Learning and Teaching Investment Fund
Expressions of Interest for The Professional Development Program 2007

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Learning and Teaching Investment Fund

Expressions of Interest for The Professional Development Innovations Program

1. Background

The RMIT Academic Plan 2010 describes a number of initiatives for RMIT to achieve its academic aspirations in line with the directions set out in the RMIT Strategic Plan 2010: Designing the Future.

These aspirations include an approach to learning and teaching that is characterised by a rigorous scholarship of teaching and quality student learning experiences. The Learning and Teaching Investment Fund (LTIF) aims to support this approach through strategic investment in new learning and teaching ideas and professional development for staff. To these ends, the LTIF will comprise two funding programs:

1. The Learning and Teaching Innovations Program, and
2. The Professional Learning and Development Program.

The present call for expressions of interest relates to the second of these programs – The Professional Learning and Development Program.
2. Funding Priorities

The Professional Learning and Development Program will be used in three ways:

2.1 A Learning and Teaching Sabbatical

2.1.1 The Aim

The Aim of the Learning and Teaching Sabbatical is to provide the opportunity for RMIT academic and teaching staff to engage in a concentrated professional opportunity to improve learning and teaching practice and scholarship aimed at increasing student learning, satisfaction and feedback and/or improve student employability in line with RMIT Learning and Teaching priorities as outlined in the Strategic and Academic Plan.

2.1.2 Type of Activities (indicative)

- Develop, design and trial of an innovative approach to learning and teaching practice
- Extend the outcome of an internal RMIT LTIF Innovation Project Initiative across RMIT
- Write scholarly articles for submission to refereed journals in relation to discipline-based learning and teaching research previously conducted
- Engage in a project to explore and/or implement aspects of RMIT Learning and Teaching strategy and/or policy

2.1.3 Eligibility

RMIT academic and TAFE teaching staff who have:

- taught in the university for at least three years
- an ongoing appointment
- demonstrated a commitment to learning and teaching advancement through the design of innovative learning activities or evidence of reflection upon practice and action taken for improvement

2.1.4 Selection Criteria

Applications for the Learning and Teaching Sabbatical must demonstrate

- how the project is aligned to the RMIT Strategic and Academic Plan
- how the project seeks to improve student learning, satisfaction and feedback
- the course(s) or Program(s) in which the innovation will be incorporated
- the outcomes to be achieved
• agreement of the Head of School and the Course Co-ordinator/Program Leader who will collaborate in, and support, the project
• a time-line, with milestones for the project
• Identifies a clear dissemination strategy to engage in scholarship within RMIT and with the wider community

2.1.5 Output
Successful projects undertaken as a Learning and Teaching Sabbatical must demonstrate a tangible output, for example one or a mix of the following

• A report on a new approach to learning and teaching practice
• An re-usable artefact or course-ware
• Evidence of improved student satisfaction and/or graduate employability arising from the innovation or scholarly output
• Evidence of reflective practice and scholarly activity eg through publishable academic paper
• Successful policy and/or implementation strategy for a university wide Learning and Teaching Policy
• Demonstrated network and/or mentoring strategy across the university
• Application for an RMIT Teaching Award

2.1.6 Evaluation
As part of this work, staff will be expected to disseminate the results of their work through academic publications and conferences. It is envisaged that successful applicants will spend the time working closely with staff from the Office of the DVC(A) and other learning and teaching experts from RMIT (e.g. Deans of Academic Development).

2.2 Learning and Teaching Fellowship

2.2.1 Aim
The Aim of the Learning and Teaching Fellowship is to provide the opportunity for RMIT academic and teaching staff to engage in a concentrated professional opportunity to build RMIT capacity in learning and teaching practice and scholarship in accord with the priorities of the Carrick Institute and/or OTTE. Information about the Carrick Institute priorities, objectives and values may be found at www.carrickinstitute.edu.au.

2.2.2 Type of Activities (indicative)

• Develop, design and extend an innovative approach to learning and teaching practice as a collaboration and/or multi-disciplinary activity across universities in the higher education sector
• Extend the outcome of an LTIF Innovation project across universities in the tertiary sector
• Advance an approach to learning and teaching for which you have been recognised through a teaching award (RMIT, Carrick, State Government or Industry body) across the higher education sector (eg through a Carrick Fellowship)

• Apply for a major external Learning and Teaching grant and/or Fellowship (eg Carrick Institute, State government) aimed at building learning and teaching capacity and resources across the tertiary sector

• Write scholarly articles for submission to refereed journals in relation to discipline-based learning and teaching research previously conducted that has relevance across the higher education sector

2.2.3  Eligibility

RMIT academic and TAFE teaching staff who have:

• taught at RMIT for at least five years

• an ongoing appointment

• demonstrated a commitment to learning and teaching advancement through participation in and dissemination of the results of RMIT LTIF projects or acceptance of an RMIT Teaching Award and/or external National and State Teaching Award

2.2.4  Selection Criteria

Applications for the Learning and Teaching Fellowship must demonstrate

• how the project is aligned to the RMIT Strategic and Academic Plan and the aims of the Carrick Institute, State government or industry body

• how the innovation relates to an improvement in student satisfaction and feedback and/or graduate employability

• agreement of at least one other university that will collaborate in the project

• how the project will build learning and teaching capacity and resources across the tertiary sector

• an evaluative process for the project

• a time-line, with milestones for the project

• identified a clear dissemination strategy to engage in scholarship across the wider community and within RMIT

• approval of the Head of School

2.2.5  Output

Successful projects undertaken as a Learning and Teaching Fellowship must demonstrate a tangible output, for example one or a mix of the following

• A report on a new approach to learning and teaching practice

• An re-usable artefact or course-ware

• Evidence of improved student satisfaction and/or graduate employability arising from the innovation of scholarly output
• An application for a Learning and Teaching Grant
• An application for a Fellowship or Assessor or Reviewer (eg Carrick Institute, State body)
• Application for a National or State Award for Teaching excellence
• Evidence of reflective practice and scholarly activity eg through publishable academic paper
• Demonstrated network and/or mentoring strategy across the higher education sector

2.2.6 Evaluation
As part of this work, staff will be expected to disseminate the results of their work through academic publications and conferences. It is envisaged that successful applicants will spend the time working closely with staff from the Office of the DVC(A) and other learning and teaching experts from RMIT (e.g. Deans of Academic Development).

2.3 Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning
The Professional Learning and Development Program will also be used to fund RMIT academic staff to undertake a tertiary teaching qualification. As of semester 1, 2007 it has been compulsory for newly appointed ongoing academic level A & B staff, who do not hold an equivalent qualification, to undertake the RMIT Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning. Successful completion of the program will be one criterion for probation.

To meet the expected demand within the limits of available teaching resources, 30 places have been made available each semester for this newly appointed ongoing academic level A & B. Any places that are not filled by the mandatory group will be made available to interested and eligible higher education teaching staff who meet the selection criteria and have the endorsement of their Head of School, however these places will require funding from the appropriate Schools.

Newly appointed academic staff who are required to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning will be advised by their Head of School.

Other eligible RMIT staff are invited to apply for the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning via the website at www.rmit.edu.au/higheredpd.

3. Funding
Funding for the Learning and Teaching Sabbatical and Learning and Teaching Fellowship will be available for salary replacement for up to one semester and limited support for travel and relevant expenses associated with the proposed Sabbatical or Fellowship activity.

For staff required to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning Funding is provided under the LTIF Professional Learning and Development Scheme.

For staff who elect to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning Funding must be provided through the School.
4. Application Guidelines: Learning and Teaching Sabbatical and Fellowship

Interested staff will be invited to attend an information session in December 2007 followed by a formal application by January 25th. All applications will require the endorsement of the Head of School, who must agree to release the staff member for one semester.

Applicants should submit an expression of interest via the attached template to A/Prof. Sandra Jones (sandra.jones@rmit.edu.au) by 25th January 2008

- Proposals should be no more than 5 single sided A4 pages in Arial 11pt
- Successful applicants will be notified by 4th February 2008

The Sabbatical or Fellowship may be undertaken in Semester 1 or 2, 2008.

5. More information

For further information regarding the Professional Development Program please contact Associate Professor Sandra Jones on 9925 4936 or sandra.jones@rmit.edu.au. after December 7th

Information on the Learning and Teaching Innovations Program is available at:

http://www.rmit.edu.au/teaching/ltif