The project's objectives

The 4 main objectives of the project were to:

1. Establish and build strong, new and continuing relationships and connections across programs.
2. Undertake a mapping activity to give a clear account of film and television at RMIT, including an overview of the strengths and distinguishing features of the various programs.
3. Identify mutual interests and possibilities for developing collaborative initiatives in teaching and research.
4. Investigate means of building and supporting RMIT student cohorts around training, education and special projects.

Five lunches were held off campus and staff from the film & TV community were invited. The lunches were well attended and succeeded in their objective of bringing together academics who have otherwise been too busy to meet. The discussion was wide-ranging – the focus of each program area was clarified and numerous ideas canvassed for joint projects relating to L&T, research and industry engagement. Notes were kept on the content of the discussions.

A researcher/writer was also hired to collate information about the community from the fragmented and disparate sources available. While many ideas for future projects were raised, the group decided that the development of an elective that would be available for screen production students across the university was the most useful next step to take. A sixth lunch with additional invited guests also served as a presentation to relevant senior university figures of what had occurred.

Outcomes and learnings

An application to the 2008 Learning & Teaching Investment fund was made, proposing that a screen production elective be set up. This application was successful and the elective will be developed this year (including the trial of a collaborative cross-School production project) for introduction in 2009.

The data collected about the programs, staff and research within the film & TV discipline has been organised into a single document. Discussions are continuing about the most effective way to present this material clearly and accessibly to prospective students and industry. A trial website is being developed.

The steering group feel that the establishment of relationships is an important precursor to harnessing the expertise that exists in this community of practice. While there is a concern that the relationships that were built up and the benefits gained from sharing knowledge and ideas will dissipate now that the project is complete, there is also the belief that the commencement of the elective will give a focus to the community and a structure through which continuing dialogue can occur. Some other activities (such as shared research supervisions and the 2008 ASPERA Conference being held at RMIT) will provide further opportunities for the community to develop.

Budget report

Budget: $6,800 (split equally between Applied Communication and Creative Media)

Expenditure:

(1) Applied Communication
   Linda Wall (Researcher) - $2,000
   Lunch 1: The Stork Hotel (Aug 07) - $306.40
   Lunch 3: Sahara Restaurant (Sept 07) - $284.00
Lunch 5: Sahara Restaurant (Oct 07) - $298.00 (incl GST)
Other: Materials, communication - $300.00

(2) Creative Media
  Linda Wall (Researcher) - $2,000
  Lunch 2: The Order of Melbourne Restaurant (Sept 07) - $310.40
  Lunch 4: The Stork Hotel (Oct 07) - $360.85
  Other: Materials, expenses, backfill - $750.00

Total Expenditure: $6,609.65

Leo Berkeley
2 April, 2008