools. Feedback on the Plus/Minus/Interesting task was discussed. There was also discussion about how to support teachers to teach in new learning spaces and SALTs began to develop a plan for the school network meetings for semester 2. SALTs were also asked to choose a technology or a teaching approach that could be used in a Next Generation Learning Space that they would present to the rest of the group, including how to use it and when and why it could be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 3</td>
<td>Two academics were invited to talk about their experiences of teaching in a Next Generation Learning Space – Sarah Holdsworth (School of Property Construction, Property Management) and Kerin Elsum (née Brearley) (School of Media and Communication). Prompts included: 1. Tell us briefly of your experiences of teaching in this space. 2. Did you need to change your curriculum to teach in this space? 3. How did you integrate technology? 4. What sort of support would you have found valuable (e.g. someone to walk you through the technology, a curriculum designer...)? 5. What would you do differently if you knew what you knew now? 6. Were there any surprises when you started teaching in the new spaces? 7. Is there a question that you think we should have asked? (Or one that you are getting maybe from colleagues who hear you’re teaching in these spaces or are about to teach in a Next Generation Learning Space themselves...) Questions and discussion followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting 4</td>
<td>SALTs presented their chosen technologies/teaching approaches for Next Generation Learning Spaces. These included: ‘Flipping the classroom’, ‘Using SmartBoards’ and how to use PeerMark with students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Templates and materials were developed centrally for SALTs to customise. This reduced duplication of efforts across the schools and ensured high standards and consistency of the approach.
Providing support for the SALTS was provided in order to build their confidence and capability, as well as to develop distributed leadership capacity for fostering sustainability beyond the life of the project.

Evaluation and feedback

An initial (pre) survey was emailed to SALTs prior to the Train-the-Trainer meetings began to determine their level of confidence to support academic staff teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces. The survey was sent out again at the end (post) of the project.

Pre and post survey data from SALTs

Four of the seven SALTs (60%) completed the pre-survey (N=4) and four completed the post-survey (N=4). Analysis of the data is presented in the figures below.

The figures below show that, for the SALTS who completed the survey, there was an increase in confidence for every item, without exception. This indicates that they were more confident to use next generation learning spaces and in supporting others to both use the spaces, turn on the technology system in the space and to help staff teach using a range of technologies after the meetings.

![Figure 4. SALT responses to the item: ‘How confident are you in using Next Generation Learning spaces?’](image)

![Figure 5. SALT responses to the item: ‘How confident are you in supporting others to teach in new learning spaces?’](image)
Figure 6: SALT responses to the item: How confident are you in supporting staff to turn on the new learning space technology system (such as the AMX) in a next generation learning space?
How confident are you in supporting staff to teach using the following technologies in new learning spaces?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Pre-Survey Average</th>
<th>Post-Survey Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Padlet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PebblePad</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate (Blackboard successor to...)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording using Lectopia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polling Software</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using collaboration software for group...</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clickers/Personal Response Software</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Online Databases</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary inputs to control a video...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamboards/Smartboards</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Using Echo 360</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using a microphone and audio system</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting your own laptop to the...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flipping between the student screens...</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the document camera</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnitin</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackboard</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing a DVD/Using the VCR</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Docs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablets and Smartphones in the new...</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room lighting</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Point in a new learning space</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room Computer (AMX)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. How confident are you in supporting staff to teach using the following technologies in new learning spaces?

In addition, SALTS reported increased knowledge and skills about using next generation leaning spaces. The comments below are indicative:

This was a good opportunity for us to engage with a range of technologies, discover the challenges and joys of using them, and work with each other to enhance our knowledge and skills. The broad spin-off has been engagement with ITS to provide feedback on the technologies and services they provide.
There’s a genuine enthusiasm in my school to begin using these technologies, even from people who have previously been sceptical of, for instance, the use of online elements in their classrooms. – SALT comment on Train-the-Trainer meetings

The DevelopME sessions were also very successful, with informal comments from SALTs indicating that they found participating in them very useful, even if it was simply spending time to look at new features in the spaces:

I would recommend [this training] to new academics as Blackboard is not very intuitive, but it is an essential skill to meet students’ online expectations.

A useful refresher.

I worked out how to use Gradebook in Blackboard - this was not part of this particular session, but sitting in the session gave me the time and mental space to do it. The trainer also provided a couple of helpful pointers with this. – SALT comments on Train-the-Trainer meetings.

**Key Findings:** As shown in the data presented above, SALTS participation in the ‘Train-the-Trainer’ meetings, undertaking their own professional learning and the DevelopME sessions on Next Generation Learning Spaces resulted in not only an increase in knowledge but also in confidence in a number of areas, including in SALT use of Next Generation Learning Spaces and associated technologies, and also in supporting staff to use and adapt their teaching for Next Generation Learning Spaces.

The knowledge and experiences gained by the SALTs participating in the Train-the-Trainer meetings will have a lasting effect as the SALTs are now able to share their expertise with academic staff in the schools as part of their normal school professional learning activities:

Running the sessions in a range of Next Generation Learning Spaces, allowing the SALTs the opportunity to practice using the technologies and facilitating activities which necessitated collaboration and placing SALTs in the roles of students and teachers in these spaces, was key to this strong result.

In terms of future enhancements, feedback from SALTs during the meetings was that they wanted to hear from academics who were teaching in innovative ways in Next Generation Learning Spaces and to discuss and share lessons learnt. They also wanted “More hands-on workshops/ trialling the technology in real-world situations like staff meetings” and having a “hands-on” play with the spaces.

I’ve familiarised myself with the resources available to support staff. I have been part of a team presentation/induction session in one of the spaces earlier this year which gave me an opportunity to use some of the functions, but haven’t much of a hands on play myself yet with all aspects… – SALT comment on Train-the-Trainer meetings

### 3.1.2 Outcome 2: Establishing school-based peer learning networks for staff teaching in next generation learning spaces

A Social Learning approach was used throughout the life of the project. Social learning theory supports the bringing together of people with varied levels of skills and experience to share, discuss and learn from one another. This approach allowed participants to explore learning and teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces, and to discuss and share lessons learnt. Peer learning groups exemplify a social learning approach. It has been shown that they are an effective professional development approach as participants are much more likely to listen to the experiences and successes of their peers’ than taking up a suggestion from an external facilitator (Scott, Coates and Anderson, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, in Semester 2, 2013, six of the seven SALTs facilitated a school-based collaborative peer learning network in their schools.
Each SALT also received a list of academic staff teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces via the timetabling system. SALTs selected academics and met with them to inform the direction of the network meetings. However, a general invitation was also sent out to all academic staff members. Numbers varied widely from school to school with some schools having only a handful of staff teaching in a Next Generation Learning Spaces and other schools having over 70 academics involved.

The peer learning networks used the Steel and Andrew’s academic development model for technology enriched learning spaces (2012, p. 252), shown in Figure 5 below.

![Figure 8. A model of academic development for technology-enriched learning spaces](image)

The peer network meetings followed the stages of Steel and Andrews as follows:

1. Making teacher belief systems explicit
2a. Identifying inherent pedagogical and technological possibilities
2b. Hands on practice and experience
2c. Translating to own pedagogical and disciplinary context
2d. Peer review, practice and community building
3. Application, reflection, leadership and disciplinary communities

SALTs worked with academics through the network meetings to provide timely professional development and to support them teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces. Expert speakers (both internal and external) were brought in and this was contextualised for each school depending on the academic staff needs.

Two SALTs conducted a ‘needs analysis’ using a survey instrument to determine the foci of their meetings. Common among the schools was a desire for sessions on educational technologies and contemporary pedagogies that foster students’ critical, creative and reflective thinking in new generation learning spaces. A number of schools also explored ways to use the spaces to engage with industry and global networks.

Staff were able to practice with the tools and use them in their own classes. The school peer learning networks also allowed staff to reflect on their own learning and teaching and discuss one another’s experiences. Often SALTs used some of their knowledge and research from their professional learning activity in Semester 1 to share with academic staff.

Highlights included Professor Gilly Salmon (PVC Learning Transformation at Swinburne University) who discussed ‘e-tivities’ and how they can be used in course design and Next Generation Learning Spaces, and A/Prof Deborah Bateman, an OLT fellow, who discussed her experiences of teaching in a Next Generation Learning Space.
A list of all the network meetings and facilitators is provided in Table 3. Some Schools extended invitations to other Schools to attend their network meetings (knowing the content would be of interest to a wide range of academics) and in the case of Professor Gilly Salmon and Associate Professor Debra Bateman’s, all DSC academic staff were invited. These two sessions attracted over 70 attendees.

Table 3. School Network meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network meeting topic</th>
<th>Facilitator/s:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flipped Teaching in Media and Communication</td>
<td>Terry Johal and Jason Downs (Lecturers, RMIT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing student-centred teaching</td>
<td>Jo Dane (Education Consultant, Woods Bagot)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing student-centred teaching: e-tivities: A framework for online and mobile learning</td>
<td>Professor Gilly Salmon (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning Transformations Swinburne University of Technology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Blackboard in Next Generation Learning Spaces</td>
<td>Erika Beljaars-Harris (Education Developer – eLearning, DSC) and Meredith Seaman (Senior Advisor L&amp;T, DSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Collaboration Tools in GUSS</td>
<td>Howard Errey (Education Developer – eLearning, DSC) and Meredith Seaman (Senior Advisor L&amp;T, DSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality teaching and learning in Next Generation Learning Spaces</td>
<td>A/Prof Debra Bateman (Faculty of Arts &amp; Education, Deakin University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online elements in TAFE Art: Tumblr, Pinterest and Blackboard</td>
<td>Jon Hurford (Senior Advisor L&amp;T, DSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackboard, Turnitin and Mobile Technology in Art</td>
<td>Jon Hurford (Senior Advisor L&amp;T, DSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving Sessional Education Staff in Professional Development</td>
<td>Spiros Soulis (Senior Advisor L&amp;T, DSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SmartBoards and iPads in Education</td>
<td>Amber Lochland, Training Officer, RMIT &amp; Howard Errey Education Developer – eLearning, DSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Google docs for Group work; Clickers and Responseware in PCPM</td>
<td>Dr Frank Boukamp, and Ehsan Gharaie (Lecturers RMIT)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation and feedback

The local network meetings were well very received by academics. Below, aggregated feedback from 141 academics participating in the network meetings is presented. All feedback was gathered anonymously via feedback forms that were handed out at the end of each meeting. Data was analysed using Google’s Form tool.

I found today’s meeting worthwhile:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10. Chart showing agreement with Item: ‘I found today’s meeting worthwhile’

Key finding: Ninety-eight percent of academics found the meetings worthwhile. Such a figure shows that a face-to-face model of professional development is still seen as valuable by academics.

The session’s learning objectives were met:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11. Chart showing agreement with Item: ‘The session’s learning objectives were met’

Key finding: Ninety-four percent of academics believed that the learning objectives for the meetings were met. This result reflects the work that the SALTs put in to ensure that the meetings were relevant to academics.
I am interested in trialling a change to my teaching as a result of attending this meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>107</th>
<th>78%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key finding:** Seventy eight percent of academics indicated that they were interested in trialling a change to their teaching as a result of the meetings. This result reflects that the sessions were effective in challenging conceptions and nudging academic intentions of adopting new approaches.

In addition, open ended comments from academics about the professional network meetings were positive, including for example:

- Excellent use of my time, as I learnt a lot in a small time frame, Thank you
- Nicely facilitated- interactive and lots of peer discussion
- These are really good workshops, short, sweet and to the point
- Very Inspirational
- Fantastic speaker! Inspiring
- Loved the fact that this was at Bundoora campus (much easier to get to as a sessional)

The open ended comments were used to create a word cloud (wordle), which is shown below. The words that stand out include great, good, thanks, examples and liked.

![Word Cloud](image)

**Figure 13.** Visual representation of sentiment across all sessions, all responses to the 'Other Comments' feedback item.

Additionally, a number of academics took the opportunity to thank the project team in person or via email:
Just wanted to thank you for these high quality sessions. The calibre of the speakers is raising the dialogue of elearning and online delivery to a much higher level. It is allowing us to discuss and engage with a variety of perspectives and approaches to eLearning. – Academic, School of Media and Communication (via email)

Key Findings: Network meetings were established in six of the seven schools in the college. Feedback on these school network meetings was very positive, with 98% of academics indicating that they were worthwhile and 94% responding that the learning objectives were met. This result reflects the work that the SALTs put in to ensuring that the meetings were relevant to academics. In addition, 78% of academics reported that they were interested in trialling a change to their teaching as a result of the meeting(s) they attended, with an additional 15% responding that they may change their teaching. These results indicate that the majority of academics who attended the network meetings intended to try something new and did not indicate resistance to changes in teaching pedagogies. The next step is to support them to actually implement changes in their actual teaching practice.

3.1.3 Outcome 3: Improved use of technology and
Outcomes 4: Increased use of blended and student-centred learning

All the SALT Train-the-Trainer and school network meetings were held in a Next Generation Learning Space. Guest speakers were also requested to use the spaces as they are intended, rather than to simply ‘lecture’ at academic participants. For some academics this was their first experience of these spaces. A number of technologies and approaches to teaching were demonstrated and used by academics including the use of:

- video
- ‘flipping the classroom’
- ‘e-tivities’ to scaffold learning
- multiple screens and source inputs such as iphones, laptops, iPads and the room’s PC
- polling tools such as PollEverywhere
- Google docs for large group discussion and feedback
- Clickers, and so on.

While student feedback on staff increased use of technology, blended learning and student-centred learning was not measured directly through the Course Experience Survey, the qualitative feedback from academics was analysed to see whether academics mentioned these aspects. Analyses revealed eight strong themes, as shown in Figure 15 below.
From Figure 15, the majority of academic comments referred to enhanced knowledge or use of technology, followed by references to changes in pedagogy and then trialling something new or innovative.

**Technology**

Most of the comments by staff about technology indicated that they showed an enthusiasm and intention to begin using these tools in class (often coupled with the sentiment that they were not aware of the power of the tool until this point) and a clearer appreciation of a tool that, for instance, offers faster and richer feedback:

> I fully intend to explore this tool in my own time.
> Use of Wikis for ongoing assignments
> How to organise material for online delivery.
> The wealth of possibilities - wondering how to 'integrate' the technologies so I need to start playing now.

– Comments from School Network participants

These comments indicated that academics were keen to increase their use of technology, however, they still had to implement these intended changes and this will require further support.

**Pedagogy**

Comments attributed to pedagogy indicated that staff were engaging with how they might use the spaces in their teaching. There were also many comments about innovation and trying new things in the space.

> I have a new idea for a particular assessment task.
> I want to deliver content more efficiently and thoroughly through online spaces and to incorporate more diverse teaching methods in the classroom.
> That the rooms are flexible and if we model new ways and give permission to students to use spaces differently, the teaching experience changes.
I have a much better idea of how technology is guiding changes in the delivery of education.

Got to start doing this. – Comments from School Network participants

**Key Findings:** Whilst the project did not directly measure academics’ improved use of technology or an increase in the use of blended learning and student-centred approaches in Next Generation Learning Spaces, there were a number of indicators that suggested that this was an outcome of engaging in the project.

In terms of the SALTs, they indicated that their confidence in using technology and their ability to support academics in using blended learning and student-centred learning in Next Generation Learning Spaces had increased. SALTs also reported supporting staff to adapt their curricula to include online elements and had additional discussions after the network meetings. The increased confidence of SALTs will almost definitely have a flow on effect in the Schools as they are the ones who provide learning and teaching support to academics teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces.

In terms of the academics, they indicated that they had become more aware of a wide range of technologies and different approaches to teaching, including blended learning and student-centred learning. It seems that the questions from the academics involved in the project are no longer about online or face-to-face, but how to teach in a blended way or how to ‘flip’ the classroom.

### 3.1.4 Outcome 5: Documented curriculum change projects

Academics were asked to put in to practice the strategies and techniques that they learned through the peer learning networks by engaging in curriculum change projects. Given that embedding ‘…technology into teaching and learning practices is complex and requires sophisticated disciplinary thinking, as well as a deep educational pedagogical knowledge’ (de la Harpe, Mason & Blythe, 2008, p. 100) the projects were seen as an ideal vehicle to achieve this aim. A number of curriculum change projects will take place in 2014 since the school network meetings were only conducted in Semester 2, 2013.

In terms of sessional staff engagement, the project linked with the ‘Connecting Sessional Staff’ professional development initiative that the College was facilitating. At the first sessional staff symposium, the sessional staff who attended were invited to undertake professional learning and develop a curriculum change project.

At the symposium all sessional staff in attendance (approximately 130) were invited to undertake a professional learning activity related to teaching with technology. On receipt of a documented curriculum change case study outlining what changes they had made to their teaching, they received $500. This was an outcomes based incentive. Seven sessional academic staff completed a curriculum change project, despite a lot of interest initially. In fact, a number of sessional staff emailed to say that they were simply too busy with other competing tasks.

The seven curriculum change projects that documented the changes they had made to their teaching included:

- Blogging with students using Tumblr
- Sharing a supervision proforma with HDR students using DropBox
- Refreshing AutoCAD skills using Lynda.com

Figure 17. Most sessions went smoothly with the assistance of ITS and AV technicians
• Refreshing Blackboard skills using Lynda.com and RMIT’s staff information pages
• Training with RMIT’s Sessional Modules (Teaching With Technology)
• Taking part in RMIT’s Peer Review of Teaching process
• Taking part in the Peer Partnership program

These projects covered the kinds of changes that Next Generation Learning spaces encourage and have surfaced sessional practitioners that SALTs in the DSC could work with in future projects.

A workshop was also specifically designed to explore teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces. Nineteen sessional staff registered for the Teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces workshop and two of these staff immediately sent an email to their schools requesting that they are timetabled to teach in a Next Generation Learning Space.

**Key Findings:** Seven curriculum change projects were completed in 2013 with a number of others planned for semester 12 2014. These have been captured as case studies for wider sharing and dissemination through the web. Undertaking a curriculum change project was rewarding for those that did so, but many staff found the task too onerous given competing demands, especially sessional staff.

3.1.5 **Outcome 6: Increased knowledge of how best to provide staff professional development, ‘just in time and just for me’**

The extract below, from the OLT Not a Waste of Space project that explored contemporary ways to provide staff professional development, captures how professional development of the future should be designed and implemented.

> Traditionally, institutions have supported academic staff to enhance their teaching practice by using formal learning activities. These usually take the form of workshops, face-to-face sessions, conference attendance, forums with expert speakers, a certified program or some sort of in house training (see Figure 3.). Most universities would also have a staff website dedicated to teaching and learning resources… The expectation is that staff will engage with these formal learning activities in a ‘just-in-case’ manner.

> There is significant research that professional learning should be continuous, in the workflow, aimed at staying current, social, self-organised, self-managed, performance-driven and (self)-evaluated (Hart, 2011; Cross, 2010, Boud & Hagar, 2012; Webster-Wright, 2009; Roscoe, 2002). This is because learning happens informally “…in the work setting…from asking questions, hearing stories, watching someone do a task, trial and error, searching Google, talking with the help desk, conversation in the coffee room” (Cross, 2010, p.45) and contributes to workers remaining up to date when it is on offer just in case they need the knowledge at some point in the future.

(Not A Waste of Space Report, 2014, p. 16-17)

This LTIF project captured many of the positive elements described in the extract above. The network meetings were face-to-face and often had expert speakers, they were also social, in the workflow and continuous. They allowed staff to ask questions, hear stories and experience learning in a Next Generation Learning Spaces. Academics were encouraged to follow up with their Senior Advisor, Learning and Teaching who was embedded in their School and someone they knew could support them to try something new in context.

The online professional learning ‘game’ that the Not a Waste of Space project developed was also trialled with 125 DSC staff teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces. Personalised weekly emails (with staff member’s name and room number) were sent to these staff over the course of a Semester. There were 14 emails in total. Four focused on encouraging staff to undertake professional development and provided resources (underpinned by the Theory of
planned behaviour), while eight invited staff to participate in a professional learning game, comprising 8 quests (Gamification). The quests included short videos, quizzes, links to short readings or an invitation to take a colleague to coffee. When a quest was completed, the academic received a letter. All 8 letters made up a codeword that allowed the academic to “crack the code” to teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces.

Eight academics completed all 8 quests and “cracked the code”, with 149 making an attempt to complete them over a 14-week period. Those who completed the 8 quests received a certificate from the Pro-Vice Chancellor congratulating them on their successful achievement.

There was a mixed response from academics to this gamification element, with some finding it juvenile, with others finding it engaging and encouraging. Overall, however, the feedback was more positive than negative. Additionally, on average, if an email was ‘gamified’, an academic staff member was more than one and a half times more likely to open the email and complete it than they were to open and click on a linked resource from an email that was not gamified.

The gamified approach to professional learning was an innovative step forward in academic development. The project team believe that more research needs to be undertaken to see how gamified learning might be used in institutional contexts.

Staff participating in the online gamified approach to professional development made the following comments.

- It allows you to 'dip in and out' of the activities when you have time, and also fast tracks some of the professional learning by offering quick grabs / dumps of key info
- Flexibility; variety of learning methods/approaches
- Broadens perspective on teaching approaches that are effective
- Keep it up, and introduce this approach in other areas

– Comments from email approach participants

**Key Findings:** Through implementing the peer learning networks, curriculum change projects and the gamification online professional learning approaches, the project team concluded that multiple and various opportunities that are just-in-time, self-directed and embedded in day-to-day work and performance-driven and evaluated are most effective.

Overall while, the professional learning approaches adopted were influential in seeding the use by academics of new pedagogies and new technologies, ongoing professional support needs to be available and accountability for change in practice must be built into individual academic work plans. Unless a new pedagogy or technology is expected, practised and evaluated, it is easy to lapse back into default practice.

### 3.1.6 Outcome 7: Blog posts and Library Guide

Five posts relevant to teaching in New Generation Learning Spaces were authored for the teaching tomtom, the College of Design and Social Context’s Learning and Teaching Blog. The site averages over 1500 hits each month and has over 800 followers. Posts came from project team members and teaching staff in the College of design and Social Context. Short excerpts are provided below and full versions of these posts are accessible at [http://theteachingtomentum.wordpress.com/](http://theteachingtomentum.wordpress.com/).

**Designing collaborative learning is worth the effort** *(21 February, 2013)*

…It was a fabulous way to facilitate collaboration and it was made possible because of the learning space –
this type of activity would not have worked in a lecture theatre. Designing activities and class work as Nick did does take some time, however, the students were engaged, they loved it, they learnt from each other and I am sure they will remember that class and what they learnt in that class when they are working in the field. Nick had designed a lesson that David Perkins would say ‘played the whole game’ of their future professional lives in a practice session…
http://theteachingtomtom.wordpress.com/2013/02/21/designing-collaborative-learning-is-worth-the-effort/

Making Twitter work for your students (1 August, 2013)

…After doing the basics with students, Narelle found that connections were being established between the four class groups on different campuses. Conversations were taking place inside and outside the class within different years of the Education student cohort and connections with established practitioners were being formed. Students were able to show their work to each other, research topics, share leads and contacts with each other, and teach each other social media skills…
http://theteachingtomtom.wordpress.com/2013/08/01/making-twitter-work-for-your-students/

Tools for paperless grading (6 September, 2013)

… Terms like ‘the paperless office’ and ‘paperless learning’ have come off the boil in recent years but both seem primed for a comeback in the tertiary setting. Web-based collaboration tools are closer to providing what lecturers and teachers need and (at least in Australia and industrialised nations) students are increasingly equipped with a smartphone, laptop or tablet: tools that potentially change the way people learn and capture their learning. I’m hesitant to say more than that because (with some exceptions) it seems to me that we use technology for the most part to present finished material and to view the finished material of others…
http://theteachingtomtom.wordpress.com/2013/09/06/tools-for-paperless-grading/

The use of technology in teaching and learning: A game of mix and match (19 September, 2013)

…Before you answer these questions, you need to decipher what happens in your teaching practice. Without reflecting on your own practice you will not be able to make active decisions. And I assure you, without you making these decisions; the decisions will be made for you. Wait another few years and you will find yourself with a tablet in hand without knowing how to make use of it. The new movement towards MOOCs
is one example of the technology changing and leaving us to follow the trend instead of making active decisions…


Thinking of doing some professional development for teaching? (21 November, 2013)

Although engaging in professional development to improve teaching has been shown to have a direct relationship on student learning outcomes (Hattie, 2009), as far back as the mid-80s, questions have been raised around the effectiveness of some professional development activities. As Webster-Wright (2009) points out, ‘…many [PD programs] remain as episodic updates of information delivered in a didactic manner, separated from engagement with authentic work experiences…’ Such approaches are generally ‘bolted-on’, often with a focus on compliance. They tend to be content heavy rather than learning oriented in their design and delivery. What this can lead to is a kind of superficial accumulation of knowledge, layer upon layer, rather than an ongoing re-conceptualisation of educational practice (Boud & Hager, 2012; Cross, 2010; Feixas & Zellweger, 2010; Hart, 2011; Webster-Wright, 2009)...

http://theteachingtomtom.wordpress.com/2013/11/21/thinking-of-doing-some-professional-development-for-teaching/

In addition, an online ‘library guide’ was developed as an outcome of one of the curriculum change projects. The guide houses information relevant to teaching in new generation spaces in the one place for academics to access at a time suitable to them (See http://rmit.libguides.com/newlearningspaces).

**Key Findings**: The 5 blog posts and the associated Not a Waste of Space library guide were innovative ways to engage academics in professional development for these spaces. Posts were widely read with over 1500 hits and the library guide significantly accessed with 2597 views since its launch in 2013. This approach increased flexibility for academics to engage in their professional learning.

### 3.1.7 Outcome 8: Interactive infographic about Next Generation Learning Spaces

An interactive and fun professional learning infographic was developed. The infographic is a clickable, interactive online resource that not only includes information about Next Generation Learning Spaces, but also a number of resources and strategies for teaching. Of particular interest may be the easy-to-use session/lesson-planning tool. The infographic can be found at: http://notawasteofspace.net/intergraphic/index.html.
Key Findings: Like the blog posts and library guide, the Next Generation Learning Spaces infographic is a resource that is available to a wide audience in a convenient and compelling format. With recognition that many academic staff including sessionals do not have the time to engage in ‘traditional’ workshop-style professional learning, the team built a tool that allows academics to explore the spaces in their own time. One of the first uses of the page will be a demonstration to assembled DSC staff at the 2014 Sessional Staff Symposium on 20 February 2014.

3.1.8 Outcome 9: Scholarly publications

A number of publications have resulted from undertaking this project and the Office of Learning and Teaching one “Not a Waste of Space: professional development for staff teaching in New Generation Learning Spaces” as follows:


3.2 A brief description of any issues preventing achievement of all the outcomes stated in the application

All project outcomes were successfully achieved. However, the project did change course twice throughout the year in response to feedback from project participants, details are outlined in the section below.
3.2.1 Describe briefly any issues that may have prevented you achieving all of the outcomes in your application

In the original application the project leadership team anticipated that the SALTs (DSC Senior Advisors, L&T) would conduct a peer learning network in their schools in both the first and second semesters of 2013. The project team thought that this would happen in parallel to the ‘Train-the-Trainer’ sessions. However, rather than the Senior Advisors conducting a peer learning network in their Schools in the first semester the project timeframe was adjusted based on strong feedback from the SALTs that they would like to experience the professional learning model themselves in its entirety prior to implementing it in their schools in Semester 2, rather than in parallel as originally envisaged. This was a fortuitous change in that the project was able to adapt the professional learning approach based on sound feedback and evaluation from the SALTs trial in Semester 1. SALTs were able to tailor the school component to be more relevant to school-based issues, ensuring buy-in and strong attendance from their staff.

Sessional staff funding was originally the largest line item of the proposed budget. Originally the funding was designed to cover the attendance of sessional staff at Semester 2 School Network meeting. However, relatively low numbers of sessional staff at these meetings meant that it became apparent to the project team that this portion of the budget would be underspent. The opportunity to target sessional staff teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces by working with the centrally funded Connecting Sessional Staff project was taken by the project team. This reinforced the difficulty of predicting and ensuring attendance at face-to-face professional development events. The question of how to reach these sessional members of staff (who were already being targeted by the Connecting Sessional Staff project for face-to-face professional learning) was adapted by the project team offering sessional staff a $500 payment for a documented, self-directed, curriculum change project. As reported earlier, a total of seven sessional staff completed a case study and received a $500 payment.

The final remaining budget was approved through LTU to be re-allocated for the development of an interactive infographic for teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces. Two game specialists, RMIT PhD student Lauren Ferro and Christopher Mackenzie, were engaged by the project team to design and implement a compelling online resource that would be able to be accessed by academics in order to increase the project’s ongoing impact. The tool draws on much of the research in the field and provides a fun and engaging way for all staff to explore aspects of teaching in a next generation learning space. This is a resource for staff with teaching resources, videos and guides. Of particular interest to academics may be the lesson planning tool, which encourages academics to plan a multiple-activity, student centred, inquiry-based lesson through the use of easy drag and drop elements (see Figure 20 below).
The final change that the project managed was Dr Kym Fraser leaving the University. Her departure left the project leadership team a member short. Dr Fraser’s early work in the design and initial implementation of the SALT Train-the-Trainer program was invaluable.

3.3 A brief description of any disciplinary and interdisciplinary linkages that emerged as a result of the project

Academics in the DSC College reported enjoying the meetings with academics from other disciplines. Comments received to the item: “What was the most valuable skill/concept/idea that you will take away from the meeting” included:

*Discussion about varied experiences across schools builds understanding.*

*Seeing how others go about modifying/improving their teaching practices.*

— Comments from School Network participants

4 Dissemination strategies and outputs

An active dissemination strategy was put into place for the project. The project methodology and findings were disseminated widely using OLT endorsed information and engaged dissemination methods, including engaging with the target group and transferring to the target audiences (Hinton et. al. 2011) as well as making resources available. Dissemination activities included:

- 14 School network meetings
- 16 invited expert speakers
  - 13 internal speakers
  - 3 external speakers
- 5 Blog posts on the teaching tomtom - http://theteachingtontom.wordpress.com/

Figure 20. Session planning tool in the interactive infographic.
• A workshop at the DSC Sessional staff symposium, including $500 opportunity to undertake a curriculum change project – 6th September
• Emails to Deputy Deans/Heads/Chairs L&T outlining the project
• 3 publications relating to the project

Engaging: Involvement of the SALTs as key participants in the project was crucial for sustaining the peer learning networks. Invitations to workshops by key external speakers, were widened to include ADG group in the Colleges of Business and Science, Engineering and Health.

Transferring: A multi-channel communication strategy was used to keep senior leaders in the University informed of the progress and outcomes of the project. This included using existing communication tools that key stakeholders use – e.g. School L&T committees, DSC Executive Meetings, emails and reports to the College Deputy Pro Vice Chancellors (L&T). Additionally, the project team reported fortnightly in the College of Design and Social Context L&T meetings.

Outputs made easily available: Resource outputs, such as the library guide and the interactive infographic are available online.

• Interactive infographic including a session planning tool - http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=xnbgfx4a17h3
  The blog posts are available on the teaching tomtom
• Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.

and the peer reviewed articles and chapters will be lodged in the university Research Repository.

5 Evaluation of project outcomes

The Evaluation Framework used to evaluate the project and responses to the key evaluation questions are outlined in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Project evaluation framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key evaluation question</th>
<th>Leadership Team (regular project meetings)</th>
<th>SALTs (surveys, regular meetings, individual meetings)</th>
<th>Academic staff network meeting feedback (hard copy); online approach (email)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To what extent have the intended outcomes been achieved? (Enhancement of School culture to supports scholarly teaching practice; increase in scholarly teaching practice by teaching staff; improvement in student outcomes/experience)</td>
<td>Combined with the very high level of satisfaction in response to School Network meetings, SALTs also reported increased enthusiasm in Schools to discuss use of NGLS and the supporting technologies. SALTs report that they had identified examples of good practice, champions or in-school experts on certain aspects of tech/pedagogy that they hope to work with next year</td>
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<td>2. Were there any unintended outcomes?</td>
<td>The project team and SALTs identifying expert practitioners within the schools</td>
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<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
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| What were they? How did they enhance or detract from the project?      | Development of the interactive infographic  
Being part of the sessional symposium | 3. What factors were critical to the success of the project and what factors impeded the achievement of the project outcomes?  
Enthusiastic participation from the SALTs  
Including this project as a part of their workplan  
Coherence and organisation of the project leadership team to deal flexibly with school needs. As one SALT commented:  
*This was excellent. The team provided a range of appropriate speakers to meet what the school identified they wanted. The team did the liaising between the speakers and the School and ensured that the sessions ran smoothly (with excellent catering!)* | 4. How did the project vary, if at all, from the original proposal and why? How did these changes affect the final outcome of the project? How did they affect the project management?  
The DSC Sessional symposium provided an opportunity to target sessional staff ‘in the one place at the one time’  
The shift in moving the School Network meetings to Semester 2 meant that a lot of the curriculum change projects were being developed at the end of 2013 for 2014 implementation  
The decision to allocate funding to the interactive infographic will provide staff access to resources that they can access when they need them. Additionally, working with Lauren Ferro and Christopher Mackenzie and learning about gamification was a fantastic experience for the project team | 5. How useful are the deliverables of the project for the relevant stakeholders?  
The deliverables are useful to all stakeholders. Blog posts and journal papers provide information on teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces. The interactive infographic provides a wealth of information and practical resources | 6. How will the project focus and outcomes be sustained beyond the project? To what extent are the project outcomes transferable to other institutions?  
Dissemination of report  
Integration into SALT workplans - many SALTs have expressed an intention to continue with the format and themes of the school network meetings  
Teaching tomtom post on the project outcomes  
Availability online of the interactive infographic for RMIT organisational units and other institutions (Australian and Worldwide) to access  
Further publications  
Approach the LTU to discuss the potential of the online professional learning approach being more widely adopted across the Colleges by the University | 7. How could the project have been designed and managed differently and why?  
The largest component of the project’s budget aimed at supporting sessional staff professional learning (over $30,000). This proved difficult to acquit as many sessional staff had other competing priorities. This was addressed with the links made through the Connecting Sessional Staff professional development project, including running workshops as part of that schedule and using it to cross-promote the availability of the $500 self-directed curriculum change learning opportunities. These links strengthened the suite of offerings and opportunities for staff to engage in |
Transforming teaching practice through professional learning for Next Generation Learning Spaces

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<th>professional development</th>
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<td>The interactive infographic could have been designed into the original proposal. This is an exciting resource for academics that provides ideas on teaching in Next Generation Learning Spaces</td>
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<th>8. What lessons have been learned from this project, particularly about project management and the processes of the project and how might these lessons be of assistance to other projects?</th>
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<td>The cost and time intensity involved in facilitating professional development is very high. Asking busy professionals to add an extra piece of work to their already full schedule is very difficult, especially for sessional staff. However, many SALTs found ways to integrate the project into the existing work that they were doing within the school and used NGLS as a focal point or an organising principle.</td>
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References


JISC Designing Spaces for Effective Learning, guide for the 21st century learning design.

