Community Education Providers and Western Sydney Regional Economic Development: Expanding Capacity and Contributions

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Executive Summary

This Report

Community Colleges Australia (CCA) has produced this report for the NSW Department of Industry with the aim to ensure that the NSW Government can use the capacity of Western Sydney not-for-profit community education providers to support that region's economic development priorities.[1]

Key Findings

The 13 Western Sydney region not-for-profit community education providers deliver a wide range of vocational educational and training services to the region, from more than 120 locations. The providers bring strengths in business and work skills, early childhood, aged care, disability, community services, foundation skills and adult literacy/numeracy, English as a second language, information technology, management and leadership.[2]

Greater recognition of the activities and capacity of community education providers by local, state and institutional stakeholders will enhance the ability of providers to work in economic development.

Community education providers deliver more effectively than TAFE and for-profit VET providers to hard-to-reach cohorts: people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, people with disabilities, older (age 45-plus) Australians and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.[3] Western Sydney community providers are in a unique position to pick up many of the outreach services previously supplied by TAFE NSW, given proper funding.[4]

The project has reinforced the possibilities ripe for exploration:

- The sector is ideally positioned to deliver a cohesive framework for connection, ongoing learning and skilling in Western Sydney.
- Investment in establishing a governance structure and shared systems for a regional network of not-for-profit community education providers would lift the sector capacity's capacity, enabling active participation in economic development.
- Community providers are embedded and trusted providers in their respective communities, delivering skills and support where people live and work.
- While community providers in Western Sydney are effective, they continue to battle limited resources, especially given their willingness to expand and introduce new services to key equity groups.
- Collaborations with all layers of government and community stakeholders are crucial for broader success. The post-secondary policy focus on universities and TAFE has limited the ability of community providers to participate in collaborations with governments.

[1] This report follows a similar project completed in January 2018 that focussed on the role of NSW community education providers in regional and rural economic development; see https://cca.edu.au/home/nsw-regional-and-rural-economic-development-report-summary/.

[2] Some providers also offer some specialised and unique training, such as Auslan from the Deaf Society.

[3] Source: National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER); see section 4.5 below.

[4] See section 5.3 for full details.

Western Sydney Context

Western Sydney is home to one in ten Australians, and is Australia's third largest economy, after Sydney and Melbourne central business districts. More than 2.2 million people live in greater Western Sydney, 35% of them born overseas, from more than 170 countries and speaking more than 100 languages. The region has numerous economic attractions and advantages, notably a rapidly growing Parramatta central business district, the planned Badgerys Creek airport and associated Aerotropolis, historical sites, tourism attractions including the Blue Mountains, and a growing number of post-secondary educational institutions. With booming population growth – one of the highest rates in the developed world – Western Sydney's economy has been unable to keep up with infrastructure needs or jobs, with the ratio of jobs to residents falling consistently since the year 2000.

The region lacks public transport accessibility, frequently necessitating long commutes and extensive reliance on automotive travel. It has locally significant unemployment and underemployment, especially among young people, Indigenous people and new migrants; significant pockets of poverty and disadvantage; and an economy heavily reliant on manufacturing and other 20th century industries.

For the purposes of this report, Western Sydney is defined as the local government areas of Penrith, Blacktown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Liverpool, The Hills, Hawkesbury, Parramatta, Wollondilly, Campbelltown, Blue Mountains and Canterbury-Bankstown.

Adult and Community Education Providers in Western Sydney

Thirteen not-for-profit community education providers currently provide education, training and other community services in Greater Western Sydney: Macquarie Community College, The Parramatta College, Nepean Community College, Macarthur Community College, JobQuest, Bankstown Community College (BCCI), The Deaf Society, Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Community College, Jesuit Social Services & Jesuit Community College, St George & Sutherland Community College, Sydney Community College, VERTO and MTC Australia. Many of the region's community providers already work closely together, and this project identified additional opportunities to expand collaboration.

To make a real difference to Western Sydney's economic development, community providers will need to create a "collaboration infrastructure" that enhances their individual organisational strengths, and assists them to operate under a collective – and effective – governance structure. This project has identified this consortium/network as a high priority, although seed funding will be essential. CCA does not under-estimate the complexity and challenges involved in developing such a partnership, however believes that this is the only way to make a substantial leap in the ability of the community sector to develop major new projects and ventures.

CCA analysed Western Sydney 2017 VET subject enrolments, by comparing not-for-profit community providers with other types of providers: TAFE and private for-profit organisations.[5] In relative percentage terms, the region's not-for-profit community education providers excel in reaching all but one high priority groups for engagement in vocational education and training:

[5] Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2018.

- 46.5% of community education enrolments were of students aged 45-plus, compared to TAFE with 15.4% and private for-profit providers with 22.6%;
- 15.6% of community education enrolments were of students with a disability, compared to TAFE with 9.8% and private providers with 3.1%;
- 55.8% of community education enrolments were of students from non-English speaking background, compared to 35.8% of TAFE and 48.8% of private providers; and
- 42.5% of community education enrolments were of students in the bottom quintile (20%) of socio-economic status, compared to 39.9% of TAFE and 39.9% of private providers.[6]

The only area where community providers did not over-perform compared to other provider types was with Indigenous learners, with 1.2% of enrolments, compared to TAFE with 5.6% of enrolments and private providers with 1.5% of enrolments.

There is a clear opportunity for the New South Wales and Commonwealth Governments to support Western Sydney community education providers to leverage their expertise with students who are older (45-plus), who have a disability, who are from non-English speaking backgrounds and who are from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

There is also a major opportunity to expand the training services of Western Sydney community providers for the large and growing Indigenous communities in the local government areas of Blacktown (9,526 people or 2.7% of residents in the 2016 Census), Penrith (7,741; 3.9% of residents), Campbelltown (5,791; 3.8% of residents) and Liverpool (3,012; 1.5% of residents), as community education providers have a demonstrated capacity to work with Indigenous communities in other parts of New South Wales.[7]

In addition to accredited VET courses, the region's community providers provide other education services that create and sustain social and community networks, build self-esteem and skills of learners and assist in providing the "community glue" that ensures that communities are resilient and sustainable.

Local Government in Western Sydney

Local governments in Western Sydney take increasingly sophisticated approaches to their economic development activities; many of them have recognised and actively encouraged the incorporation of post-secondary education services in their economic development planning. In some cases, they lead Australia in recognising and incorporating education into planning. Noted examples of Western Sydney local government areas that have developed comprehensive education policies include Parramatta City Council, Liverpool City Council and Blacktown City Council, each of which participated in CCA's Parramatta Forum on 26 October 2018.

While these local councils bring a great deal of sophistication to their economic development planning and incorporation of education, the primary focus to date has been on engagement with universities, with some involvement of TAFE NSW. No local government area in Western Sydney has developed an economic development project incorporating community

[6] Socio-economic disadvantage is based on the SEIFA index developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistic; see http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/seifa.

[7] See https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/NSW-Aboriginal-Economic-Development-Statement-by-CCA-27March2018.pdf.

education providers. The focus on education planning has been on university study, such as Blacktown's plans for a university campus in its CBD, Parramatta Council's engagement with Western Sydney University and Liverpool Council's health, education and research district – which does include TAFE NSW.

Very little of the local government education focus is on post-secondary education includes recognition of the critical role of foundation skills and the "lower level" (Certificates I to IV) VET qualifications that community education providers specialise in. This is a significant gap in the region's post-secondary and life-long education planning. Although traditionally the provision of education and training in Australia has been the responsibility of state and territory governments, many larger local councils – such as those in Western Sydney – are taking a lead in planning for post-secondary education facilities and services in their areas, because of the proven direct connection between education and economic development.

Economic Development Opportunities for Western Sydney Community Education Providers

Throughout the course of this project, CCA identified emerging opportunities where Western Sydney regional community education providers can enhance and expand their services to the region, based on existing strengths and expertise. Given the rapid population growth in the region and the significant infrastructure projects, there is substantial funding and interest by governments, both New South Wales and Commonwealth. Opportunities include participation in the Western Sydney City Deal, Western Sydney Airport and the Aerotropolis, the Parramatta North Heritage Core, the Nirimba Education Precinct, and expansion of community education delivery of foundation skills, neighbourhood centre activities, migrant services and innovative employment programs, including social enterprises.

CCA organised a Western Sydney regional economic development skills forum in Parramatta on 26 October 2018, with more than 70 participants. The Forum underscored the importance of the "place-based" learning, which recognises that regions are different, that one-size-fits-all approaches are often inappropriate, and that local communities must be central to development efforts. The Forum also highlighted that substantial government education investment has gone into universities and to some extent TAFE – but almost none into community providers.

This project identified additional areas where Western Sydney community education providers can play an enhanced role in economic development, including:

- *Older (45-plus) workers*, given that Western Sydney community providers heavily out-perform all other training provider types in the region, with 46.5% of student enrolments in this category, compared to 15.4% of TAFE and 22.6% of private for-profit organisations.
- *Indigenous Australians*, given that they participate in VET at double the rate of non-Indigenous people, and that Western Sydney has the largest concentration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the country.
- *Business incubators,* traditionally established to foster self-employment, assist business development, accelerate business growth, reduce the failure rate of start-up businesses, assist businesses to operate, and increase employment opportunities – and in which NSW community providers are starting to take a lead.
- *Entrepreneurship and social enterprises,* with CCA members JobQuest and Jesuit Social Services already operating successful social enterprises in the region.

- *Philanthropic funding,* still under-utilised for Australian regional economic development pilot projects, but available to most community education providers because of their not-for-profit status.

In addition, the NSW Central Coast provides another region for focussing on how community providers can assist economic development. The Central Coast has more than 333,000 residents (ABS, 2016), a high population growth rate and significant employment challenges. The four community education providers active in the region – Central Coast Community College, Tuggerah Lakes (TLK) Community College, ET Australia and VERTO – combined operate from more than 60 locations in the region, providing an excellent platform for co-ordinated economic development assistance.

NSW Government Support for Western Sydney Community Education Providers

The NSW Government supports the activities of NSW community education providers with students who have special needs and are vulnerable or disadvantaged, primarily through the Adult and Community Education (ACE) Community Service Obligation (CSO) program (approximately $21.6 million in 2018/19). Community providers also receive some general Smart and Skilled allocations. CCA's analysis of government-funded VET student cohorts shows that the ACE CSO program is largely responsible for NSW community education providers achieving the best outcomes in reaching target "equity" groups of any VET sector (public, community, private for-profit) in any state or territory. Given the superb track record of community providers, CCA strongly believes that a substantial increase in CSO funds in 2019/20 and subsequent years is warranted. This is particularly so in Western Sydney, with deep pockets of disadvantage and substantial population growth.

To support regional economic development goals, Western Sydney community education providers must be sustainable, with well-trained staff and strong governance structures, The NSW Government has supported the governance and professional development needs of community education providers to build their quality and capacity. This funding, primarily through the "ACE Teaching and Leadership" funding program, has been valuable in that it empowers the sector to deliver NSW Government training and skills programs in the best possible manner. This funding is particularly important for Western Sydney providers, which have reduced access to both formal and informal professional development opportunities, due to the travel distances to the Sydney CBD.

CCA has highlighted the importance of maintaining, preserving and protecting the physical facilities of community education providers: in Western Sydney, many providers operate from very old buildings with extensive maintenance needs and frequently high rents. CCA welcomes the Government's commitment to allocate $2.3 million in maintenance and operations funding in 2019/20 financial year, and will work closely with its members to ensure funds are taken up and properly utilised.

TAFE NSW Facilities and Outreach

TAFE NSW has valuable and frequently under-utilised facilities that could be used by Western Sydney community providers. In addition to general classroom spaces, specific facilities include commercial training kitchens, creative and performing arts spaces, and automotive and other trade workshops. NSW community providers consistently find difficulty in accessing TAFE NSW facilities, and at a reasonable cost.

CCA has received reports that TAFE NSW had deleted its Western Sydney outreach program of working with marginalised, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Many potential learners – especially from migrant and non-English speaking backgrounds, Indigenous, disengaged young people, or from lower socio-economic status – do not have the personal networks, confidence, literacy or language skills to seek out training opportunities, even those that are substantially or fully funded by government. Given proper funding and support, Western Sydney community education providers are in a unique position to pick up many of these services previously supplied by TAFE NSW.

Australian Government Policies and Programs

The absence of a national policy on adult and community education affects Western Sydney community providers, as it underpins the important role that community providers play in their communities, an essential element to ensuring their participation in regional economic development activities. CCA has expressed concern that the Australian Government's Skilling Australians Fund has little relevance for community education providers, given its focus on apprenticeships and trainees.[8]

[8] This report was completed prior to the outcomes of the May 2019 Federal election, so does not take into account events after that date.

Summary of Recommendations

As a result of the research and consultations undertaken for this report, Community Colleges Australia recommends the following:

Western Sydney regional community education providers

- Work collaboratively to develop a regional community education consortium/network through which they can collaborate effectively with each other and undertake projects of regional economic significance. (s 2.1)

- Utilise their not-for-profit positions to access “Deductible Gift Recipient” (DGR) status, and obtain funding from Australian foundations and trusts, as well as local donations. (s 7.6)

NSW Department of Industry and Regional Development

- Provide seed funding to assist the proposed Western Sydney regional community education consortium/network in researching and establishing a proper governance structure. (s 2.1)

- The NSW Government establish a policy framework – possibly through the NSW Skills Board – or a statutory board – such as the former Board of Adult and Community Education – that will ensure the economic development capacity and capabilities of the state’s community education providers are effectively utilised. (s 2.1)

- Develop and fund a pilot project that aims at ensuring that one or more Western Sydney community education providers work closely with one or more Western Sydney councils to plan more effectively for community education delivery in the local council area, complementing and supporting other local post-secondary educational planning. (s 2.1)

- Collaborate with CCA to develop a strategy to build on the capabilities of Western Sydney community providers with respect to reaching the most vulnerable and disadvantaged community members needing training. (s 4.5)

- Investigate the re-institution of a new multi-year funding program to support the development and delivery of Tech Savvy for Small Business programs by NSW community education providers. (s 5.1)

- Increase NSW ACE Community Service Obligation (CSO) funding by 50% to $33 million/year, as a highly effective investment in the state’s future, index CSO funding annual at a minimum to inflation, take population growth into account when determining CSO allocations, quarantine of CSO funding solely for not-for-profit community education providers and extend contract timelines for CSO from one year to a minimum of three years to provide certainty, flexibility and greater innovation in delivery. (s 5.1)

- Expand the funding of the ACE Teaching and Leadership program to a minimum of $450,000 per year, commit to funding cycles of more than one financial year at a time, and implement a program timetable that enables proper and efficient planning. (s 5.1)

- Provide financial support for CCA to partner with a suitable professional development organisation such as the Australian Institute of Company Directors to develop pro-bono or subsidised training opportunities for the directors and senior executive staff of community education providers. (s 5.1)

- Examine future models for professional development of the NSW VET sector, such as the Victorian VET Development Centre, with special consideration of the needs of VET providers in Western Sydney and regional and rural New South Wales. (s 5.1)

- Implement the promised 2019/20 community education infrastructure funding program as soon as possible in order to provide certainty to NSW providers. (s 5.2)

- Establish an annual infrastructure funding program similar to the Operational Base funding of TAFE NSW to ensure that community education premises remain safe and attractive as community infrastructure assets. (s 5.2)

- Establish a process by which community education providers can apply on an annual basis for substantive grants to support capital works, in addition to maintenance and operations. (s 5.2)

- Extend the current review of ACE Community Service Obligation (CSO) to include how TAFE NSW spends its CSO funds, with particular attention to the VET participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged Western Sydney residents. (s 5.3)

- Fund a pilot program to take place in at least two local government areas of Western Sydney whereby Western Sydney community education providers are encouraged to trial innovative outreach approaches to engaging vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in VET. (s 5.3)

- Support national efforts to develop an updated policy statement on the role of community education providers in Australian education and training, updating the 2008 Ministerial Agreement on adult education and training. (s 6.2)

- Fund CCA to undertake a regional economic development study that examines how to increase the capacity and activities of Central Coast community education providers to encourage that region's economic development. (s 7.1)

- Provide funding to assist Community Colleges Australia and Sydney School of Entrepreneurs to develop entrepreneurial training for NSW community education providers. (s. 7.5)

NSW Department of Planning

- Include a state-wide approach to educational and infrastructure facility planning that includes community education providers. (s 2.1)

- Require local councils in areas of recognised population growth – such as Western Sydney – to incorporate educational facility planning into their local planning activities. (s 2.1)

- Plan for the inclusion of community education providers and "community hubs" as part of the infrastructure in any major residential or commercial new developments or re-developments. (s 2.1)

- Through the Western Sydney City Deal, make separate provision for the incorporation of not-for-profit community education providers as part of the education and training mix of providers. (s 2.2)

- Adjust the regulations – or otherwise ensure – that Section 7.11 (previously Section 94) developer amenity contributions can be utilised for post-secondary education and training by not-for-profit providers. (s 2.2)

TAFE NSW

- Work closely with CCA to establish a state-wide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TAFE that will enable community providers to work collaboratively with TAFE staff and deliver programs using TAFE facilities as part of a coordinated Community Service Obligation initiative, maximising opportunities for vulnerable and marginalised groups across NSW. (s 5.3)

Australian Government Department of Education and Training

- Ensure the Skilling Australians Fund is developed and operated in such a way that does not exclude not-for-profit community education providers from participation in funding, particularly those operating in outer metropolitan locations. (s 6.2)

- Take the lead in developing, in conjunction with the states and territories, a national policy statement on the role of community education providers in Australian education and training, updating the 2008 Ministerial Agreement on adult and community education. (s 6.2)

- Recognise the importance of incorporating entrepreneurship more fully into VET courses through its Review of training packages, as outlined in NCVER reports. (s 7.5)

About This Report

This report has been produced for the NSW Department of Industry with the aim to ensure that the NSW Government can use the capacity of not-for-profit NSW community education providers in Western Sydney to support that region's economic development priorities. The report is divided into a number of sections plus two appendices:

- Executive Summary
- Summary of Recommendations
- Section 1 – the Introduction – describes the project and its background.
- Section 2 presents the project's key findings, including the activities that CCA has already commenced as a result of the project.
- Section 3 describes the outcomes of the Western Sydney regional economic development skills forum that took place in Parramatta on 26 October 2018.
- Section 4 discusses how community education providers are delivering economic development programs in the region, including maps of training delivery locations.
- Section 5 analyses NSW Government economic development policies and programs in relation to Western Sydney community providers.
- Section 6 analyses Australian Government skills and training programs in relation to Western Sydney community providers.
- Section 7 looks at new opportunities for economic development, including entrepreneurship, social enterprises, business incubators and philanthropic funding.
- Appendix A lists the people and organisations consulted during the course of the project, including those who attended the Parramatta Forum.
- Appendix B details the education and training offerings and locations of the Western Sydney community providers; it is provided as a separate document on the CCA website.[9]

The Project Logo

The logo (below) for the Western Sydney Regional Economic Development Project symbolises the Blue Mountains – visible from almost everywhere in the region – and the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system, which encircles metropolitan Sydney.[10]

[9] For the details of community provider activities in the region, go to https://cca.edu.au/member-services/western-sydney-regional-economic-development-and-community-education/.
[10] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawkesbury_River and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nepean_River.

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Community Colleges Australia acknowledges the Darug, Tharawal (also historically referred to as Dharawal) and Gandangarra peoples as the traditional owners of the lands of Western Sydney that are considered in this report, and honours their Elders past, present and emerging.

Funding and Disclaimer

This report was prepared with funding provided by Training Services NSW, part of the NSW Department of Industry. The recommendations, views and opinions expressed in this report are those of Community Colleges Australia only, and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the NSW Department of Industry, any other government agency or individual CCA members.

A Note on Terminology

Community education providers are frequently called “adult and community education” or “ACE” providers and are commonly known in New South Wales as “community colleges”. This report usually uses the generic name “community education providers”, as it incorporates organisations that do not use the “community college” name, and provides consistency with the terminology used by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).[11]

In NSW, the name “Aboriginal” is frequently used by the New South Wales State Government to mean both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, or Indigenous people. To prevent confusion of organisational names, this report at times utilises both “Indigenous” and Aboriginal interchangeably.

At the time of publication of this report (May 2019), the NSW Government is undergoing a major restructure that will become effective from 1 July 2019. Training Services NSW will move to the Department of Education, and the Departments of Industry and Planning will effectively merge into a larger entity. Thus some of the identified departments in the report’s recommendations will change.

[11] See https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collection/students-and-courses-collection/government-funded-students-and-courses.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Western Sydney Regional Economic Development Project

The Community Colleges Australia (CCA) Western Sydney regional economic development project investigated the contributions that not-for-profit community education providers make to the economic development of that region, and how these contributions can be expanded to improve the region's development. The project aims to ensure that the NSW Government can use the capacity of the NSW community education providers in Western Sydney, supporting economic development and providing new program models and linkages.

This report arose from CCA's research into the role that community education providers play in regional and rural NSW, entitled *The Role of New South Wales Community Education Providers in Regional and Rural Economic*. That report proposed that CCA undertake a similar regional economic development research project in Western Sydney.[12]

Thirteen not-for-profit community education providers currently provide learning and other services in Greater Western Sydney: Macquarie Community College, The Parramatta College, Nepean Community College, Macarthur Community College, JobQuest, Bankstown Community College (BCCI), The Deaf Society, Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Community College, Jesuit Social Services & Jesuit Community College, St George & Sutherland Community College, Sydney Community College, VERTO and MTC Australia.

Together these organisations supply a valuable economic development resource for Western Sydney, a resource that is not yet not fully utilised.

CCA undertook this project to ensure Western Sydney becomes a stronger and more connected region, under-pinned by increased post-secondary education and training capacity, conducted in local centres by the region's adult and community education providers for accessibility. This project:

1. Surveyed and mapped the skills and economic development activities of Western Sydney's not-for-profit community education providers;
2. Investigated case studies of selected community education projects that can serve as models for future Western Sydney activities;
3. Organised a Western Sydney regional economic development forum;
4. Conducted additional meetings and consultations with other regional stakeholders; and
5. Prepared this final report, summarising project findings and recommendations.

This report shows the extensive roles and breadth of services that community education providers already play in Western Sydney, and the great capacity these providers have to expand to deliver additional services. The report indicates a number of opportunities and resources available to achieve this vision.

[12] See the summary at https://cca.edu.au/home/nsw-regional-and-rural-economic-development-report-summary/, or the full report available at https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/NSW-Regional-and-Rural-Community-Providers-Regional-Econ-Devt-report-FINAL-25Jan2018-2.pdf.

1.2 Western Sydney Regional Economic Development Skills Forum

CCA organised a Western Sydney regional economic development skills forum, which took place in Parramatta on 26 October 2018, with more than 70 participants from community education providers, regional not-for-profit community organisations, NSW Department of Industry, local councils, peak business and industry groups, and other post-secondary education providers. Speakers included Zoe De Saram, Deputy Secretary, Skills & Economic Development, NSW Department of Industry; Kerry Robinson, General Manager of Blacktown City Council; Michael Cullen, Regional General Manager, Western Sydney, TAFE NSW; Julie Scott, Manager Economic Development, Liverpool City Council; and others.

A full report on the Parramatta Forum outcomes is included later in this report.[13] Appendix A.1 lists the names and organisations of all Forum attendees. Copies of the presentations made at the Forum are attached as a separate Appendix.[14]

1.3 Why Western Sydney?

Western Sydney is home to one in ten Australians, and is Australia's third largest economy, after Sydney and Melbourne central business districts. It has numerous economic attractions and advantages, notably a rapidly growing Parramatta central business district, the planned Badgerys Creek airport and associated Aerotropolis, rich rural and agricultural lands, historical sites, important recreational and sporting facilities, great bushland and World Heritage-listed wildernesses in the Blue Mountains, the Hawkesbury-Nepean river system, and significant educational infrastructure, including TAFE campuses and its own university – the multi-campus Western Sydney University.[15]

Western Sydney has experienced booming population growth – one of the highest rates in the developed world. For instance, the Blacktown Council area is projected to undergo more than 2% growth each year during the 20 year period from 2016, increasing from 349,050 to 521,450 residents by 2036.[16] The region's economy has been unable to keep up with the growth, with the ratio of jobs to residents falling consistently since the year 2000.[17] Research undertaken for CCA by SGS Economics and Planning shows that 46% of workers travel to jobs outside of Western Sydney and that "poor access to local jobs or long travel times to reach jobs elsewhere in Greater Sydney is linked to the level of socioeconomic disadvantage."[18]

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[13] The Forum outcomes are also available on the CCA website: https://cca.edu.au/cca-western-sydney-regional-economic-development-skills-forum-emphasises-the-role-of-not-for-profit-community-education-providers/.

[14] The presentations are also available on the CCA website through this link: https://cca.edu.au/resources/#economicdevelopment.

[15] See https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/About/about_greater_western_sydney.

[16] Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment, https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Demography/Population-projections.

[17] See https://www.wsroc.com.au/issues-campaigns/economy-and-employment, and Diana Bagnall, Australia's great urban experiment," *Inside Story*, 14 March 2019, http://insidestory.org.au/australias-great-urban-experiment/. Also see the presentation by Terr

[18] See presentation by Terry Rawnsley at the CCA Parramatta Economic Development Forum, October 2018, https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Developing-Western-Sydney-and-the-role-of-NSW-Community-Colleges-SGSEP.pdf.

More than 2.2 million people live in greater Western Sydney, 35% of them born overseas, from more than 170 countries and speaking more than 100 languages. Many of the economic challenges that face regional and rural NSW also face Western Sydney.[19] These include:

- lack of public transport accessibility, especially to centres of employment but also to other services, frequently necessitating long commutes and extensive reliance on automotive travel;
- locally significant unemployment and underemployment, especially among young people, Indigenous people and new migrants;[20]
- significant pockets of poverty and disadvantage;[21] and
- an economy heavily reliant on manufacturing and other 20th century industries, which are expected to continue to decline over the next 20 years.

The pockets of disadvantage can be profound, with some of the most deprived areas in Australia. Demographer Bernard Salt describes "an arc of adversity" that ranges from Granville through Fairfield to Cabramatta to west of Liverpool. Salt writes:

> More than a century ago urban disadvantage clustered … in Sydney's Redfern, within walking distance of factories. Across the course of two generations the poor of the inner city have been propelled outward as if by some centrifugal force to the city's edges, to Cabramatta…. That force is a confluence of megatrends that transferred manufacturing jobs to Guangzhou and that rewarded knowledge workers with the exquisite amenity of the inner city.[22]

"With one million more people expected to live west of Homebush by 2031, Western Sydney's population will grow by almost 50% in just over 15 years," says the report *Shaping Future Cities - Designing Western Sydney: A blueprint for the economic transformation of Western Sydney*.[23]

That report identifies "seven key drivers for creating jobs", including lifting workforce participation rates to "support disadvantaged groups through training and work transitions, creating a more balanced and equitable city" (p. 5). Not-for-profit NSW adult and community education organisations have a crucial role to play in ensuring that the region has the region has a complete suite of necessary education and training infrastructure, as an instrument for this job creation driver.

These macro-economic forces are only part of the many challenges that face Western Sydney. Given that one in ten Australians lives in Western Sydney, its importance to Australia's economic well-being and future prosperity cannot be overstated.[24]

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[19] See https://www.wsroc.com.au/issues-campaigns/economy-and-employment.
[20] See http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydneys-rich-and-poor-the-rising-crisis-in-our-suburbs-20150507-ggwvh1.html.
[21] See https://www.ncoss.org.au/sites/default/files/public/ncoss_antipoverty_final_2.pdf.
[22] See https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/inquirer/census-2016-snapshot-of-struggle-street-reveals-urbanrural-contrast/news-story/2594d5a3ea9de0399882bbee4a5b9be8?csp=4d4c0b2688db589221e036ebe55b3b6b.
[23] See *Shaping Future Cities: Designing Western Sydney*, A blueprint for the economic transformation of Western Sydney, Deloitte, December 2015, p. 27, http://landing.deloitte.com.au/rs/761-IBL-328/images/deloitte-au-designing-western-sydney-31215.pdf.
[24] See https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/future-of-cities/articles/designing-western-sydney.html.

1.4 About Community Colleges Australia

CCA is a national peak body that champions strong not-for-profit community-based education through powerful national representation and the facilitation of research, professional development and collegiality.

To make our vision a reality, we work to empower the community education sector by:

- increasing the awareness of the sector and its place in the economic and social fabric of our nation;
- advocating at all levels of government on the value of the community education sector, and our members' activities and programs;
- building business opportunities for our members; and
- providing services for our members.

Our vision is for a thriving community-based education sector that inspires individuals, communities and businesses across Australia to engage in learning for achievement and success.

CCA engages with various levels of government and encourages policy-makers to recognise the benefits of community-based education as essential for community connectivity and learning, including the benefits of community-based programs and courses promoting local productivity, social and economic wellbeing and targeted opportunities for disadvantaged learners.

CCA was launched in 2007 through a merger of Community Colleges New South Wales and Community Colleges Victoria. Our members have been providing flexible and dynamic learning and training opportunities to individuals, groups and businesses for a long time – in some instances more than 100 years.

Almost all CCA members are Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) for vocational education and training (VET), and contracted providers of the NSW Government's Smart and Skilled programs. CCA members offer a range of inclusive learning opportunities, including non-accredited training, lifelong, lifestyle and cultural learning courses – education for which they are historically well-known. These educational activities create and sustain social and community networks, re-engage "missing" learners, empower individuals and strengthen communities.

More than 12 years ago, Dr Kaye Bowman identified the six key roles played by community education providers, roles which still characterise the sector.[25] The three economic development roles community education providers play are:

- platform builders, re-engaging adults with basic education and support services;
- bridge builders, providing pathways into formal tertiary education and paid work; and
- work-skills developers, offering accredited vocational training.

[25] See https://www.ala.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/research/Bowman_final_draft_30_Oct_2006.pdf.

And the three community development roles community providers play are:

- community capacity builders, facilitating local networks, community-led development and leadership at suburb, town, regional, state and national levels – with particular importance for programs for young people;
- promoters of citizenship, engaging adults active in community activities, contributing to social cohesion and unity; and
- facilitators of adult health, improving mental, physical and emotional well-being, especially for people who may be socially marginalised.

2. Project Findings

2.1 Project Findings

2.1.1 The Capacity of the Western Sydney Community Education Sector

The 13 Western Sydney region not-for-profit community education providers deliver a wide range of vocational educational and training services to the region, from more than 120 locations. The providers bring great strengths in business and work skills, early childhood, aged care, disability, community services, foundation skills and adult literacy/numeracy, English as a second language, information technology, management and leadership. Some providers also offer some specialised and unique training, such as Auslan from the Deaf Society.

The project has confirmed that Western Sydney provider delivery is extensive and continues to evolve and respond to changing community needs, government policies and requests from business, industry and other training providers. Greater recognition of the capacity of community education providers by local, state and institutional stakeholders will enhance the ability of providers.

Specially commissioned data on Western Sydney from the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER) – summarised in section 4.5 below – reinforces CCA's claim that *community education providers deliver more effectively than other training providers types, especially to hard-to-reach cohorts: people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, people with disabilities, older (age 45-plus) Australians and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.*

All of the region's community education providers have expressed interest in expanding their training and other economic and community development services. They have identified significant areas of need and their organisations' respective capacity to meet that need, given proper structures and support.

In addition to the accredited VET courses, providers offer a wide range of non-accredited professional education and training, particularly in information technology and business services. These educational offerings are complemented by a wide range of leisure, lifestyle, personal development programs which – as noted above – create and sustain social and community networks, build self-esteem and skills of learners and assist in providing the "community glue" that ensures that communities are resilient and sustainable.

The connection between these three types of learning – accredited VET, non-accredited professional and business work skills training, and leisure/lifestyle/personal development – are a unique offering by the not-for-profit community education sector, with unparalleled opportunity to ensure and enhance proper community development.

During the course of this project, CCA received a number of reports that for strategic, budget and operational reasons TAFE NSW has cut back on its outreach activities to marginalised, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including in Western Sydney.[26] Western Sydney

[26] Linda Simon, "VET needs support to rebuild its role in getting disadvantaged groups into education and work", *The Conversation*, 8 October 2018, https://theconversation.com/vet-needs-support-to-rebuild-its-role-in-getting-disadvantaged-groups-into-education-and-work-101390; and Youth Action with Uniting and Mission Australia, *Vocational Education and Training in NSW: Report into access and outcomes for young people*

community providers are in a unique position to pick up many of these services previously supplied by TAFE NSW, given proper funding: see section 6.3 for details.

The project has reinforced the scope of the sector and the possibilities ripe for exploration:

- The sector is ideally positioned to deliver a cohesive framework for connection, ongoing learning and skilling for the region.
- A key sector strength is that community providers are embedded and trusted providers in their respective communities, delivering skills and support where people live and work.
- While community providers in Western Sydney are effective, they continue to battle limited resources, especially given their willingness to expand and introduce new services to key equity groups.
- This report describes existing opportunities that can deliver immediate results and build the economic capacity of the Western Sydney region.
- Collaborations with all layers of government and community stakeholders are crucial for broader success.
- Investment in establishing a governance structure and shared systems for a regional network of not-for-profit community education providers would build sector capacity.

2.1.2 Enhancing Regional Collaboration

Proper economic development in NSW requires the coordinated and collaborative effort of numerous stakeholders and players, working closely together. *To date, the whole of the NSW community education sector – a state-wide network of approximately 38 not-for-profit organisations – has not been sufficiently incorporated into the state's regional economic development planning*. This is despite the significant and historic role that community education providers have played and continue to play in their respective communities for decades.

This project highlighted the lack of coordination between players operating in one or more of the region's education and training sectors – early childhood, schools, VET, higher education and relevant community and family services, across sub-regions and whole greater Western Sydney region. There are many excellent endeavours across provider types and sectors and good examples of collaborations. However, there is often limited coordination between players and initiatives, which constrains the synergies within a community or local economy and the economic advantages that such connectivity brings – providing less than optimum results.

A number of organisations have commented that there are a number of youth, training, employment and community services located in the Blacktown and Mt Druitt areas, resulting in competition for a limited funding pool that has been fierce and at times "cut throat". There are also repetitions of services as providers are often reluctant to share and coordinate their services – frequently in fear of losing their funding, resulting in wastage while the resources available is very limited already.

experiencing disadvantage, February 2018, available at https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/youthaction/pages/1462/attachments/original/1519002239/VET_Report_2018.pdf?1519002239.

A major outcome of the project was the clear identification of:

- areas of disadvantage and demand for upskilling across Western Sydney;
- significant shortfall of delivery across certain locales and populations;
- community education providers with capability and capacity to address these needs;
- poor levels of recognition of community education providers;
- lack of innovative 'joined up' solutions; and
- the opportunity for enhanced collaborations between players across the spectrum of service provision.

Many of the region's not-for-profit 13 community providers are already working closely together, and a number of have assisted each other in delivering VET, such as the Deaf Society and the Parramatta College. Sydney Community College, while not a Smart and Skilled provider, has taken the approach to build partnerships with local TAFEs and other community colleges, in particular Macquarie Community College, to facilitate the movement of its CSO students into Smart and Skilled to complete their qualifications.

The region's community providers frequently meet with the NSW Department of Industry to coordinate strategy. Both the Western and Southwestern Sydney regional offices of Training Services NSW participated in this project and actively support the region's community education providers. CCA commends the enthusiasm and support that these regional offices provide to the community education providers.

Most of the 13 community education providers have annual turnover of less than $5 million and lean permanent staffing. The scale and reach of the individual providers limit their capacity to position, partner and bid for large and long term innovative projects that aim to bring about significant social impact.

To be effective in making a real difference to Western Sydney economic development, community education providers will need to work closely together to create a "collaboration infrastructure" that enhances their individual organisational strengths, but assists them to operate under a collective – and effective – governance structure. This could take the form of either a consortium or a network, enabling them to undertake large education and other service delivery projects. While educational collaborations are frequent in Australia, it will be essential that the region's community providers identify the best means to do this, in a model suitable both to the region and their own capacity.

This project has identified this consortium/network as a high priority research, development and governance activity.[27] It is highly likely that sources of funding – either from the philanthropic or government sectors – will be available to assist with this endeavour. CCA does not under-estimate the complexity and challenges involved in developing such a partnership, however believes that this is the only way to make a substantial leap in the ability of the community sector to seek funding and develop new opportunities.

[27] One example of a highly effective Australian educational consortium is Open Universities Australia, co-owned by seven universities with an additional seven universities participating; see https://www.open.edu.au/about-us/our-board-and-management and https://www.open.edu.au/about-us/partnerships/partner-with-us.

CCA recommends that:

- *The Western Sydney community education providers work collaboratively to develop a regional community education consortium/network through which they can collaborate effectively with each other and undertake projects of regional economic significance.*
- *The NSW Government provide seed funding to assist the proposed Western Sydney regional community education consortium/network in researching and establishing a proper governance structure.*

2.1.3 Working with Local Government and State Planning Agencies

Local governments in Western Sydney take increasingly sophisticated approaches to their economic development activities; many of them have recognised and actively encouraged the incorporation of post-secondary education services in their economic development planning. In some cases, they lead Australia in recognising and incorporating education into planning. Noted examples of Western Sydney local government areas that have developed comprehensive education policies include Parramatta City Council, Liverpool City Council and Blacktown City Council, each of which participated in CCA's Parramatta Forum on 26 October 2018.[28]

While these local councils bring a great deal of sophistication to their economic development planning and incorporation of education, the primary focus to date has been on engagement with universities, with some involvement of TAFE NSW. No local government area in Western Sydney has developed an economic development project incorporating community education providers. The focus on education planning has been on university study, such as Blacktown's plans for a university campus in its CBD, Parramatta Council's engagement with Western Sydney University and Liverpool Council's health, education and research district – which does include TAFE NSW.[29]

Very little of the local government education focus is on post-secondary education includes recognition of the critical role of foundation skills and the "lower level" (Certificates I to IV) VET qualifications that community education providers specialise in.[30] This is a significant gap in the region's post-secondary and life-long education planning. Although traditionally the provision of education and training in Australia has been the responsibility of state and territory governments, many larger local councils – such as those in Western Sydney – are taking a lead in planning for post-secondary education facilities and services in their areas, because of the proven direct connection between education and economic development.

The NSW Government has adopted policies that state that growing Western Sydney communities will "have access to jobs, schools, parks, community facilities, public transport and services to meet their needs and support growth in the area"; that "the right infrastructure" will be "available in time to meet the needs of growing communities"; and

[28] Details of Liverpool and Blacktown Council Forum presentations are available here: https://cca.edu.au/resources/#economicdevelopment.

[29] See https://www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/About-Council/What-we-do/Transformational-Projects/A-university-for-Blacktown; http://www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au/old/business/economic-development/liverpool-health-education-research-and-innovation-precinct; and https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/about-parramatta/news/media-release/parramatta-welcomes-university-of-sydney-announcement.

[30] See section 2.2.6 below on "Foundation Skills".

"communities will have access to local jobs".[31] What is lacking in the description of "infrastructure" is establishment of accessible training and life-long adult learning facilities.

CCA believes that any local government area in New South Wales experiencing population growth – especially in Western Sydney – needs to be encouraged to undertake comprehensive planning of the location of post-secondary education facilities, working in concert with the NSW Government. Priority business growth areas and corridors include Marsden Park, Badgerys Creek, Rouse Hill and Norwest Business Park and residential areas throughout North West and South West Sydney.[32]

The absence of any references to incorporating local training facilities results, in large part, from the lack of larger organisational structures that enable local councils and NSW planning agencies such as the Greater Sydney Commission and structures such as the Western Sydney City Deal to work with. CCA's proposal for a Western Sydney regional community education provider consortium (see Section 2.1.2 above) is an important mechanism to assist this collaborative policy development.

A second means to ensure that the capacity and capabilities of the region's community education providers are effectively utilised is through an official NSW State Government policy framework such as the NSW Skills Board[33] or a structure such as the re-establishment of a Board of Adult and Community Education (BACE). This structure would return New South Wales to the position it was in for 18 years – until 2008 – when it had a legislatively constituted Board**,** with members appointed by the Minister.[34] The functions of such a reconstituted Board would be to:

1. promote the provision of adult and community education in NSW;
2. foster and support the establishment of organisational structures that facilitate the co-ordinated provision of adult and community education in NSW;
3. advise the Minister and the NSW Government on needs and trends in, and the co-ordination of, adult and community education;
4. arrange for the distribution of government funds to adult and community education agencies; and
5. commission research into adult and community education activities in NSW.

From the perspective of rapid population growth and infrastructure planning needs in Western Sydney, functions 1 and 2 above would provide the high-level administrative and policy capability to ensure that the state's needs are aligned with the capacity and capabilities of the community education sector. This structure would bring New South Wales in line with Victoria, which has a statutory "Adult, Community and Further Education" (ACFE) Board. The ACFE Board plans and promotes adult learning, allocates resources, develops policies, and advises the Victorian Minister for Training and Skills.[35]

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[31] See https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Priority-Growth-Areas-and-Precincts/North-West-Growth-Area.

[32] See https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Priority-Growth-Areas-and-Precincts/North-West-Growth-Area and https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Priority-Growth-Areas-and-Precincts/South-West-Growth-Area.

[33] See https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/about/advisory-bodies/nsw-skills-board.

[34] Details of the original NSW Board of Adult and Community Education (BACE), which operated successfully from 1990 to 2008 are available on the NSW Government's legislation website: https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/1990/119/full.

[35] Details on the ACFE Board can be found at https://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/providers/learnlocal/Pages/acfe.aspx.

Community Colleges Australia recommends that:

- *The NSW Department of Planning and Environment include a state-wide approach to educational and infrastructure facility planning that includes community education providers.*[36]

- *The NSW Department of Planning and Environment require local councils in areas of recognised population growth – such as Western Sydney – to incorporate educational facility planning into their local planning activities.*

- *The NSW Department of Planning and Environment plan for the inclusion of community education providers and "community hubs" as part of the infrastructure in any major residential or commercial new developments or re-developments.*

- *The NSW Department of Industry develop and fund a pilot project that aims at ensuring that one or more Western Sydney community education providers work closely with one or more Western Sydney councils to plan more effectively for community education delivery in the local council area, complementing and supporting other local post-secondary educational planning.*

- *The NSW Government establish a policy framework – possibly through the NSW Skills Board – or a statutory board – such as the former Board of Adult and Community Education – that will ensure the economic development capacity and capabilities of the state's community education providers are effectively utilised.*

2.2 Emerging Opportunities

Throughout the course of this project, CCA identified emerging opportunities where Western Sydney regional community education providers can enhance and expand their services to the region, based on existing strengths and expertise. Given the rapid population growth in the region and the significant infrastructure projects, there is substantial funding and interest by governments, both New South Wales and Commonwealth. CCA has identified the following opportunities.

2.2.1 Participation in the Western Sydney City Deal

This partnership between the Australian Government, NSW Government, and local governments of the Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly – a new form of collaboration between the three tiers of government.[37] The City Deal states that it will "skill our residents in the region and initiating new education opportunities."[38] The education components of this partnership are to include an Aerospace Institute; expressions of interest for a STEM university; the Aerotropolis VET facility (see below) to upskill future workforces; a high-performance secondary school connecting students with aviation, engineering, science and the industries of the

[36] See https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Infrastructure.
[37] Diana Bagnall, Australia's great urban experiment," *Inside Story*, 14 March 2019, http://insidestory.org.au/australias-great-urban-experiment/.
[38] Western Sydney City Deal, *Implementation Plan Report Card* 2018, https://citydeals.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-12/Implementation%20Plan%20Report%20Card_0.pdf.

Aerotropolis; and a TAFE Skills Exchange to grow talent in the construction of the Western Sydney Airport.[39]

Prior to the March 2019 NSW election, the Coalition – now returned to Government – promised new $80 million TAFE campus in Western Sydney to deliver construction training, based on the "record infrastructure pipeline and a construction boom underway across Sydney" and "surging demand for more tradies." It will focus on fields like construction, carpentry, electrical and plumbing, and train 700 new students each year, and be located close to the Western Sydney airport, in or near Penrith, Leppington or Bringelly.[40]

2.2.2 The Western Sydney Airport and the Aerotropolis

The Western Sydney Aerotropolis is to "be an integrated, world-class economic hub consisting of a purpose-built city and business centre connected by significant road and rail infrastructure".[41] Plans are advanced for a new university campus at the Aerotropolis, organised by the "NUW Alliance" (the University of Newcastle, UNSW Sydney and the University of Wollongong) and Western Sydney University, who have "joined forces to deliver a world-class higher education and research presence in Western Sydney."[42]

An aerotropolis is "an airport city – as opposed to a city airport", based on the fact that "35% of the value of global trade is freighted by air," Diana Bagnall writes. The model is working successfully in the Netherlands, South Korea and "the Chinese are mad for it". Even though the new Western Sydney airport is unlikely to challenge Kingsford Smith Airport, when it opens in 2026, it will be "a game-changer for the region." The accompanying Aerotropolis is intended to "supercharge" Western Sydney jobs development, with the training required to support that growth.[43]

To date, the neither the Western Sydney City Deal nor the Aerotropolis have mentioned the role of not-for-profit community education providers, which are uniquely placed to support the training that will develop in the Aerotropolis and new airport precinct – especially in ensuring that disengaged workers have an opportunity to get involved, and in supporting advanced training activities with language and foundation skills. *This training capacity will not magically appear, however, and needs to be supported and planned in advance.*

It is recommended that:

- *The NSW Government and the Western Sydney City Deal make a separate provision for the incorporation of not-for-profit community education providers as part of the education and training mix of providers.*

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[39] See https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/projects-and-initiatives/western-sydney-city-deal/#skills-and-education.

[40] See https://nsw.liberal.org.au/Our-Plans/Policies/A-NEW-TAFE-FOR-WESTERN-SYDNEY.

[41] See https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/172298/Invitation-to-Participate-Aerotropolis.pdf. In early March 2019, the airport was named "Nancy-Bird Walton Airport" - https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-04/western-sydney-airport-named-after-nancy-bird-walton/10867430.

[42] See https://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/news/general/new-university-campus-take-flight-western-sydney-aerotropolis (14 September 2018) and https://www.nuwalliance.edu.au/about-us.

[43] Diana Bagnall, Australia's great urban experiment," *Inside Story*, 14 March 2019, http://insidestory.org.au/australias-great-urban-experiment/.

2.2.3 The Parramatta North Heritage Core

UrbanGrowth NSW "is creating an aspirational place identity for Parramatta North's publicly owned, nationally listed Heritage Core that is locally contextual, globally relevant and seeks to fill an unmet need in a rapidly developing urban landscape." It is now looking for ideas for uses, programs, services and activities that could take place in buildings and the public spaces in between, to activate the Heritage Core. UrbanGrowth NSW has called for expressions of interest.[44] A number of community education providers in Western Sydney have submitted interest proposals.

2.2.4 The Nirimba Education Precinct

The Nirimba Education Precinct is a multi-institutional educational campus founded in 1995 and located at Quakers Hill in North West Sydney with secondary education providers, TAFE and Western Sydney University College, as well as BREED, a not-for-profit economic development and jobs organisation.[45]

2.2.5 Neighbourhood Centres

Given the large number of new and expanding housing estates and commercial centres, community education providers are strong candidates to provide structured post-secondary learning in new developments. The population of Western Sydney "is projected to reach 3 million by 2036 and to absorb two thirds of the population growth in the Sydney region – making the region one of the largest growing urban populations in Australia."[46]

Substantial Australian research supports the importance of centres in new estates and centres, particularly in areas with populations of low to medium socioeconomic background.:

> Neighbourhood and community centres are uniquely placed to play a strong role in the delivery of a whole range of social services. Being embedded in the community, these centres can contribute significantly to improving the lives of the children and young people, families and the elderly, within their neighbourhoods.[47]

CCA members have consistently found substantial challenges in obtaining affordable and well-located facilities to serve the education needs of the new and expanding suburbs. CCA notes that Section 7.11 of the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment 1979, as amended (previously Section 94) requires developer contributions towards provision or improvement of amenities or services. To date, almost none of these contributions have been utilised to establish not-for-profit community-based education and training facilities.

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[44] See https://www.ugdc.nsw.gov.au/growth-centres/parramatta-north/parramatta/.
[45] See https://nirimba.nsw.edu.au/ and https://breedaustralia.com.au/our-story/.
[46] See https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/About/about_greater_western_sydney.
[47] Source: Gul Izmir, Ilan Katz & Jasmine Bruce, *Neighbourhood and Community Centres: results for children, families and communities*, SPRC Report 16/09, Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW, August 2009, p. ii, https://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/media/SPRCFile/2009_Report16_09_Neighbourhood_and_CommunityCentres.pdf.

It is recommended that:

- *The NSW Department of Industry work with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment to adjust the regulations or otherwise ensure that Section 7.11 (previously Section 94) developer amenity contributions can be utilised for post-secondary education and training by not-for-profit providers.*

2.2.6 Foundation Skills

CCA's research and consultations have identified a very high need for more foundation skills training in many areas throughout Western Sydney. The Australian Government defines foundation skills as "the underpinning communication skills required for participation in the workplace, the community and in adult education and training."[48]

The National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults explicitly established formal units of competency of foundation skills into units of competency that describe the language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance, included in the FSK Foundation Skills Training Package.[49] Foundation skills are a combination of language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) – specifically listening, speaking, reading, writing, digital literacy, use of mathematical ideas and employability skills – and employability skills – collaboration, problem solving, self-management, learning, information and communication technology.[50]

English language training consistently rates as a high priority to meet the needs of those who have completed the AMEP program but are not yet ready to pursue further study under Smart and Skills or to pursue entry level employment. This need is greatest where new migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are settling, such as those in the Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown and Liverpool LGAs. CCA understands that agencies involved in migrant resettlement currently have a large client base seeking to enrol in part qualifications, but who have expressed concern that they would be unsuccessful without further development of foundation skills, including personal communication and presentation, as well as language, literacy and learning.

JobQuest provides FSK courses for students dropping out of high schools but are not engaged with training, employment or any other assistance in Hawkesbury (Richmond and Windsor). In partnership with University of Western Sydney, Northwest Disability Services and Secret Garden, the FSK courses engage the students with projects in nursery, landscaping and gardening. The target group used to be referred by their high schools to TAFE outreach before signing out, and would be engaged with one of the courses being offered. JobQuest is now able to utilise the Smart and Skilled funding to fill the gap.

JobQuest has been running parenting courses in partnership with a family service in Western Sydney. The family service refers disadvantaged parents (young parents, single parents, parents with other risks factors) to JobQuest. JobQuest will package FSK courses focusing in parenting skills. It has been a very successful program for both agencies as well as the clients involved.

[48] See https://vetnet.education.gov.au/Public%20Documents/HLT_Foundation_Skills_Guide.pdf.
[49] Available at https://training.gov.au/TrainingComponentFiles/FSK/FSK_R1.0.pdf.
[50] See Foundation Skills Fact Sheet, https://www.myskills.gov.au/media/1777/back-to-basics-foundation-skills.pdf.

While jobactive providers contract JobQuest to deliver various VET courses, we have a good example of innovative employment program with a DES. The program utilises FSK courses as a pathway for the DES clients to develop capacity for work with our Social Enterprise, then proceed to open employment. So are we have achieved 100% outcome with the six participants in the pilot completed in late 2018.

The program was developed to provide pathway for people with disability leading to employment with our Newcastle based Social Enterprise, which provides grounds maintenance and cleaning services. The program focuses on developing workplace skills (including literacy and numeracy, oral communication, work health and safety, first aid and practical vocational skill) for grounds and cleaning work. The extended induction program ensures that the students are well aware of all aspects of working in the Social Enterprise and with our clients before they commence. The program runs for 4 weeks - 3 days per week and involves a mix of classroom and practical hands-on work skills training.

The pilot for the program was run in conjunction with an employment service located in Newcastle. They recruited suitable clients for the program and provided the students with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE- safety footwear and clothing, etc) to enable them to undertake the practical skills training. Some have already commenced employment and the rest were expected to commence before the end of January resulting in 100% employment outcomes.

Young people, particularly those who are disengaged form mainstream schooling, is an important and unevenly served cohort in foundation skills, in part because of current funding models. A large “grey” area exists for young people who are nominally enrolled in school, but do not actively participate. Funding for this group is very limited or not currently available to RTOs (individuals need to have left school formally to be eligible for VET funding). Programs and connections for the cohort exist within the ACE network and opportunity to build and deliver for young people is high. Given the imminent (July 2019) move of Training Services NSW to the Department of Education, CCA will undertake renewed dialogue with that Department to explore innovative models and programs for young people still at school.

2.2.7 Migrant Services

CCA’s Western Sydney members have developed deep expertise in meeting the education and training needs of migrant communities, including operating English language teaching programs for many years. Western Sydney community education providers have developed excellent models of migrant mentoring and work transition, similar to AMES Australia.[51] Macquarie Community College and St George & Sutherland Community College are among those with many years of migrant service delivery, especially English language teaching through the Government’s Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), English for employment and Skillmax.[52] The Parramatta College’s Skilled Migrant Work-Ready Program supports migrants and refugees who are seeking employment in their professional domain.[53]

The successful professional migrant mentoring established by City East College (Bondi Junction) – originally with no government funding – provides an excellent model to leverage

[51] See https://www.ames.net.au/-/media/files/research/spmp-mentoring-report_feb2018_final.pdf, https://www.ames.net.au/volunteering/volunteer-mentors and https://www.ames.net.au/courses/skilled-professional-migrants-program-spmp.
[52] See https://www.education.gov.au/adult-migrant-english-program-0 and https://www.macquarie.nsw.edu.au/class/skillmax_job_seekers_course-6.
[53] See https://www.parramattacollege.com.au/transitiontoworkprograms.

community education resources to community needs. This program supports the integration of professionally skilled migrants and refugees into employment, enabling them to have career continuity. Expansion of this type of program to Western Sydney – with some 40% of its population born outside of Australia – could make an immediate and profound impact on the lives of hundreds of families in locations such as Bankstown, Campbelltown, Fairfield and Blacktown.[54]

2.2.8 Special Assistance Secondary Schools

CCA recognises the opportunity to increase schooling options for young people in Western Sydney through special assistance schools owned and operated by not-for-profit community-based education providers. Such schools generally have smaller student intakes and operate within an adult education philosophy to cater for young people dealing with a range of issues such as trauma, anxiety and/or mental health concerns, through to other necessitous circumstances, including family-related issues.

Adult and community education (ACE) providers have a long history in supporting disengaged youth. The ACE sector has long acknowledged the need for targeted support for vulnerable and disengaged students, and the growth of special assistance schools forms a natural progression within community-based education.[55]

MTC Australia already runs two campuses – in Fairfield and Blacktown – of its Special Assistance Secondary School, Warakirri College.[56] NSW community providers have expanded their activities in offering secondary education for the most disadvantaged young people in a number of new – mostly regional and rural – locations around the state. This form of school is a natural fit for both the region and community provider governance and operations.

2.2.9 Employment Innovation

CCA members have noted that relationships with job service providers ("jobactives") vary in quality, depth and purpose. While a number of useful programs to make individuals "work ready" exist, given the scope, size and scale of Western Sydney – not only young people, but workers of all ages – CCA proposes a Western Sydney employment and training innovation fund" that will support new ventures (such as the migrant mentoring program above) to develop innovative responses. CCA notes that older workers – and especially older migrant workers – do not appear to be well-served by the current job services, which are "considered ill-equipped to assist older, highly experienced and often well-educated adults."[57]

Over the next 10 years, as the Australian population ages, we are likely to see a decreasing number of young people entering the workforce, and an increasing number of older workers staying in the workforce.[58] Community education providers are uniquely capable of assisting

[54] See https://www.westir.org.au/new/index.php/census-2016.
[55] See CCA's policy on Special Assistance Secondary Schools, February 2019: https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CCA-Policy-on-Independent-Special-Assistance-Schools.pdf.
[56] See https://www.warakirricollege.nsw.edu.au/.
[57] "Age discrimination in the workplace happening to people as young as 45", Justine Irving, *The Conversation*, 27 April 2017, https://theconversation.com/age-discrimination-in-the-workplace-happening-to-people-as-young-as-45-study-76095.
[58] See David Donaldson, "Employers seeing increased value in older workers," *The Mandarin*, 5 November 2018, https://www.themandarin.com.au/100860-employers-seeing-increased-value-in-older-workers/ and

older worker retraining: of NSW Government-funded VET students in 2017, community providers had almost 36% students who were older (age 45+), compared to TAFE with 19% of students and private for-profits, with less than 15% of students.[59]

The ideal programs to expand in Western Sydney are those that target hard-to-reach cohorts who are seeking opportunities in high growth industries and employment sectors that favour the employment of mature aged migrant women or men, including disability, aged care, child care, retail and hospitality.

Innovation might look like a mentoring program for older jobseekers who are matched with mature age mentors; training in technology and digital devices; or work-simulated training conducted in a group environment. An innovative program could include an incentive payment for hosting work experience which could then be paid to the worker for transport costs and other incidentals: often jobseekers do not obtain the train or bus fare to support their work experience hosting. Work experience is crucial, but often too little funding is provided to assist work experience placements. (Also see Section 7.2 on older workers below.)

2.3 CCA Activities

In addition to the recommendations listed in this report, Community Colleges Australia has commenced activities based on priorities that have become apparent during this project. Over the coming months, CCA will:

- Continue to support the not-for-profit Western Sydney regional community education providers to engage with government, peak organisations, business/industry and not-for-profit organisations active in the region;
- Convene meetings with key stakeholder groups such as local government (regional economic development officers), Regional Development Australia, regional chambers of commerce, and philanthropic organisations (foundations and trusts) that have an interest in operating in education, training and Western Sydney;
- Convene events that follows up from the Parramatta Forum, focussing on the role of community providers in social enterprise, entrepreneurship and small business development.
- Encourage and assist all CCA members to obtain Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status – in order to obtain tax deductible gift status – and to develop strategies to engage with Australian foundations and trusts to support economic development and other socially beneficial projects;
- Engage with peak philanthropic organisations to ensure that they are aware of and able to work effectively with adult and community education organisations;
- Convene an “Indigenous Affinity Group” of CCA members to help plan the sector’s strategy and activities in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations;
- Continue to liaise with TAFE NSW, Western Sydney University and other universities active in Western Sydney, encouraging collaborations with community education providers; and
- Liaise with entrepreneurship centres and other sources of expertise such as the Sydney School of Entrepreneurship, encouraging their involvement with NSW community providers.

[59] See https://cca.edu.au/new-south-wales-community-education-providers-continue-to-over-perform-in-reaching-vulnerable-and-disadvantaged-learners/.

3. Western Sydney Regional Economic Development Skills Forum

3.1 Background to the Forum

The Western Sydney Regional Economic Development Skills Forum organised by CCA on 26 October 2018 emphasised the roles and opportunities that not-for-profit community education providers can play in Western Sydney.

More than 70 participants gathered in Parramatta to hear presentations on Western Sydney skills and training, and to brainstorm how the region's not-for-profit community education providers can increase their contributions to the region's economic, social and community development. The Forum was arranged to obtain input from a number of government, non-government, business and educational stakeholders.[60]

In the Forum's opening keynote presentation, *Zoe de Saram*, Deputy Secretary, Skills and Economic Development, NSW Department of Industry, spoke of the importance of government in providing critical infrastructure to Western Sydney, referring to the Greater Sydney Commission's Three Cities Report and the Western Sydney City Deal.[61] In closing, she reaffirmed "the commitment by government to adult and community education – what you are good at, where you complement, where you connect and how you can leverage off each other."

3.2 Setting the Scene in Western Sydney

In setting the scene for Western Sydney's regional economic development, a number of presenters described the region's unique challenges and opportunities.

Therese O'Dwyer (Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia) discussed how the number of the region's residents participating in formal vocational education and training (VET) decreased in the period 2006 to 2016, and emphasised the lengthy journey to work, with more than 200,000 residents of the region travelling more than 30 kilometres to work each day.

Billie Sankovic (CEO, Western Sydney Community Forum) referred to the Western Sydney Community Forum *Community of Changes report*, produced to provide insights to shape the future delivery of services in the region.[62] She highlighted the region's tremendous social, cultural and human diversity, including more than 40,000 Indigenous Australians, the highest concentration in Australia. She also spoke of the region's challenges of incorporating more than a million new residents by 2036.

Sam Stewart (The Committee for Sydney) summarised research undertaken by the Committee for Sydney, which shows how rapidly Western Sydney is changing.[63] The region

[60] CCA posted a report on the Forum on its website, available at: https://cca.edu.au/cca-western-sydney-regional-economic-development-skills-forum-emphasises-the-role-of-not-for-profit-community-education-providers/.
[61] See https://www.greater.sydney/metropolis-of-three-cities and https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/projects-and-initiatives/western-sydney-city-deal/.
[62] See http://www.wscf.org.au/communities-of-change/.
[63] See http://www.sydney.org.au/what-we-do/publications/.

already has two major education-economic hubs in Westmead and Macquarie Park, and growing in Parramatta. The Committee's report *Rebalancing the City* recommends embedding education in town centres, ensuring that business can work close to educational institutions and helping education providers to become involved in regional governance and planning frameworks such as the City Deal.[64]

Michael Cullen, Western Sydney Regional Manager of TAFE NSW, spoke of TAFE's activities in the region, with 90,000 students attending at 21 facilities. He pointed to how Western Sydney's educational demographic differed from other parts of the metropolitan area: many more people with no post-school qualifications, fewer residents with university degrees, but more with VET certificates III and IV. He also discussed the region's unemployment, where "the rate hides a huge concentration of youth unemployment".

Kerry Robinson, General Manager of Blacktown City Council, described why the Council had issued an expression of interest to place a university campus in the Blacktown CBD: "It's the ecosystem that surrounds a university. The activity will enliven the centre and change Blacktown from a 'stagecoach town'".[65] The Council has already received "two fully formed bids" for the campus. The Council's population is estimated to exceed 500,000 people by 2036.[66]

In her presentation, *Julie Scott* (Manager, City Deal, Liverpool City Council) noted that "Liverpool is no longer on the edge; we're in the middle of everything." The Council is heavily promoting the Liverpool Health, Education, Research and Innovation Precinct, with TAFE, University of Sydney, University of Wollongong and Western Sydney University all key education partners.[67] She also committed to assisting community education providers to get engaged in the Western Sydney City Deal.[68]

Terry Rawnsley (SGS Economics and Planning) reported on a CCA-commissioned study of the region's education and training needs.[69] He noted that low access to job opportunities means that 46% of the region's workers travelled to jobs outside of Western Sydney. He presented convincing data showing that higher education equalled higher lifetime earnings, and lifetime earnings for non-English speakers was significantly lower: thus learning English was essential for migrants. Additional education is even more crucial for disadvantaged groups.

A large number of the Forum's presenters were born or grew up in Western Sydney. Copies of Forum presentations are available in a separate Appendix to this report, and on the CCA website.[70]

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[64] See http://www.sydney.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Committee_TownCentreRenewal_Final_WEB.pdf.
[65] See https://www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/About-Council/What-we-do/Transformational-Projects/A-university-for-Blacktown and https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/blacktown-lures-universities-in-its-bid-to-become-the-talented-city-20180727-p4zu3o.html.
[66] See https://www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/About-Council/What-we-do/Transformational-Projects.
[67] See https://www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au/business/health-education-research-innovation-precinct.
[68] See https://www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au/council/western-sydney-city-deal.
[69] See https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Developing-Western-Sydney-and-the-role-of-NSW-Community-Colleges-SGSEP.pdf.
[70] See https://cca.edu.au/resources/#economicdevelopment.

3.3 Community Colleges Australia Forum Conclusions

The Forum underscored how important the "place-based" learning offered by the region's community education providers are. The Forum also showed the significance of the not-for-profit community education providers operating in Western Sydney to work closely together as part of a consortium or network to swing resources to the community sector, so that community providers can do more of they do well – providing education and training services to the region's large number of vulnerable and disadvantaged residents and workers.[71]

The Forum heard at length about the employment and training challenges facing Western Sydney. We have the opportunity to meet these needs, of migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds, of young people keen to participate in the workforce, of older workers who need and want retraining, and of small businesses that need a 'leg up' in developing skills.

The Forum also highlighted a large part of government investment into Western Sydney regional post-secondary education has gone into universities and to some extent TAFE. It is essential that community education providers be added to the mix and the partners in the Western Sydney City Deal, the Aerotropolis training hub and the Parramatta and Blacktown educational developments.[72]

A number of organisations at the Forum made commitments to assist community education providers expand services. CCA is committed to developing its relationship with TAFE NSW to complement TAFE's major role in Western Sydney, and will focus on specific, 'do-able' projects. CCA is also keen to work with the region's local councils – four of which sent senior representatives to the Forum.

3.4 Forum Presentations

The Forum participants also heard from the region's not-for-profit community education providers:

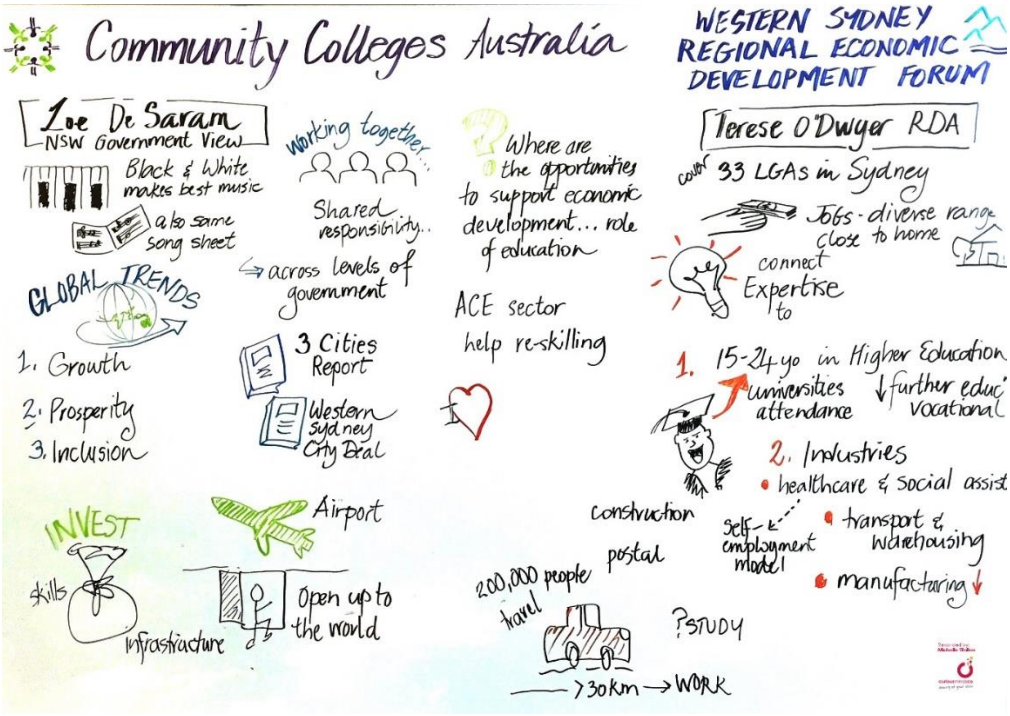
- Theresa Collignon, CEO, Macquarie Community College
- Eric Wright, Principal, Nepean Community College
- Cliff Pacey, Principal, Macarthur Community College
- Danielle Bensley, CEO, The Parramatta College
- Ka Chan, Manager, and Fiona Keane, Co-ordinator, JobQuest
- Lisa Lillis, General Manager – Education and Training, MTC Australia
- Brittany Jack, Chief Operating Officer, VERTO
- Tonya Cook-Pedersen, Sydney Community College
- Bernadette Mills, Vocational Manager, St George & Sutherland Community College.

[71] For details of how NSW community providers over-perform with relation to equity groups, see https://cca.edu.au/new-south-wales-community-education-providers-continue-to-over-perform-in-reaching-vulnerable-and-disadvantaged-learners/.

[72] See https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/projects-and-initiatives/western-sydney-city-deal/; https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/aerotropolis; and https://www.greater.sydney/metropolis-of-three-cities/productivity/jobs-and-skills-city/greater-parramatta-stronger-and-better.

Other Forum presenters included:

- Uncle Greg Simms, Aboriginal Elder, who provided a welcome to the land of the Darug people;
- Councillor Sameer Pandey, who welcomed participants to the City of Parramatta and underscored the Council's commitment to education and training;
- Nicolene Murdoch, CEO of Western Sydney University – The College, who described that College's unique model of engaging new students;
- Dennis Smith, Multicultural Engagement Officer, Paula Abood, Sydney Regional CALD Coordinator & Jude Cooke, Head Teacher Career Pathways, TAFE NSW;
- David Hill, CEO of the ARC Group and member of the Parramatta Business Chamber; and
- Bob Turner, CEO of BREED Australia – and former Sydney Kings basketball star, coach and owner.



3.5 The Forum Participants

Other community education provider staff present at the Forum included Ted Nabung, CEO of Hornsby Kur-ring-gai Community College; Jennifer Aldred, Senior Manager, Sydney Community College; Stuart Bastock, Head of Training & Sandra McKinney, Marketing & Sales Manager, Macquarie Community College; Syed Moniruzzaman, Education Manager, The Parramatta College; Carla Dawson, Curriculum Manager, MTC Australia; Shayma Saafan, Bankstown Community College (BCC Institute); and Libby Waring, Principal & Margaret Teed, Mentor Program Coordinator, City East Community College.

Other organisations represented at the Forum included NSW Business Chamber, the Parramatta Business Chamber, Penrith Chamber of Commerce, Warakirri College (MTC Australia), Training Services NSW – NSW Department of Industry, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC), The Hills Shire Council, Greater Sydney

Commission, the Reading Writing Hotline, Villawood Public School's Community Hub, Ability Options, Settlement Services International, Schools Industry Partnership, Adele House, Wentworth Community Housing, TAFE Community Alliance and a number of local businesses.

Michelle Walker from Curious Minds facilitated the Forum, assisted by education and training consultant Camilla Couch. A complete list of Forum participants is available in Appendix A.1.


CCA WESTERN SYDNEY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM
Billie Sankovic
Western Sydney Community Forum
Sam Stewart
the Committee for Sydney
Kerry Robinson
Blacktown City Council
Deliberately diverse membership
1 plane ... 23 sec ea 24 hrs
Aboriginal community is very active
RESEARCH benchmarking
+ Social equity economics
500,000+ population
by
Giga Warehouse
Festivals ... destination
Restaurants... sacred places
extraordinary leaders, people, activists, sports people
Arts, artists
POETRY
Stars
Science
innovations
solar
tech
Older Citizers
inequalities exist
across geographies
Medicine manufacture
is an advantage
CONNECTEDNESS
Harrick Lane PROJECT
university in Blacktown
business activity
enliven city
equity
travel for study
workforce
overseas + local
education destination
Health Precinct
Center - Training Excellence
rehab, medical prof, sports people
markets reskilling
ONGOING AGILE
Embedded Education
ECONOMIC GROWTH
300,000 students
$11b

4. Economic Development and Community Education Providers

4.1 Supporting Economic Development

Community education providers have played, and continue to play, a major role in NSW in building the productive capacity of their respective communities through education and training. To derive maximum benefit from the state-wide network of not-for-profit community education providers, valuable changes are needed to increase their ability to participate in economic development planning:

- Include community education providers in the planning for large-scale economic development activities, such as the Aerotropolis training hub associated with the new Western Sydney Airport;
- Ensure that community providers have the capacity and means to work collaboratively with local councils, which are some of the most powerful drivers in Western Sydney economic development;
- Actively engage across local and state decision making bodies to provide community education providers with use of accessible infrastructure;
- Encourage multi-sector regional economic development planning activities to include not-for-profit community education providers; and
- Increase the capacity of community education providers to participate effectively in economic development through collaborative ventures.

4.2 NSW Government Regional Development Framework

The NSW Government's *Regional Development Framework* provides important guidance for the involvement of community education organisations in regional development. The *Framework*:

> recognises the need to be more strategic and better coordinated if it is to make a difference, particularly in addressing some of the serious issues facing regional NSW such as pockets of youth unemployment, social disadvantage, changing economic opportunities and increased competition.[73]

The *Regional Development Framework* is underpinned by the NSW Economic Development Strategy (March 2015), which has five goals, to:

1. Promote key regional sectors and regional competitiveness
2. Drive regional employment and regional business growth
3. Invest in economic infrastructure and connectivity
4. Maximise government efficiency and enhance regional governance
5. Improve information sharing and build the evidence base[74]

[73] See https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/invest-in-nsw/regional-opportunities/regional-development-framework.
[74] See https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/invest-in-nsw/invest-news/news/new-economic-development-strategy-for-regional-nsw and https://rdafarwestnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Economic-Development-Strategy-for-Regional-NSW-eb2015.pdf.

Community education providers have the capacity, willingness and resources to help address the issues in the *Regional Development Framework*, and to contribute to all five of the goals of the Economic Development Strategy.

4.3 Capabilities of NSW Community Education Providers

There are powerful reasons for focussing on the capacity of not-for-profit NSW community education providers. These organisations already have strong capabilities, as they:

1. are mostly small to medium size businesses, unconstrained by large bureaucracies;
2. have mission, vision and values statements that prioritise community development to meet local community social and economic needs;
3. are skilled and trusted at delivering accredited vocational education and training (VET), especially in areas of need and to vulnerable and disadvantaged learners through programs such as the NSW Community Service Obligation (CSO) scheme;
4. understand how to work closely with small businesses, providing the adaptability and flexibility that small businesses require in training providers;
5. provide a range of non-accredited education and training solutions and services, which both complement and extend accredited VET;
6. are independent organisations with autonomous governance structures, based in their local communities and working effectively with local stakeholders;
7. are linked by a powerful network through their peak organisation, Community Colleges Australia;
8. are agile and flexible, able to identify and respond quickly to changing community needs, developing local programs that address local challenges;
9. have developed efficient, diverse and lean business models, given limited government funding;
10. are not-for-profit organisations (most of them registered charities), unencumbered by the need to produce profit for investors, resulting in a low risk of any funding or support benefiting individuals rather than the whole community;
11. are familiar with reinventing themselves, engaged in ongoing processes of performance improvement – if they do not renew their approaches, they do not survive;
12. understand how to work collaboratively with the NSW Government in achieving education, training and employment goals; and
13. work with other government bodies, state, local and Commonwealth, along with other not-for-profit organisations, business, industry and other community stakeholders.[75]

NSW community education providers already have a strong relationship with economic development. Traditionally, community colleges foster and promote lifelong learning, innovative and critical thinking; skill capable workers; assist with communication skills; improve the social and cultural life of their communities; and have the flexibility to meet challenges and change.[76]

[75] For more details on some these, see Patricia Carroll (2000), "Engaging the Community College in State and Local Economic Development: Maintaining the Balance."

[76] See Patricia Carroll, "Engaging the Community College in State and Local Economic Development: Maintaining the Balance."

4.4 Australian Regional Economic Development – The Importance of Place-Based Approaches

The Australian Parliament's Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation's inquiry into best practice approaches to regional development summarises relevant themes, based on work from the Regional Australia Institute, the Productivity Commission and the Australian Business Foundation. The Committee concludes that, a "'place-based' approach is important because it recognises that regions are different, that one-size-fits-all approaches are often inappropriate, and that local communities must be central to development efforts."[77]

The Productivity Commission notes that successful adaptive and development strategies for Australia's regions need to be:

- led by local communities;
- aligned with regional strengths;
- supported by targeted investment; and
- guided by clear objectives and measurable performance indicators.[78]

The Australian Business Foundation concludes that successful regional development requires:

- strengthened local and regional institutions able to develop local economic assets more than just "tailoring national policies";
- active stakeholders; and
- development of human capital and the promotion of innovation.[79]

All three reports align with OECD literature and conclude that a local, "place-based" approach is an essential element of best practice regional development.[80] The Select Committee quotes Professor Andrew Beer, who notes that, "Good practice in regional economic development is accepted as focusing upon endogenous growth – that is, growth that takes place because of the assets, abilities and talents of the region and the people within it."[81] This compares to the "top down" or "centre-directed" approach that many governments take.

More recently, the Australian Government's Select Committee on Intergenerational Welfare Dependence supported a place-based approach as "an effective way to improve entrenched

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[77] Parliament of Australia, Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation, 2017, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Regional_Development_and_Decentralisation/RDD/Issues_Paper/section?id=committees%2Freportrep%2F024094%2F24934.

[78] Productivity Commission, *Transitioning Regional Economies*, April 2017, http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/transitioning-regions/initial/transitioning-regions-initial.pdf.

[79] John Tomaney, *Place-based Approaches to Regional Development: Global Trends and Australian Implications*, November 2010, http://alstonvillewollongbar.com.au/members/Library/Documentation/2014/Place_based_competitiveness_australia.pdf.

[80] OECD, *The New Rural Paradigm: Policies and Governance*, June 2006, http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/thenewruralparadigmpoliciesandgovernance.htm.

[81] Parliament of Australia, Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation, 2017, line 1.13, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Regional_Development_and_Decentralisation/RDD/Issues_Paper/section?id=committees%2Freportrep%2F024094%2F24934.

disadvantage … [and which] reflects an understanding of the community and its people, and the particular circumstances that exist in that community…. It offers a customised response rather than 'one-size-fits-all' program."[82]

The Regional Australia Institute's "Policy Hack" on place-based programs states the need for locally sources solutions, because the:

> Large macroeconomic reforms that began in the 1980s were guided by a way of thinking about service delivery as a marketplace. The thought was that distribution of these services could be more efficient if supply arrangements could achieve economies of scale…. The provision of services has been increasingly outsourced and large organisations (including not-for-profits), seeking economies of scale to maximise returns.
>
> Previous policy thinking places little emphasis on 'place' as the context within which programs are implemented. Policies and programs are rolled out across the country with uniformity whether they are being implemented in a metropolitan centre or in a small regional town. Uniformity in delivery processes across Australia leaves no avenue for the consideration of local issues or actions. And it can be often used as a smokescreen for 'equity' (everyone is subject to the same program or policy guidelines) but actually it leads to anything but, frequently imposing unworkable requirements on regional providers.
>
> Central government policy makers often over-estimate the degrees of freedom enjoyed by managers locally and frequently assume there has been a higher level of local input into the design of programs than has been the case. Mechanisms and processes need to allow local input into the design and to guide program modifications to meet the needs of the community.[83]

These descriptors all apply to the Western Sydney community education providers, given their ability to undertake and support place-based regional economic development activities. *Strengthening the place-based activities of Western Sydney's regional community education providers, which support the formation of human and social capital in the region, is one of the most cost-effective means that the NSW and Commonwealth Governments can utilise to promote economic development in the region.*

The most effective place-based services are ones where "wrap-around" support is provided, centred on the needs and ambitions of disadvantaged community members. In the Western Sydney context, this is a high priority for newly arrived non-English speaking background jobseekers who are obliged to search for jobs and attend interviews while attempting to improve their English. CCA members have observed that as a result of job search pressures, many of them drop out of English language classes, impairing their long-term absorption and success.

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[82] House of Representatives Select Committee on Intergenerational Welfare Dependence, *Living on the Edge: Inquiry into Intergenerational Welfare Dependence*, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, February 2019, Chapter 3, "Principles for Successful Programs," https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Intergenerational_Welfare_Dependence/IGWD/Final_Report/section?id=committees%2freportrep%2f024242%2f26848.

[83] Regional Australia Institute, *Regions Rising Canberra Conference Policy Hack Place-Based Programs*, "What needs to change for place-based policies to be implemented in regional Australia?", March 2019, http://regionsrising.regionalaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/190321_RR2019_CBR_PolicyHack_PlaceBased.pdf.

The NSW Government continues to invest substantial effort to ensure that Western Sydney develops properly through its infrastructure and planning activities.[84] Although the NSW Parliament's Standing Committee's Inquiry discussion paper only briefly touches on the role of VET providers, it does recommend that the government "do more to support innovative models to fund activities in research and knowledge exchange" and asks, "What action can the NSW Government take to work with regional stakeholders to ensure that training and education caters to local workforce demand?"[85]

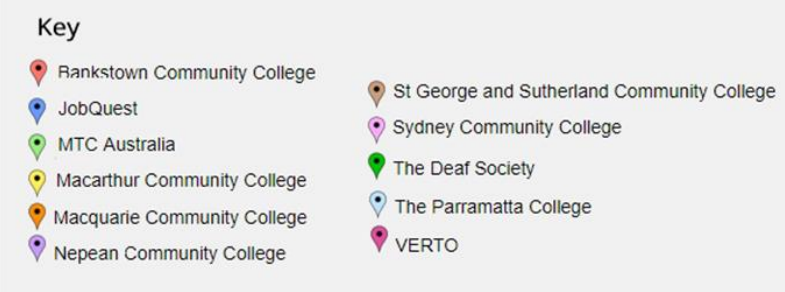
Community Colleges Australia responds to this question by recommending empowering and funding NSW community education providers to participate effectively. The current Australian policy "literature" strongly supports the development of a Western Sydney regionally based Community Education Development Corporation, as outlined in section 2.1 above.

4.5 Western Sydney Community Education Providers

4.5.1 Geography and Operations

Of the 39 established community education providers in New South Wales, 13 providers (32%) operate in whole or in part in Western Sydney.[86] Those 13 providers operate from more than 120 separate locations around greater Western Sydney. The two maps below show the locations. The complete interactive map is available online through this link: https://www.easymapmaker.com/map/western-sydney-community-education-providers.

Western Sydney Community Education Providers map key for Figures 4.5-1 and 4.5-2



[84] See http://www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au/ and https://www.greater.sydney/metropolis-of-three-cities/productivity/jobs-and-skills-city/economic-sectors-are-targeted-success.
[85] See *Regional development and a global Sydney Discussion paper*, https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/DBAssets/InquiryReport/ReportAcrobat/6123/Discussion%20paper.pdf, pp. 50 & 51.
[86] See https://cca.edu.au/members/ for head office details.

Figure 4.5-1: Western Sydney community provider activities (large scale)

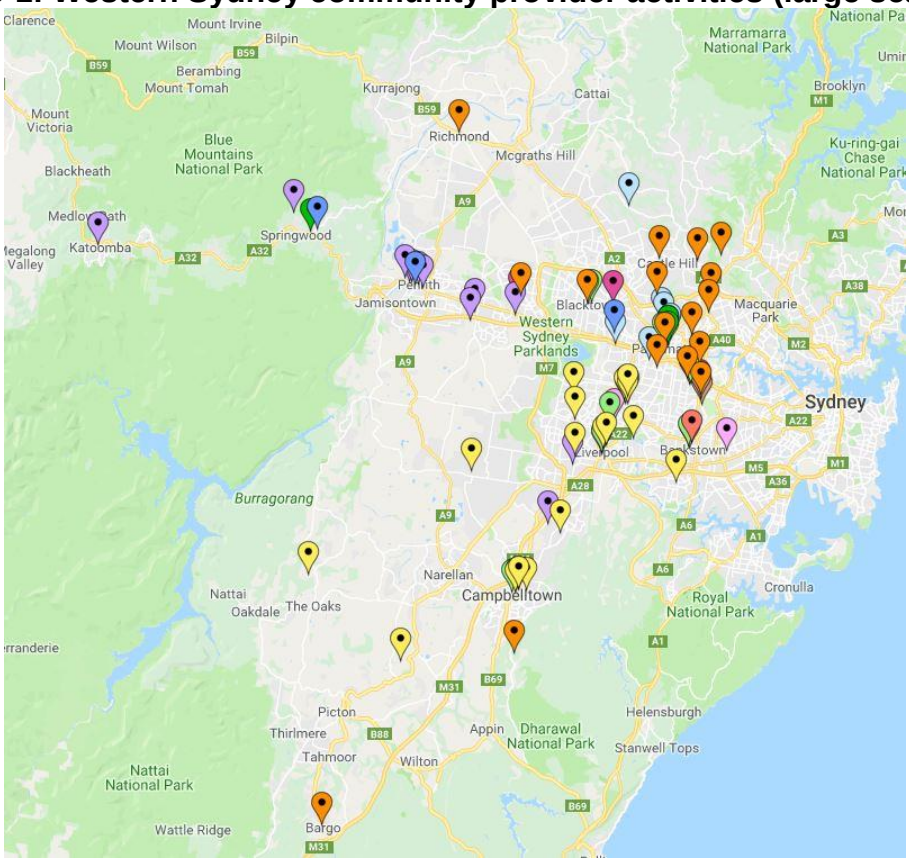
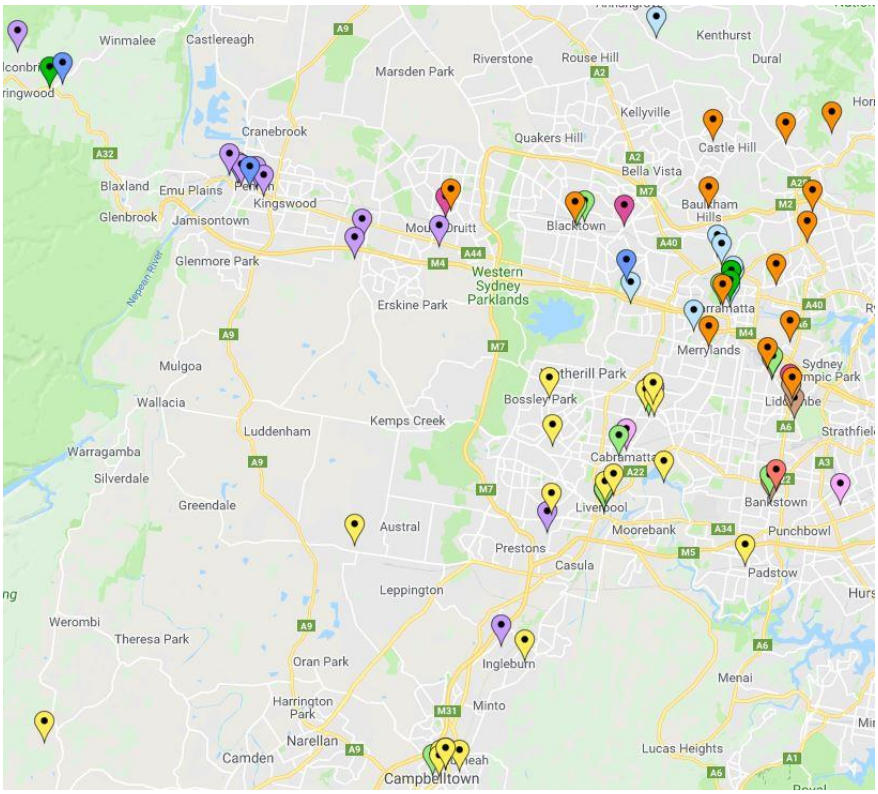


Figure 4.5-2: Western Sydney community provider activities (close scale)



4.5.2 Student Demographics of Western Sydney Community Education Providers

While it is not possible to obtain breakdowns of the Western Sydney VET populations by student, CCA has obtained breakdowns by VET subject enrolment comparing provider type: community education, TAFE and private for-profit. The following data has been supplied to CCA by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER): these are total VET subject enrolments for the calendar year 2017.[87]

4.5.2.1 VET Student Enrolments

The breakdown of total VET enrolments (Table 1) shows that community providers had 5.9% (98,765 of 1,677,056) of enrolments in 2017. This is more than the community education provider "share" of government-funded VET (4.4%) but less than the NSW community education provider "share" of total VET activity (11%) in the state.[88]

Table 1: Western Sydney Total VET Subject Enrolments 2017

Provider Type	Total VET Subject Enrolments 2017	% of total subject enrolments 2017
TAFE	471,654	28.1
University	1,552	0.1
School	124,946	7.5
Community education provider	98,765	5.9
Enterprise provider	36,038	2.1
Private training provider	944,101	56.3
Grand Total	**1,677,056**	**100**

The majority of Western Sydney community provider enrolments (59.4%) were government-funded, with the rest as fee-for-service activities (Table 2, below). This compares to TAFE with a great majority of government-funded student enrolments (87.7%) and private for-profit providers with 59.2% of fee-for-service. There is relatively little international fee-for-service in the region, only a modest number of private RTOs.

Table 2: Western Sydney VET Subject Enrolments 2017 by Funding Source

Funding Source	Community (%)	TAFE (%)	Private (%)
Government- funded	59.4	87.7	35.3
Fee-for-service domestic	40.5	10.3	59.2
Fee-for-service international	0.1	2.0	5.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0

[87] This data is extracted from the NCVER *National VET Provider Collection 2017* and *National VET in Schools Collection 2017*, available at https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collection/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-students-and-courses. CCA has removed "unknown" responses from the data. These subject enrolments are from students residing in the following local government areas: Penrith, Blacktown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Liverpool, The Hills, Hawkesbury, Parramatta, Wollondilly, Campbelltown, Blue Mountains and Canterbury-Bankstown.

[88] For more details, go to https://cca.edu.au/what-we-do/nsw-election-platform/.

4.5.2.2 Western Sydney 2017 Student Characteristics by Enrolments

The age breakdowns (Table 3 below) shows a very distinct pattern: community providers enrol a very high percentage of older people (45 and older), with TAFE proportionately enrolling many more young people (24 years old and young), compared to private for-profit providers, whose demographics are quite evenly spread. This indicates a unique ability of community providers to reach, engage and enrol older workers and learners – who are particularly vulnerable in a time of rapid workforce changes.

Table 3: Western Sydney VET Subject Enrolments 2017 by Student Age

Age	Community (%)	TAFE (%)	Private (%)
<24	16.3	49.2	24.0
25-34	16.3	20.8	31.9
35-44	20.9	14.6	21.5
45+	46.5	15.4	22.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0

With respect to disability, Indigenous and language status (Table 4, below), Western Sydney community providers have many more learners with a disability – 15.6% compared to TAFE's 9.8% and private providers with only 3.1%, as well as more learners from non-English speaking backgrounds: 55.8%. Western Sydney community providers lag, however, in engaging Indigenous students, with only 1.2%.

Table 4: Western Sydney VET Subject Enrolments 2017 by Student Status

Provider Type	Disability Status %	Indigenous Status %	Non-English Speaking Background %
Community	15.6	1.2	55.8
TAFE	9.8	5.6	35.8
Private	3.1	1.5	49.8

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has developed "Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas" (SEIFA), which ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage.[89] NCVER data supplied to CCA separates the 2017 VET student enrolments into 5 "quintiles", each quintile representing 20% of the total population; see Table 5 below.

Western Sydney student enrolments in 2017 show that all of provider types, community education providers out-perform both TAFE and private for-profit providers with respect to engagement and delivery to communities classified in the lowest quintile on the SEIFA index, with 42.5% of enrolments. When considering the lowest (bottom) two quintiles, TAFE leads (with 63.5%, including 39.9% in the bottom quintile), closely followed by community providers (61.4%, which includes 18.9% in the second-to-bottom quintile), and then private (60.8%, which also includes 39.9% in the bottom quintile).

Given that this data includes fee-for-service students (approximately 40% of Western community student enrolments), this somewhat raises the "economic advantage" of community students. By comparison, the NSW state-wide government-funded VET numbers in the bottom two SEIFA quintiles were 65.6% in 2017 (and 69.1% in 2016), compared to 55.2% of TAFE and 56.2% of private for-profits in 2017.[90]

[89] See http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/seifa.

[90] See https://cca.edu.au/new-south-wales-community-education-providers-continue-to-over-perform-in-reaching-vulnerable-and-disadvantaged-learners/.

Table 5: Western Sydney VET Subject Enrolments 2017 by Student SEIFA Quintile

SEIFA Quintile	Community (%)	TAFE (%)	Private (%)
Bottom quintile: most disadvantaged 0-20%	42.5	39.9	39.9
Second from bottom quintile: 20-40%	18.9	23.6	20.9
Third (middle) quintile: 40-60% advantage	10.5	11.5	12.5
Fourth quintile: 60-80% advantage	15.6	16.2	13.9
Top quintile: most advantaged; 80-100%	12.5	8.8	12.7
Total	100.0	100.0	(*) 99.9

(*) Total does not add to 100% due to rounding

4.5.2.3 Western Sydney Student Characteristics: Summary and Conclusions

The demographic figures in the tables in this section (above) show clear patterns for Western Sydney community providers, most of which reflect the state-wide activities of the community sector. In short, on a percentage basis compared to other provider types, Western Sydney regional community education providers:

1. over-perform with respect to engaging students who have a disability, are from non-English speaking backgrounds and/or are older (aged 45-plus years);
2. perform at approximately the same level with respect to socio-economic status (SEIFA); and
3. perform at a lower level with respect to Indigenous students, especially in comparison to TAFE.

There is a clear opportunity for the New South Wales and Commonwealth Governments to support Western Sydney community education providers to leverage their expertise with students who are older, who have a disability, who are from non-English speaking backgrounds and who are from lower socio-economic backgrounds. These are all high priority and hard to reach groups for engagement in post-secondary education and training.

There is also a major opportunity to expand the training services of Western Sydney community providers for the large and growing Indigenous communities in the local government areas of Blacktown (9,526 people or 2.7% of residents in the 2016 Census), Penrith (7,741; 3.9% of residents), Campbelltown (5,791; 3.8% of residents) and Liverpool (3,012; 1.5% of residents), as community education providers have a demonstrated capacity to work with vulnerable and disadvantaged learners but have not yet fully engaged with Indigenous communities.[91]

[91] Source: *Census – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population*, 2016, published 27 June 2017, http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/MediaRealesesByCatalogue/02D50FAA9987D6B7CA25814800087E03.

It is recommended that:

- *The NSW Department of Industry collaborate with CCA to develop a strategy to build on the capabilities of Western Sydney community providers with respect to reaching the most vulnerable and disadvantaged community members needing training*.[92]

4.6 Economic Impact of Community Education Provider Training

As part of this project, CCA surveyed every community education provider in Western Sydney. The overwhelming contribution that community providers make to regional economic development is through their VET and related activities, providing education and training to individuals, local industries, businesses, other not-for-profit organisations and their clients, local councils, state government departments and local communities. Appendix B the activities and training capacity of the region's 13 not-for-profit community education training providers, especially relevant for small businesses and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and groups. This skilling of the regional workforce helps to create the fabric of more resilient, engaged workers and potential workers, increasing local and regional capacity for economic growth.

CCA has not attempted to quantify the total economic contribution of Western Sydney community VET activities, as it is beyond the scope of this investigation. Nevertheless, NCVER research notes that:

> There are numerous ways to measure the costs and benefits of training, resulting in varied estimates of the return on investment…. Evidence suggest[s] that VET does deliver a substantial return on investment…. attributed to VET generating an increase in employability and, to some degree, increasing the productivity of workers.[93]

Working with individuals – and their communities – is the most positive and obvious impact that community providers make to regional economic development. Thus any programs, policies or new institutional arrangements that enable community providers to deliver more services to more groups will have a positive economic benefit, one that can often be felt quickly. International literature supports this conclusion:

> VET is regarded as a particularly suitable means of promoting economic growth. The purpose of VET is to provide individuals with skills that are more or less directly applicable in the workplace and it is argued that these are likely to have direct and immediate effects on productivity and consequently upon economic growth.[94]

In addition to training and direct economic contributions to their communities, community education organisations are well-known for their ability to create "social capital", defined by the OECD as "networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups."[95]

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[92] See Section 5.3 of this report below regarding expanding outreach in areas where TAFE has withdrawn.
[93] See NCVER, https://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/publications/all-publications/costs-and-benefits-of-education-and-training-for-the-economy,-business-and-individuals, 27 July 2016.
[94] Anders Nilsson, "Vocational education and training – an engine for economic growth and a vehicle for social inclusion?", *International Journal of Training and Development*, 14: 251–272, 21 November 2010, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2419.2010.00357.x/full.
[95] See "What is social capital?", OECD, https://www.oecd.org/insights/37966934.pdf.

The adult and community education sector (often referred to as the "ACE" sector) is a significant builder of social capital, particularly in outer metropolitan and regional locations where local educational institutions are part of the "glue" that holds communities together.[96] Research conducted by the Centre for Rural and Regional Innovation at the University of Queensland notes that VET mobilises "social capital, as well as human, environmental, cultural and built (that is, physical) capital …. These various types of capital are core requirements for sustainable regional development."[97]

[96] See Adult Learning Australia, "Adult Learning and Civic Participation", https://ala.asn.au/civic-participation/.
[97] See http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/749/1/Building_learning_communities.pdf, p. 4.

5. NSW Government Policies and Programs

5.1 NSW Department of Industry ACE Programs

5.1.1 Community Service Obligation Funding

Each year, the NSW Government provides funds for the delivery of what is called the "ACE (Adult and Community Education) Community Service Obligation" (CSO) program, with approximately $21.6 million allocated in 2018/19.[98]

TAFE NSW also receives an unknown amount of CSO funding from the NSW Government that provides for:

> flexible and efficient support services, resources and equipment to support students with special needs. This includes innovative learning support methods to ensure that students with a disability can access training both inside and outside traditional classrooms, and in simulated workplaces. It is also to be used to improve community programs that support disadvantaged or disengaged groups into vocational education and training pathways.[99]

The CSO program is part of the NSW Government's Smart and Skilled VET funding, particularly oriented for students from "key equity groups" who need additional support to access training. ACE CSO funding is "provided for training and support that cannot be effectively addressed through Smart and Skilled entitlements", particularly for "disadvantaged learners, regional and remote communities and hard to service communities."[100]

CSO is the primary NSW Government funding program for the state's adult and community education providers. CCA and the NSW CSO provider recipients acknowledge the importance of this funding, which has produced outstanding outcomes for NSW, servicing many of the most disadvantaged residents. As this report outlined above, 65.6% of government-funded 2017 VET community education students in New South Wales fell into the bottom two (most disadvantaged) quintiles.[101]

The ACE CSO program is an excellent initiative. In fact, CCA's analysis of government-funded VET student cohorts shows that the ACE CSO program is largely responsible for NSW community education providers achieving the best outcomes in reaching target "equity" groups of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners of any VET sector (public, community, private for-profit) in any state or territory.[102] Given the superb track record of community providers, CCA strongly believes that a substantial increase in CSO funds in 2019/20 and

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[98] Source: Speech to the CCA Conference by the Hon Bronnie Taylor, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary to the NSW Deputy Premier, 14 November 2018; available at https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Speech-by-the-Hon-Bronnie-Taylor-MLC-to-CCA-Conference.pdf. The funding program commenced in early 2015.

[99] See https://www.tafensw.edu.au/documents/60140/76288/a-vision-for-tafe-nsw.pdf/02ced5e5-7274-cdd2-9816-defef61ffc28, p. 9.

[100] See https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/ace/ace_cso_program.html. The majority of community providers also receive Smart and Skilled program funding, in smaller – and widely varying – amounts.

[101] See https://cca.edu.au/new-south-wales-community-education-providers-continue-to-over-perform-in-reaching-vulnerable-and-disadvantaged-learners/.

[102] See CCA's summary national analysis at https://cca.edu.au/what-we-do/federal-election-platform/.

subsequent years is warranted. This is particularly so in Western Sydney, with deep pockets of disadvantage and substantial population growth.

The CSO funding is particularly suited to community education providers who can leverage their community linkages and depth of experience in engaging learners that face disadvantage or barriers to participation in education and training. They are adept at identifying needs, tailoring and designing specific programs that include both accredited and non-accredited units.

It is recommended that the NSW Government:

- *Increase NSW ACE CSO funding by 50% to $33 million/year, as a highly effective investment in the state's future.*
- *Index CSO funding annual at a minimum to inflation.*
- *Take population growth into account when determining CSO allocations.*
- *Quarantine of CSO funding solely for not-for-profit community education providers.*
- *Extend contract timelines for CSO from one year to a minimum of three years to provide certainty, flexibility and greater innovation in delivery.*

5.1.2 Tech Savvy for Small Business Program

In June 2017, the NSW Department of Industry also announced a new "Tech Savvy for Small Business" (TSSB) program, with funding of $1.8 million to NSW community education providers. This program was set up to "deliver targeted short workshops based on understanding and implementing current technology requirements for small business". Eligible recipients of the workshops are small businesses that have 20 employees or less, or an annual turnover of less than $2,000,000.

CCA members reported different approaches to how they utilised the program funds, including:

- Working with local Business Chambers
- MS Office, Excel, Word, Xero and MYOB workshops
- Social media and online marketing workshops
- Financial literacy workshops
- Customer service interaction workshops
- Small business finance training for farmers and graziers
- Drawing from units of competency in the Certificate III in Small Business

The Tech Savvy for Small Business was an outstanding program with enormous potential for expansion and to make a real difference for hundreds of small businesses in Western Sydney, particularly as it drew on the strengths of NSW community education providers – their ability to work locally, with small businesses and to adapt to local needs and situations. Because the program was announced relatively late (June 2017), there was little opportunity to plan for it, and the result has been that a number of organisations did not start to deliver the program until early 2018. Some CCA members attempted to connect this program regional economic development strategies.

In March 2018, CCA provided a submission to the NSW Government on the Tech Savvy for Small Business program.[103] The NSW Government did not continue this program in 2018/19, but instead incorporated the funding into the CSO program.

That CCA submission concluded the following:

1. There is both appetite from providers and scope for the continuation of this program under the CSO ACE program in 2018/19 and subsequent funding years. Providers report good outcomes across the state.
2. The limited notice, size, and nature of the TSSB program affected the level of time and investment by most providers in innovative training and delivery models.
3. Both the content and target groups of the program provided challenges for many providers given the new content for some providers and/or new target audiences.
4. Both provider size and vision appear to have a marked impact on organisational capacity. The program provided an opportunity for the organisations to refine their practice and engage with emerging markets and new clients. Many are entering new markets and can see enormous opportunity in engaging in new ways, although some do not.
5. The level of skill, innovation and practice varies enormously across the sector. So does the ability of the organisations and trainers to deliver and assess with imagination in emerging relevant fields of practice. There is scope to assist the sector in this area.
6. There is a significant benefit to be gained from lifting ACE RTO exposure to good practice in innovative approaches and delivery. There is sector expertise that can assist with this.
7. CCA's preliminary investigation illustrated that the TSSB program delivered small business skilling outcomes at basic (foundation) and sometimes higher levels, demonstrated by data submitted to the Department and anecdotally by providers.
8. Some innovative and novel programs were delivered, however this effort was not being formally captured.
9. Evaluation metrics for the program were not implemented mentioned by the Department of Industry. It would be in both the Department's and the ACE sector's best interests to provide data on take-up and benefit.
10. There is an opportunity for the NSW ACE sector to use this program to shift thinking and reconceptualise how they operate in parts of the market, specifically with small businesses.
11. Research and feedback indicate that the TSSB program provides a good return on investment to the NSW Government.
12. TSSB program outcomes would have been enhanced had the NSW Department of Industry provided:
    - additional notice of the program's commencement;
    - better guidance on program implementation, as providers are not a 'one size fits all' and require varying levels of information and support;
    - engagement with CCA to facilitate this process;
    - co-creation opportunities for providers to discuss and leverage ideas prior to and early in the program roll-out;
    - clarification of where the program fits or relates to other non -VET small business programs;
    - KPIs or incentives for innovative outputs/outcomes;

[103] See https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Tech-Savvy-for-Small-Business-28March2018-final.pdf.

- support for upskilling of staff and delivery models to foster 21st century skills, enabling development of approaches that provide leading and cutting-edge skill development; and
- an idea of the longevity/position of program to allow future planning. A three-year commitment, for example, would have allowed robust program settings and timeframes for analysis.

The CCA review concluded that the TSSB program delivered good and often exceptional outcomes for the small business target group it was designed to assist. The program of this nature has great potential to build and deliver further innovative skilling solutions with the addition of targeted assistance and guidance.

CCA recommends that the NSW Department of Industry:

- *Investigate the re-institution of a new multi-year funding program to support the development and delivery of Tech Savvy for Small Business programs by NSW community education providers in 2019/20 and future years.*

5.1.3 Meeting Governance and Professional Development Needs

For Western Sydney community education providers to support regional economic development goals, they must be sustainable organisations, with well-trained staff and strong governance structures. The NSW Department of Industry requires that all Smart and Skilled training providers "must develop and implement a CPD policy that reflects the needs of their business but also includes, as a minimum, key staff and management (including trainers, assessors, administration officer and managers)".[104]

Investment in the capacity of the not-for-profit sector "has been miniscule as a percentage of total sector turnover. Of particular concern is the failure to provide adequate professional development opportunities," writes David Crosbie, CEO of Community Council for Australia.[105] The Centre for Social Impact points out that lack of money and time are the key barriers for accessing professional development by Australian not-for-profits (NFP) – consistent with CCA's findings of its members:

> Insufficient financial and structural support prevent the Australian NFP sector and its people from engaging with more professional development. Smaller NFP organisations appear particularly prone to financial challenges, while larger NFPs are challenged by the time and support required to offer training. Thirty-three per cent of NFP executives have no access to a designated training budget.[106]

The Australian Government's Productivity Commission also concluded:

> NFPs in the community services sector appear to experience the greatest challenges in attracting and retaining employees and volunteers. Addressing these challenges is

[104] NSW Department of Industry, *Smart and Skilled Teaching and Leadership Policy*, July 2016, p. 3, https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms_documents/smartandskilled/contract/teaching_leadership.pdf.
[105] See "Investing in People Who Make a Difference", by David Crosbie, Pro Bono Australia, 31 January 2019, https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2019/01/investing-people-make-difference/.
[106] *Learning for Purpose: Researching the Social Return on Education and Training in the Australian Not-for-Profit Sector*, by Ramon Wenzel, Centre for Social impact, University of Western Australia, 2015; available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1--xR9XdxCEZ0lRaGZ1S1BHT2c/view.

> vital to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of these NFPs, especially those delivering government funded community services.[107]

The NSW Department of Industry has supported the governance and professional development needs of NSW community education providers to build both the quality and capacity of the providers. This funding, primarily through the "ACE Teaching and Leadership" funding program, has been valuable in that it empowers the sector to deliver NSW Government training and skills programs in the best possible manner. This funding is particularly important for Western Sydney providers and their staff, which have reduced access to both formal and informal professional development opportunities, due to the travel distances to the Sydney CBD.[108]

The value of the Department's ACE Teaching and Leadership funding program has also been exhibited through the work that CCA has undertaken on corporate governance and CEO mentoring.[109] Governance is an important and ongoing focus of the community education sector, and across not-for-profit organisations generally.[110] While capability across the sector has improved markedly, performance by the voluntary not-for-profit boards of directors is still uneven and inconsistent. CCA has determined that proper governance – and associated management expertise – is second only to funding in relation to the success and sustainability of NSW community colleges.

Despite the funding from the NSW Department of Industry, CCA is aware that a majority of professional development needs of its NSW member staff – totalling some thousands of people – remain only partially met or un-met.

In most years, the Department called for proposals and expressions of interest for the Teaching and Leadership program in May for the financial year commencing 1 July (although frequently the contracts were not finalised until late July). The 2017/18 call for proposals did not occur until October 2017, with funding allocated in late November. These contract delays have made it very difficult for CCA and the rest of the NSW community education sector to plan, develop and deliver professional development programs efficiently and coherently.

The Victorian Government established the VET Development Centre (VDC) in 2005 to:

> promote the development and raise the professional standing of people working in the vocational education and training (VET) sector. VDC delivers and facilitates Victorian Government-funded continuing professional learning and evaluation activities to the Victorian VET workforce. The VDC specialises in providing fee for

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[107] Australian Government Productivity Commission, *Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector*, January 2010, p. 249, https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/not-for-profit/report/not-for-profit-report.pdf.

[108] See Kilpatrick and Bell, https://www.ncver.edu.au/__data/assets/file/0014/3209/200.pdf.

[109] The Department's funding has enabled CCA to develop the following current (January 2019+) programs:

- Additional 6 programs to the current 8 of the audio podcast series on corporate governance https://cca.edu.au/resources/#governance
- Coaching and mentoring program for CEOs: https://cca.edu.au/member-services/professional-development/ceo-mentoring-and-coaching-program-2019/
- CEO-Chair workshop: https://cca.edu.au/member-services/professional-development/ceo-chair-workshop/
- VET Manager Professional Development: https://cca.edu.au/member-services/professional-development/vet-pd-2019/

[110] Australian Institute of Company Directors, *2017 NFP Governance and Performance Study*.

service continuing professional learning webinars, workshops, and seminars well as customised consultancy to the Australian VET sector.[111]

As a public company limited by guarantee – with the Victorian Minister for Training and Skills as its sole member – the VDC plays a unique role in Australian VET professional development. In 2017, the VDC received $3.6 million funding from the Victorian Government, and had up to 20,000 participants in its activities.[112]

Although the Industry Programs Directorate of the NSW Department of Education and Training (then responsible for VET in NSW) ran state-wide professional development VET programs for many years, this was eliminated in 2014. CCA believes as an important means of ensuring VET quality in the state, the NSW Government should examine the re-creation of this function on a state-wide basis, through a VDC or other possible model. The current approach, of leaving VET professional development to the "market", is not working. The further you travel from the Sydney CBD – such as Western Sydney, the Central Coast and regional and rural NSW – the more difficult accessing proper professional development becomes.

Community Colleges Australia will continue to encourage member organisations to commit their respective Boards of Directors to place corporate governance – including board skills development – as a high priority, in order to increase their capacity to deliver services and take on new and expanded community development roles in economic development.

It is recommended that the NSW Department of Industry:

- *Expand the funding of the ACE Teaching and Leadership program to a minimum of $450,000 per year, commit to funding cycles of more than one financial year at a time, and implement a program timetable that enables proper and efficient planning.*
- *Provide financial support for CCA to partner with a suitable professional development organisation such as the Australian Institute of Company Directors to develop pro-bono or subsidised training opportunities for the directors and senior executive staff of community education providers.*
- *Examine future models for professional development of the NSW VET sector, such as the Victorian VET Development Centre, with special consideration of the needs of VET providers in Western Sydney as well as regional and rural New South Wales.*

5.2 Community Education Provider Infrastructure Funding

CCA has highlighted the importance of maintaining, preserving and protecting the physical facilities of adult and community education (ACE) providers. A submission in May 2018 to the NSW Government requested a base amount of $100,000 annually to assist each NSW ACE provider in delivering high value education and training to priority communities and residents.[113] This is especially important to Western Sydney providers, many of which operate from very old buildings with extensive maintenance needs – and frequently high rents.

[111] See https://vdc.edu.au/about-us/.
[112] Source: VET Development Centre (VDC) *2017 Annual Report*, https://vdc.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/S5460-VDC-2017-Annual-Report_LR_10.pdf.
[113] See https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CCA-Submission-Maintenance-costs-of-NSW-Community-Education-Providers-21May2018.pdf/

A CCA NSW member survey determined that members spend an average of $277,000 each year on physical premises and assets maintenance, with none spending less than $100,000. The CCA submission shows how such funding would be consistent with the NSW 2021 Plan and the 2018-2038 State Infrastructure Strategy.[114] CCA notes that the NSW Government has directly funded TAFE NSW for "Operational Base Funding" (OBF), defined as, "the costs incurred as a result of the competitive disadvantages arising from public ownership."[115]

CCA received notification in December 2018 from the NSW Deputy Premier of a positive response to this funding request, for $2.3 million in the 2019/20 financial year, with future years subject to review.[116] CCA is pleased that this has taken place and will work with its members to ensure funds are taken up and properly utilised.

It is recommended that NSW Government:

- *Implement the promised 2019/20 community education infrastructure funding program as soon as possible in order to provide certainty to NSW providers;*
- *Establishes an annual infrastructure funding program similar to the Operational Base funding of TAFE NSW to ensure that community education premises remain safe and attractive as community infrastructure assets; and*
- *Establishes a process by which community education providers can apply on an annual basis for substantive grants to support capital works, in addition to maintenance and operations.*

5.3 TAFE NSW

As the largest VET provider in Australia, TAFE NSW has a great capacity – and excellent facilities – that assist the state's economic development. In much of Western Sydney, TAFE NSW has valuable facilities – frequently under-utilised – that could assist NSW community education providers. In addition to general classroom spaces, specific facilities include commercial training kitchens, creative and performing arts spaces, and automotive and other trade workshops. NSW community providers consistently find difficulty in accessing TAFE NSW facilities, and at a reasonable cost.

During the course of this project, CCA received a number of reports that TAFE NSW had deleted its outreach program. TAFE Outreach had developed a highly effective, community-embedded and evidence-based approach to working with marginalised, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups across NSW, particularly in Western Sydney. "This has meant reducing numbers of educational specialist staff for long term unemployed, culturally and linguistically diverse students and those with disabilities"[117]

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[114] See https://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/file_manager/NSW2021_WEBVERSION.pdf and https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms_documents/vet/directions_statement/directions_statement_vet.pdf.
[115] See https://www.tafensw.edu.au/documents/60140/76288/soe.pdf.
[116] See https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Deputy-Premier-infrastructure-letter-to-CCA-26Nov2018.pdf and https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Deputy-Premier-Barilaro-letter-March2019-2-online.pdf.
[117] Linda Simon, "VET needs support to rebuild its role in getting disadvantaged groups into education and work", *The Conversation*, 8 October 2018, https://theconversation.com/vet-needs-support-to-rebuild-its-role-in-getting-disadvantaged-groups-into-education-and-work-101390; and Youth Action with Uniting and Mission Australia, *Vocational Education and Training in NSW: Report into access and outcomes for young people experiencing disadvantage*, February 2018, available at

A large number of potential learners – especially those from Indigenous, disengaged young people, non-English speaking or lower socio-economic status backgrounds – do not have the personal networks, confidence, literacy or language skills to seek out training opportunities, even those that are substantially or fully funded by government. According to Linda Simon:

> Outreach learners are unique. Their hope for success lies in the fact that they have a pathway to prove to themselves they can return to a learning environment, meet commitments on a regular basis, engage with peers and staff, and enjoy renewed confidence…. Where have they come from? Gaol, fleeing domestic violence, managing homelessness, drug and alcohol issues, perhaps they are one of the 4th generation unemployed, or recipients of mental health services…. Many have been successful professionals, simply finding personal issues unbearable.
>
> Why keep Outreach for them? It brings them back from the brink of whatever situation has brought them … for them it represents the provision of a setting that is empathetic, non-threatening, supportive, secure and free from academic pressures that urge them to perform beyond their capacity and capability at a particular time in their lives. They can now be described as part of enrichening the social capital of this region.[118]

The Australian Government's Department of Social Services has identified that "Indigenous people are "overwhelmingly considered the most hard-to-reach [and} … the most challenging to engage, because of their experiences of multiple disadvantage and cultural differences." Other hard to reach groups include: families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including new refugees, those with low incomes or living in poverty, young parents, people with disabilities, grandparents, fathers, families with child protection issues and isolated families.[119]

The report also notes:

> Culturally and linguistically diverse groups who were new in some areas were also seen as very isolated and hard-to-reach. Literacy was a further factor identified as making some families hard-to-reach, as this meant conventional means of recruiting participants, such as using flyers, did not work well by themselves.[120]

The demographic data of Western Sydney community education students (provided earlier in Section 4.5 report) show that the region's community providers over-perform with respect

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https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/youthaction/pages/1462/attachments/original/1519002239/VET_Report_2018.pdf?1519002239.

[118] Linda Simon, "VET needs support to rebuild its role in getting disadvantaged groups into education and work", The Conversation, 8 October 2018, https://theconversation.com/vet-needs-support-to-rebuild-its-role-in-getting-disadvantaged-groups-into-education-and-work-101390.

[119] *Engaging hard-to-reach families and children*, "Section 4: Who is hard-to-reach?", by Natasha Cortis, Ilan Katz and Roger Patulny, Australian Government Department of Social Services, 1 June 2009, https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/publications-articles/number-26-engaging-hard-to-reach-families-and-children?HTML#sec4.

[120] *Engaging hard-to-reach families and children*, "Section 6: Challenges of engaging hard-to-reach groups", Australian Government Department of Social Services, 1 June 2009, https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/publications-articles/number-26-engaging-hard-to-reach-families-and-children?HTML#sec6.

to reaching older workers, people with a disability and people from non-English speaking background, and more than “hold their own” with respect to people from lower socio-economic groups.

A number of Western Sydney community providers have worked with TAFE at various times. For instance, while TAFE outreach provided courses in vocational subjects – including hairdressing, carpentry and landscaping – CCA members have provided other wrap around services. Western Sydney community education providers are in a unique position to pick up many of these services previously supplied by TAFE NSW, given proper funding and support.

It is recommended that TAFE NSW:

- *Work closely with CCA to establish a state-wide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TAFE that will enable community providers to work collaboratively with TAFE staff and deliver programs using TAFE facilities as part of a coordinated Community Service Obligation initiative, maximising opportunities for vulnerable and marginalised groups across NSW.*

It is recommended that the NSW Department of Industry:

- *Extend the current review of Adult and Community Education (ACE) Community Service Obligation (CSO) to include how TAFE NSW spends its CSO funds, with particular attention to the VET participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged Western Sydney residents; and*
- *Fund a pilot program to take place in at least two local government areas of Western Sydney whereby Western Sydney community education providers are encouraged to trial innovative outreach approaches to engaging vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in VET.*

6. Australian Government Policies and Programs

6.1 The Skilling Australians Fund

In May 2017, the Commonwealth Government announced that the new Skilling Australians Fund would supersede the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform, in part to deliver an extra 300,000 apprentices over the next 4 years. Priority industries include tourism, hospitality, health and ageing, engineering, manufacturing, building and construction, agriculture, and digital technologies, with a focus on careers in sectors of future growth. The program is to meet the skills needs in regional Australia, as well as expand the apprenticeships model of training.[121] "Employers that sponsor migrants under the new temporary skill shortage visa and certain permanent skilled visas will be required to pay a levy which will provide revenue to the Fund."[122]

The introduction of any new VET funding program is welcome. Concern about this funding arises from:

- The apparent major focus on apprenticeships and trainees, which constituted only 336,500 people (out of 4.2 million VET students[123]) in 2016, and only a small proportion of what community education providers deliver in training; and
- The reliance on employer levies relating to overseas migration, which could easily mean a funding short-fall – something which appears to have happened already.[124]

6.2 National Policy on the Role of Community Education Providers

The absence of an Australian national policy on community education particularly affects Western Sydney community providers. The adult and community sector (known as "ACE") last had a "Ministerial Statement" issued in December 2008 by the Ministerial Council for Vocation and Technical Education.[125] *That statement confirmed the "value of ACE in developing social capital, building community capacity, encouraging social participation and enhancing social cohesion."* The statement also described how the sector can respond to industrial, demographic and technological changes in Australia, including important contributions to skills and workforce development – and thus to productivity.

There is very little in the 2008 Ministerial Statement that does not apply today. But the world of post-school education has changed rapidly in the past ten years, the post-GFC period. Australia needs a national policy statement that articulates the new realities of VET, given our rapidly changing economy, systematic underfunding of the VET sector, substantial damage to the VET "brand" by the VET FEE-HELP scandals, rapid expansion of international higher education and VET, and the exponential increase in the number and reach of private for-profit VET providers. This statement must include the capability of

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[121] See https://ministers.education.gov.au/andrews/skilling-australia-fund and https://docs.education.gov.au/node/43741.

[122] See http://budget.gov.au/2017-18/content/glossies/jobs-growth/html/jobs-growth-08.htm.

[123] See NCVER, *Total VET Students and Courses 2016*, https://www.ncver.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/796211/Total-VET-students-and-courses-2016.pdf

[124] See John Ross, "Migration slump jeopardises funding for VET sector," *The Australian*, 24 January 2018, https://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/migration-slump-jeopardises-funding-for-vet-sector/news-story/e89b544161ee602548d8a107726199a6?csp=9de91f86c8e01db61efd5ab01d4baa53.

[125] See http://cca.edu.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ministerial_Declaration_on_Adult_Community_Education_2008.pdf.

community providers to undertake a set of unique services as well as complement the activities TAFE, the sector's role in educating young people, and providing services to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and other programs.

A national policy on community education is required to underpin the important role that community VET providers can play in their communities, an essential element to ensuring their participation in regional economic development activities.

Community Colleges Australia recommends that the Australian Government Department of Education and Training:

- *Ensure the Skilling Australians Fund is developed and operated in such a way that does not exclude not-for-profit community education providers from participation in funding, particularly those operating in outer metropolitan locations.*

- *Take the lead in developing, in conjunction with the states and territories, a national policy statement on the role of community education providers in Australian education and training, updating the 2008 Ministerial Agreement.*

CCA recommends that the NSW Government:

- *Support national efforts to develop an updated policy statement on the role of community education providers in Australian education and training, updating the 2008 Ministerial Agreement.*

Although none of these actions are specific to Western Sydney, all of them will assist Western Sydney community education providers to increase their capacity and capabilities in meeting the region's social and economic needs.

7. New Opportunities for Economic Development

Community education organisations have developed new and often innovative approaches to economic development. These include finding new ways to engage older workers, working with Indigenous communities, extending business incubators, and developing and encouraging social enterprises. Philanthropic funding is an as-yet not fully realised useful source of pilot funding. CCA also sees a real opportunity to extend these approaches to Western Sydney.

Ideas identified during the course of this project include developing stronger links with Western Sydney University, developing "blended learning" solutions that utilise online learning components, employment hub collaborations with local councils and establishing new sites for RTO activities. Other specific opportunities are detailed below.

7.1 NSW Central Coast

The NSW Central Coast incorporates the local government area of Central Coast Council, an amalgamation of the former Gosford and Wyong Councils, with a total area of 1,854 square kilometres and 333,000 people (ABS, 2016). The Central Coast annual growth rate of approximately 2,300 people (approximately 0.7%) has slowed from a high of 1.9% growth in 2008. Given the aging of the population across the Central Coast, and the popularity of the region for retirement living, it is anticipated that the health, aged care and social assistance sectors will have significant growth in coming years.[126]

There are three TAFE NSW campuses on the Central Coast, located at Gosford, Wyong and Ourimbah – the latter co-located on the same campus as Central Coast Community College and University of Newcastle campus.[127]

There are currently four not-for-profit community education providers active in economic development programs in the Central Coast: Central Coast Community College, Tuggerah Lakes Community College – also known as TLK Community College, VERTO and ET Australia. Combined, these 4 providers operate from some 60 locations in the Central Coast area.[128]

In the June 2018 quarter, the unemployment rate in the Central Coast Council area was 6.01%, substantially more than Greater Sydney (4.47%), New South Wales (4.9%) or Australia (5.4%).[129] The Central Coast faces many of the problems of Western Sydney: much higher unemployment and under-employment, especially among vulnerable groups such as young people and older workers; issues surrounding infrastructure catching up with rapid population growth; a substantial daily "outflow" of resident workers to other locations, primarily metropolitan Sydney and Newcastle; major distances and public transport challenges – especially away from the single railway line; relatively few post-secondary

[126] Source: Regional Development Australia, Central Coast Business Plan, https://rdacc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/rda_central_coast_interim_business_plan_2018_final.pdf.
[127] See https://www.tafensw.edu.au/locations/hunter-central-coast and https://www.newcastle.edu.au/about-uon/our-environments/our-campuses-and-locations/central-coast/about.
[128] See https://www.tlkcc.com.au/locations, https://cccc.nsw.edu.au/sites and https://etaustralia.com/training-college/.
[129] Source: https://economy.id.com.au/central-coast-nsw/unemployment.

education opportunities; and significant socio-economic disadvantage, especially in the northern parts of the region.

Like in the rest of the state, the Central Coast region's community education providers over-perform in reaching key "equity" disadvantaged groups. They also liaise with Regional Development Australia, but have not been given sufficient support or assistance to engage with priority economic development projects. The major training expertise of the community providers lies in working with small businesses, and delivering courses in aged care, early childhood, beauty, hospitality, business, management and information technology. VERTO offers apprenticeship services. Central Coast and TLK Community Colleges have developed and implemented sophisticated regional programs to reduce digital literacy, especially for seniors through Tech Savvy for Seniors.[130]

TLK Community College (years 9 to 12) and ET Australia (years 7 to 10) run secondary schools, both of which cater – in different ways – for young people who often do not "fit in" with government or larger school institutions.[131] Both schools prioritise the development of job and employability skills, aiming to make their graduates as ready as possible for the workforce.

ET Australia runs a significant recruitment business, and has created a youth employment and job creation initiative directly with nine of the Central Coast's largest employers, called the Local Employer Council (LEC). Within the LEC, employers work directly with ET Australia and community partners to facilitate linkages between young people and real job opportunities to address unemployment directly.[132]

CCA recommends that the NSW Department of Industry:

- *Fund CCA to undertake a regional economic development study that examines how to increase the capacity and activities of Central Coast community education providers to encourage that region's economic development.*

7.2 Older Workers

As noted in the student demographic section above, Western Sydney community education providers heavily out-perform all other training provider types in the region in reaching and training older people, defined over age 45: 46.5% of Western Sydney regional community education student enrolments in 2017, compared to 15.4% of TAFE enrolments and 22.6% of private for-profit enrolments. The Western Sydney experience is consistent with the rest of NSW, and in fact even more pronounced.[133] In 2017, state-wide 35.8% of NSW community education students receiving government-funded VET courses were aged 45 or over, 19% of NSW TAFE and 14.7% of NSW private for-profit provider students.

Many Australian researchers have emphasised the importance and challenges of supporting and engaging older workers. Professor Carol T. Hulik writes:

[130] See https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2019-01-25/older-people-share-more-social-media-fake-news-2016-election/10746348?fbclid=IwAR3zyWgCv91GhDKzJNufkm8rXi81iVL8uNFEin33R_gT5QinhtsiMiFjM4w.
[131] See http://tlkalesco.nsw.edu.au/ and https://etaustralia.com/secondary-college/.
[132] See https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-local-employer-council---lec/.
[133] See https://cca.edu.au/older-workers-the-opportunity-for-community-vet-providers/.

> To make Australian workplaces supportive and productive environments for all employees, it has never been more important to engage mature-age workers and will only become more so. When Australia's Age Pension was introduced in 1909, only 4% of our population lived long enough to claim it. Today, the average Australian is expected to live 15 to 20 years beyond the traditional retirement age of 65. By 2050 nearly a quarter of our population will be aged 65 and over.[134]

Age discrimination is rampant: "Almost a third of Australians perceived some form of age-related discrimination while employed or looking for work in the last 12 months – starting as early as 45 years of age."[135]

The University of Melbourne's Centre for Workplace Leadership reports that there are widespread attitudes towards older workers, which "are based on stereotypes – older workers are less motivated, harder to train, more resistant and less adaptable to change…. Older workers often also hold these stereotypes themselves, compounding to negatively impact workplace participation and creating a culture of division." There is a bias against older workers "in the selection and recruitment process, resulting in barriers to entry for older people. According to the Australian Human Rights Commission, over one quarter of Australians over 50 experienced some form of age discrimination in the previous two years and 4 in 10 organisations admit they wouldn't employ someone over 65. People who think of themselves as old are more likely to leave the workforce."[136]

The Regional Australia Institute report includes recommendations for older and mature workers engaging in study, including:

1. Increasing access to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) accreditation for workers who have already gained skills, experience and knowledge through previous courses or work experience (including international experience and qualifications) to expedite completion of new qualifications/accreditation; and
2. Creating dedicated programs for mature workers for training and skills development, including job matching services to meet local industry demand.[137]

The Australian Government has commenced a national roll-out of its "Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program", which aims to:

> Fill a gap in the services currently available to older Australians … based on a model that was piloted by the Department of Education and Training from 2015 until 2016.The $17.4 million program … provides eligible Australians with advice and guidance on transitioning into new roles within their current industry or pathways to a

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[134] "Keeping mature-age workers on the job", Carol T. Kulik, *The Conversation*, 17 October 2017, https://theconversation.com/keeping-mature-age-workers-on-the-job-85678.

[135] "Age discrimination in the workplace happening to people as young as 45", Justine Irving, *The Conversation*, 27 April 2017, https://theconversation.com/age-discrimination-in-the-workplace-happening-to-people-as-young-as-45-study-76095.

[136] "The challenge and opportunity of an ageing workforce", by Professor Peter Gahan and Dr Joshua Healy, University of Melbourne, 6 March 2017, https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/the-challenge-and-opportunity-of-an-ageing-workforce.

[137] See Ageing and work in regional Australia: Pathways for accelerating economic growth, Houghton, K., Vonthethoff, B., Regional Australia Institute, 2017, http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/RAI_Ageing-and-work-in-regional-Australia_report-1.pdf.

> new career, including referral to relevant education and training options. [It] will support up to 20,000 Australians over four years.[138]

Coincidentally, VERTO Ltd – a CCA member active in Western Sydney – is delivering the Skills Checkpoint Program in New South Wales, as well as Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory.[139] CCA is ensuring that VERTO's program is connected to its NSW members.

7.3 Indigenous Economic Development

7.3.1 NSW Indigenous Population in Western Sydney

The official 2016 census results show that 216,176 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) people resided in NSW, representing 2.9% of the total NSW population and 33.3% of the Indigenous population in Australia. Subsequent ABS estimates show an "undercount" of about 17.5%, meaning that these figures are likely to be revised upwards.[140]

The largest number of Indigenous Australians live in Western Sydney: WESTIR notes that in 2016:

> A total of 41,887 people identified as Indigenous, equating to 1.8% of the GWS population. This was higher than Greater Sydney (1.5% of the total population) and Rest of Sydney (1.1%) but lower than NSW (2.9%).[141]

Given the ABS 2016 census "undercount" that figure is likely to be much higher: if the national undercount of 17.5% is applied to Western Sydney, that would result in a 2016 Indigenous population of 49,217 people in the region.

For instance, Blacktown City has the second largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population after the Central Coast with 9,527 people: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 2.8% of all residents which compares with 1.9% for Greater Western Sydney Region and only 1.5% for Greater Sydney.[142] Parramatta Council notes that:

> Parramatta has always been an important meeting place for Aboriginal people. In early colonial times, many Aboriginal people were brought to Sydney and Parramatta as an underpaid workforce in domestic service and building infrastructure. This migration resulted in a large Aboriginal population in inner-city Sydney and Western Sydney. Of note, Western Sydney has the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of any region in Australia. Aboriginal people have a very close and special connection to a number of institutions in Parramatta, including the Native Institution, Parramatta Gaol, Parramatta Park, and the Women's Factory.[143]

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[138] See https://www.education.gov.au/skillscheckpointprogram.
[139] See https://www.education.gov.au/skillscheckpointprogram and https://www.verto.org.au/news/verto-awarded-sole-provider-status-for-skills-checkpoint-tender.
[140] See http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-28/concerns-over-undercount-of-indigenous-population-in-census/8660972 and http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2940.0.
[141] See https://www.westir.org.au/new/images/IPGWS.pdf, p. 5.
[142] See https://www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/Community/Our-people/Aboriginal-communities.
[143] See https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/living-community/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islanders.

Australia's Indigenous population lags significantly behind the non-Indigenous population in wealth, income and educational achievements. This is reflected in NSW where:

- 63% of Aboriginal people in NSW aged 20-24 years had completed Year 12 or higher, compared with 87% of the non-Aboriginal population (2014-15);
- 39% of Aboriginal people and 61% of non-Aboriginal people aged 20-64 had a post school qualification (2011);
- 53% of Aboriginal people aged 15-64 years in NSW were employed, compared with 71% of non-Aboriginal people (2014/15);
- the unemployment rate in NSW for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people aged 15-64 years was 15% and 5.7% respectively (2014/15); for people aged 18-24, it was 26% and 11.4% respectively (2011);
- 42% of Aboriginal households in NSW owned or were purchasing their home, compared with 65% of non-Aboriginal households (2016);
- median weekly household income for Aboriginal households in NSW was $550, compared with $850 for non-Aboriginal households (2014/15);
- Aboriginal people in NSW were 11.3 times more likely than non-Aboriginal people to be imprisoned; and 74% of Aboriginal people in prison in NSW had experienced prior imprisonment, compared with 49% of non-Aboriginal people; Aboriginal young people were detained at 15 times the rate of non-Aboriginal young people in NSW (2014/15).[144]

7.3.2 VET and Indigenous Australians

Indigenous Australians participate in VET at much higher rates than non-Indigenous people – nationally at a rate of 18.7%, double the rate of non-Indigenous Australians – although VET completion rates sometimes lag. By contrast, Indigenous participation in higher education (3.6%) is half that of rate of non-Indigenous Australians. While TAFE remains the dominant VET provider to NSW Indigenous students (59%), the NCVER notes that community (4.1%) and for-profit private providers (27%) have increased their Indigenous students over the past 10 years.[145]

The NSW community education sector over-performs with relation to the number of Indigenous students served through government-funded VET. In 2017, 13.4% of NSW community education students funded by government programs were Indigenous, compared to 9.6% of TAFE students, 7.0% of private for-profit provider students.[146]

The NSW Government has invested a great deal of effort into addressing Indigenous disadvantage. A key part of this is the Aboriginal Affairs strategy called "OCHRE", which stands for Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment.[147] Major research projects have examined the economic development of Aboriginal communities. In 2011, the Allen Consulting Group report concluded:

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[144] See http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/research-and-evaluation/KEY-DATA-ABORIGINAL-PEOPLE-JULY-2017.pdf.

[145] See https://www.ncver.edu.au/data/data/infographics/indigenous-vet-participation-completion-and-employment-outcomes-infographic and https://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/publications/all-publications/indigenous-vet-participation-completion-and-outcomes-change-over-the-past-decade.

[146] See https://cca.edu.au/new-south-wales-community-education-providers-continue-to-over-perform-in-reaching-vulnerable-and-disadvantaged-learners/.

[147] See http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government-aboriginal-affairs-strategy and http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/OCHRE/AA_OCHRE_final.pdf.

> There is no lack of programs or funding initiatives to improve Aboriginal economic participation. Indeed, a large number of education, employment and economic development programs are delivered or available in NSW, some jointly funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments. However, despite all these efforts and investments, no significant progress has been made in closing the gap in economic outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.[148]

A 2016 NSW Legislative Council inquiry into economic development noted that "education is the cornerstone of economic and community development," and that the challenge was to integrate education with economic opportunities such as business development and land development.[149] The report's recommendations have been widely discussed, and the NSW Government is in the process of implementing a number of them.[150] The final report, and the preceding discussion paper, both emphasised the importance of VET in Aboriginal community development.[151]

The NSW Ombudsman report, entitled *Addressing Aboriginal disadvantage: The need to do things differently* (2011), includes a chapter on "Building economic capacity in Aboriginal communities", which emphasises the importance of VET and the "specific challenges associated with enhancing economic capacity and employment opportunities in disadvantaged and/or rural and remote locations." The report notes that the "NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) is the largest self-funded Aboriginal representative organisation in Australia, and … has a key role to play in creating economic opportunities for Aboriginal people in NSW."

The network of 121 Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) provides an immediate set of stakeholders for NSW community education organisations to work with. Such collaboration can be challenging because of the many challenges that the LALCs face. Community Colleges Australia recognises the important role that Aboriginal Land Councils play in NSW, has begun to engage with the Councils to create the connections.

CCA has commenced a project – funded by the NSW Department of Industry – that will enable its members, importantly the Western Sydney members – to engage and work with Indigenous communities and leaders more closely. This project will be complete by June 2019.

Given the large number of Indigenous residents in Western Sydney, and the fact that they utilise VET proportionately greater than non-Indigenous people, more attention to Western

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[148] The Allen Consulting Group, *NSW Government Employment and Economic Development Programs for Aboriginal People: Review of programs and broader considerations*, Report to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, The Hon. Victor Dominello, MP, December 2011, http://www.acilallen.com.au/cms_files/acgaboriginalemploymentnsw2011.pdf.

[149] See NSW Parliament, *Economic Development in Aboriginal Communities,* Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development, 2016, https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/DBAssets/InquiryReport/ReportAcrobat/6076/Final%20report%20-%2030%20September%202016.pdf

[150] See https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/DBAssets/InquiryReport/GovernmentResponse/6076/Government%20response%20-%20received%201%20May%202017.pdf.

[151] New South Wales Parliament, *Economic Development in Aboriginal Communities: Discussion Paper*, Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development, 2016, https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/DBAssets/InquiryOther/Transcript/10068/070716%20Discussion%20paper.pdf.

Sydney VET and the provision of opportunities by community education providers appears to be a priority for government policy making.

7.4 Incubators and Start-Up Businesses

7.4.1 The Business Incubator Concept

The concept of "business incubators" has developed quickly in recent years, aimed both at "start-ups" and established small businesses.[152] Incubators traditionally are set up to foster self-employment, assist business development, accelerate business growth, reduce the failure rate of start-up businesses, assist businesses to operate, and increase employment opportunities and community wealth.

For instance, Blue Chilli – founded in Sydney in 2012 – has evolved its model "six times and employed over 50 people to meet the emerging and changing needs of entrepreneurs around the world."[153] Sydney start-up Slingshot claims that "83% of start-ups that have participated in a Slingshot Accelerator Program are still in business today" and has launched in Newcastle.[154] The not-for-profit Fishburners expanded to Brisbane and Shanghai.[155]

The typical "focus of most accelerators is on technologies that can be rapidly commercialised … attract[ing] younger, predominately male technology enthusiasts."[156] There is no formally accepted definition of the term "accelerator", and they share some elements with incubators. A UNSW Business School report for the Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation and Science notes that:

> Historically, business incubators started off as physical facilities that shelter new firms until they can become self-sustainable and survive outside the incubator…. More recently, incubation has shifted from providing low-cost offices, to a model where the landlords offer more (access to) value-added services … include[ing] referrals to professional service firms (accounting, law, etc.) who offered discounted rates…. The basic operating model for incubators has remained largely the same: maximizing occupancy of the shared office by offering discounted rent and professional services.[157]

Accelerators have less applicability for the not-for-profit community education providers, whose greatest expertise lies not in technology support, but in community development, including working with small businesses. Incubators normally provide a range of resources to start-ups and early-stage businesses. These can range from office space to events and

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[152] See https://www.smartcompany.com.au/startupsmart/news-analysis/australias-24-most-active-accelerators-incubators/.
[153] See https://www.bluechilli.com/team/about-us/.
[154] See http://www.slingshotters.com/academy/ and http://www.slingshotters.com/news/ash-maurya-talks-teaching-entrepreneurship/.
[155] See https://fishburners.org/#about.
[156] See Tim Mazarol, "Business incubators and start-up accelerators: Valuable assets or a waste of time and money?", https://theconversation.com/business-incubators-and-start-up-accelerators-valuable-assets-or-a-waste-of-time-and-money-45551.
[157] Bliemel *et al*, *The role and performance of accelerators in the Australian startup ecosystem*, Final report for the Department of Industry, Innovation & Science, 1 February, 2016, p. 10.

access to angel networks. The goal of a business incubator is to help start-up and early-stage companies grow and succeed.[158]

The incubator concept continues to evolve, with different business models – both not-for-profit and privately run commercial organisations – that include classic/traditional incubation, university incubation, accelerators (with or without seed funds), mentorship capital, sector specific incubation, virtual incubation, online matching platforms, makerspaces and hubs.[159]

While the NSW start-up culture is particularly known for its inner city Sydney style – typified by a Surry Hills or Ultimo location – a number of regional initiatives have begun. A number of CCA members have already begun discussions with BREED Australia, a not-for-profit organisation based at Blacktown that operates a business centre.[160]

7.4.2 Business Incubators – The Potential for NSW Community Education Providers

The not-for-profit regional incubator model has a strong potential resonance for NSW community education providers, particularly if undertaken in collaboration with a university or other organisations. Professor Tim Winthrop notes that, "For governments, universities or other publicly funded institutions the accelerator model may be less desirable than the more conventional not-for-profit incubator."[161]

While the extra attention and encouragement for regional incubators is laudable, the restriction of achieving "commercial success in international markets" is a significant barrier. Why would the Australian Government wish to limit such a valuable program solely to export markets, particularly given the importance of building up the "service economy" – the overwhelming majority of it "domestic" – in regional areas?

A great deal of research has now been undertaken – much of it in the USA – on the success factors relating to incubators.[162] Studies have identified key principles: (1) keep businesses insulated from market forces to allow them time to develop and build up their capabilities – what an incubator is for; (2) consider the regional context, selecting appropriate participants; (3) ensure access to a strong network of coaches, mentors and supporting services; (4) avoid a "real estate" model if a virtual incubator can be just as effective; (5) ensure there is proper community support and resources; (6) supply entrepreneurial education including onsite learning, networks and professional support; (7) create clear program milestones; and (8) leverage ties to a university.[163]

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[158] See https://www.syndicateroom.com/learn/glossary/b/business-incubator.

[159] See http://businessincubation.com.au/incubation/, http://anz.businesschief.com/leadership/1522/These-Are-the-10-Best-Startup-Accelerators-Incubators-in-Sydney and https://blog.thefetch.com/startup-incubators-and-accelerators-in-australia/.

[160] See https://breedaustralia.com.au/.

[161] Tim Mazarol, "Business incubators and start-up accelerators: Valuable assets or a waste of time and money?", *The Conversation*, 1 August 2015, https://theconversation.com/business-incubators-and-start-up-accelerators-valuable-assets-or-a-waste-of-time-and-money-45551.

[162] Tim Mazarol, "Business incubators and start-up accelerators: Valuable assets or a waste of time and money?", *The Conversation*, 1 August 2015.

[163] Ernesto Tavoletti, "Business Incubators: Effective Infrastructures or Waste of Public Money? Looking for a Theoretical Framework, Guidelines and Criteria"; and Joel Wiggins and David W. Gibson, "Overview of US incubators and the case of the Austin Technology Incubator," 2003.

Three NSW community education providers are engaged with business incubators, all within the conventional not-for-profit incubator model (rather than the commercial "accelerator" model): Byron Community College,[164] Business Growth Centre in the Lake Macquarie area[165] and Coffs Coast Community College, which collaborated with Coffs Harbour Council in the establishment of "6 degrees".[166]

Other NSW community education providers have expressed keen interest in helping to sponsor, run, collaborate or participate in regional business incubators. They have been hampered by:

- funding programs that do not encourage involvement from community education organisations;
- a lack of consideration of the importance of VET and foundation skills – language, literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, employability and customer service – in incubators;
- a lack of sufficient expertise in teaching entrepreneurial skills (see next section); and
- exclusion from certain funding programs, including NSW state-wide initiatives that involve TAFE and the universities.

Community Colleges Australia recommends that the NSW Department of Industry's sponsor a pilot program of community education provider involvement in business incubators.

7.5 Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprises

7.5.1 Entrepreneurship

The NCVER recently examined how the VET sector engages with entrepreneurship, concluding that the sector needs to increase its participation. This includes developing a national strategy that will "support bottom-up initiatives, many of which will have a regional dimension." The report noted that educational institutions are important elements of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and recommended that:

- enterprise skills should be a key component of most VET courses;
- entrepreneurship skills and knowledge should be included in at least some courses, the obvious example being IT-related qualifications; and
- the entrepreneurial knowledge and skill of VET educators and trainers needs to be nurtured.[167]

A significant opportunity exists for NSW community education providers to become more involved in regional entrepreneurship as a means of stimulating their local economies and increasing employment opportunities. There are four ways for the community education providers to do this:

[164] See https://sbp.org.au/sourdough-business-pathways-business-mentoring-byron-bay/ and https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CCA-Regional-Economic-Development-Forum-2-Fiona-Sheridan.pdf.
[165] See https://www.businessgrowthcentre.org.au/incubators/.
[166] See https://sixdegreescoworking.com/.
[167] Don Scott-Kemmis *et al*, NCVER 2017, https://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/publications/all-publications/vet-and-entrepreneurship-research-overview.

- becoming more entrepreneurial themselves, by engaging in social enterprises that are consistent with their missions and operations;
- teaching entrepreneurship to individuals and businesses;
- teaching the core principles of entrepreneurship to secondary school teachers, so that they in turn can incorporate the knowledge in their classroom teaching (effectively "train the trainers"); and
- assisting social enterprises – both not-for-profit and for-profit – in developing their business practices.

Examples of some organisations assisting organisations to develop entrepreneurial skills include:

- Sydney School of Entrepreneurship (SSE), an independent not-for-profit organisation established by the NSW Government in 2016 which brings together 11 NSW universities and TAFE NSW, and runs programs which could be extended to the community education sector.[168] SSE is offering a free core unit of study to all enrolled students of the universities and TAFE. This would be an ideal offering to extend to NSW community education students.[169]
- The Origin Foundation has partnered with the Mitchell Institute, the Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals, the New South Wales Secondary Principals' Council, and 21 government secondary schools in New South Wales and Victoria to study how entrepreneurial learning can respond to the growing need to enhance student capabilities to apply knowledge in sophisticated ways.[170]
- The Queensland Government has developed a Regional Innovation Hubs Program to support innovation and entrepreneurship in regional Queensland, to encourage innovation and to create jobs.[171]

7.5.2 Social Enterprises

"Social enterprises" are defined as:

> Businesses that trade to intentionally tackle social problems, improve communities, provide access to employment and training, or help the environment, fulfilling a diversity of missions and serving a wide variety of beneficiaries such as creating meaningful employment opportunities for people from a specific group, and developing new solutions to social, cultural, economic or environmental problems. They are led by an economic, social, cultural or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit, trade to fulfil their mission, derive a substantial portion of their income from trade, and reinvest the majority of their profit/surplus in the fulfilment of their mission.[172]

[168] See http://sse.edu.au/.
[169] See https://sse.edu.au/core-unit/.
[170] Anderson, Michelle *et al*, *The Paradigm Shifters: Entrepreneurial Learning in Schools Research report, Mitchell Institute*, 2017, http://www.originfoundationknowledgehub.com.au/cms_uploads/docs/paradigm-shifters_entrepreneurial-learning-in-schools.pdf.
[171] Queensland Government, Regional Innovation Hubs Program, https://advance.qld.gov.au/assets/includes/docs/rihp-discussion-paper.pdf.
[172] *Finding Australia's Social Enterprise Sector 2016: Final Report*, pp. 4-5, http://cdn.socialtraders.com.au/app/uploads/2016/07/FASES-2016-full-report-final.pdf.

On this definition, almost all NSW community education organisations are social enterprises. They have a community development focus – tackling social problems such as unemployment, social isolation and other needs, derive a large part of their income from trading and reinvest surplus funds. In June 2019, CCA – assisted by UTS Centre for Business & Social Innovation and the Wayside Chapel – is offering a workshop for members to assist them in developing enterprise governance models.[173]

While most Australian social enterprises operating in Australia are not-for-profit organisations, not every not-for-profit is necessarily a social enterprise. Classic examples of not-for-profit social enterprises are the "Op Shops" of Mission Australia.[174]

In Western Sydney, **JobQuest** has been operating a social enterprise in property maintenance for disadvantaged job seekers such as long term unemployed, people with disabilities, refugees with limited language skills, homeless or at risk youth to engage to work on the lawns and gardens of public housing estates and community housing properties. The social enterprise participants work in groups/crews completing property maintenance such as cleaning, lawn mowing, edging, hedging, pressure washing, mulching, composting, removing rubbish and much more. The aim of the scheme is to assist the job seekers to develop confidence and employability skills so they become competitive in open labour market. Since conception, more than 100 participants have gained employment with their newly acquired skills and experience.[175]

Jesuit Social Services – which operates Jesuit Community College – has established a number of inter-related social enterprises in Mount Druitt, including the Ignite Food Store and Ignite Op Shop.[176] Research by Social Ventures Australia has shown the Ignite Food Store has the lowest price standard basket of groceries in the area.[177]

Many other NSW community education providers also run small businesses – classic social enterprises – such as Camden Haven Community College's Pilot Station, located at Dunbogan near Laurieton. The historic Pilot Station (originally built in 1890) runs community, social, cultural, environment, educational events and workshops with local schools, the historical society, chamber of commerce and National Parks.[178]

The research on social enterprises reveals that the external constraints the prevent social enterprises from growing their businesses and their impacts all apply to NSW community education providers, including the lack of external finance and the role of proper organisational governance.[179]

Successful development and operation of social enterprises must be underpinned by organisational capacity. These "21st century" or enterprise skills include the ability to convert knowledge to action, resilience in face of setbacks and adversity, problem solving, thinking creatively and critically, communication skills and self-reflection abilities. These are the

[173] See https://cca.edu.au/member-services/professional-development/social-enterprise/.
[174] See http://sd.missionaustralia.com.au/477-op-shops.
[175] See https://www.jobquest.org.au/social-enterprise-services.
[176] See http://www.ignitefoodstore.com.au/ and http://www.ignitefoodstore.com.au/ignite-op-shop/.
[177] See https://jss.org.au/what-we-do/settlement-and-community-building/western-sydney/.
[178] See http://www.camdenheadpilotstation.org.au/.
[179] *Finding Australia's Social Enterprise Sector 2016: Final Report,* p. 4, http://cdn.socialtraders.com.au/app/uploads/2016/07/FASES-2016-full-report-final.pdf.

transferable enterprise skills identified by the Foundation for Young Australians, which will be required in a majority of future jobs.[180]

At its November 2018 Conference held in Sydney, CCA had a major focus on social enterprise, with a number of presentations.[181] CCA is planning a member event on social enterprises, to be held in June 2019.

Community Colleges Australia recommends that:

- *The Australian Government Department of Education and Training recognise the importance of incorporating entrepreneurship more fully into VET courses through its Review of training packages, as outlined in NCVER reports.*

- *The NSW Department of Industry provide funding to assist Community Colleges Australia and Sydney School of Entrepreneurs to develop entrepreneurial training for NSW community education providers.*

7.6 The Value of Philanthropy in Economic Development

7.6.1 The Value and Role of Philanthropy

Philanthropy – funds provided by foundations and trusts or individuals – constitutes a relatively under-utilised source for Australian regional economic development pilot projects. Increasingly, Australian foundations and trusts are looking to invest strategically in projects, organisations and good causes.[182] They often wish to provide funds that stimulate long-term increases in social and economic well-being.

Many Australian foundations and trusts include regional social development and education as a significant focus. Organisations that have expressed a strong interest in regional education and regional development include Myer Foundation, Origin Foundation, Sidney Myer Fund, Perpetual Trustees, Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, Ian Potter Foundation, Paul Ramsay Foundation and most Australian bank corporate foundations.[183]

Philanthropic funding must be complementary to government funding, not replacing government's service role. Philanthropy can be particularly valuable in setting up pilot development projects that "prove" the case for a more sustained government commitment of resources. Philanthropy Australia encourages its members to work closely with government, leveraging collective strengths.[184]

Philanthropic donors are often willing wish to fund more "risky" or creative projects; they have been particularly important sources of funding for not-for-profit and social

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[180] Foundation for Young Australians, *Enterprise skills and careers education in schools: Why Australia needs a national strategy*, April 2016, https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Enterprise-skills-and-careers-education-why-Australia-needs-a-national-strategy_April2016.pdf.

[181] See https://cca.edu.au/resources/#2018conferencepresentations.

[182] See https://www.reichstein.org.au/social-change-philanthropy/.

[183] As noted earlier in this report, the Reliance Bank has sponsored Gunther's Lane, a community digital hub in Bathurst that has become the basis for an incubator; see https://www.guntherslane.com.au/brought-to-you-by-and-sponsors/.

[184] See http://www.philanthropy.org.au/tools-resources/engaging-with-government/.

entrepreneurship and incubators.[185] Philanthropic funding can also enable a not-for-profit organisation to diversify its funding base.[186] International experience shows that philanthropic organisations like to combine both thematic and place-based approaches, as a means of "achieving enduring change in larger systems."[187]

Private philanthropic funders can be of assistance in other ways, including contacting other potential funders, volunteering other resources (such as staff and expertise, in the case of corporate foundations) and connecting with other organisations. Local Australian community foundations can be particularly useful sources of funds: Australian Community Philanthropy, the peak organisation for community foundations, lists at least 57 organisations identifying themselves as community foundations, or geographic sub-funds of community foundations.[188]

7.6.2 Philanthropy and NSW Community Education Providers

Within the NSW community education sector, Riverina Community College (Wagga) has received support from the Aussie Farmers Foundation for its rural women programs.[189] Sourdough Business Pathways, of which Byron Community College is a major partner, has also received philanthropic funding. Atwea College (formerly WEA Hunter) has set up a foundation to "generate partnerships and secure resources to drive educational outcomes for the benefit of local communities."[190] City East College (Bondi Junction) has received philanthropic funding for its migrant mentoring program.[191] The Warialda and Bingara campuses of Community College Northern Inland are represented on the Gwydir Learning Region Country Education Fund Committee, which raises funds from local residents and businesses to support local youth to help them achieve their post high school education, training and vocation aspirations.[192]

Most NSW community education providers hold a "Deductible Gift Recipient" (DGR) status, which enables them to access funds from philanthropic sources and tax-deductible donations from individuals. Only a small handful of community providers have utilised the full capacity of the DGR status, and a few hold full "Public Benefit Institution" (PBI) status.[193] The reasons for this underutilisation are mostly lack of policy and strategic capacity to develop relationships with the philanthropic sector, given the high level of professionalism and competition that exists in Australian not-for-profit fundraising.[194]

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[185] See https://www.galidata.org/assets/report/pdf/GALI-databrief6_StartupFinancing_092217.pdf.
[186] See https://communitydoor.org.au/fundraising-and-philanthropy/philanthropy.
[187] See Rockefeller Brothers Fund, *Evaluating Program Impact,* 2013, p. 3, https://www.rbf.org/sites/default/files/programimpactreport_abridged.pdf.
[188] See http://australiancommunityphilanthropy.org.au/community-foundations/community-foundations-in-australia/, as well as https://cef.org.au/our-local-country-education-foundations-overview/ and http://www.frrr.org.au/cb_pages/for_community_foundations.php.
[189] See "Enhancing Wellbeing Among Rural Women", http://www.aussiefarmersfoundation.org.au/2016-grassroots-grants-announced/.
[190] See https://atwea.edu.au/about-the-foundation.
[191] See https://www.cec.edu.au/mentor-program.
[192] See https://cef.org.au/foundations/gwydir/.
[193] The full definition of PBI is available from the ACNC website: https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/factsheets/public-benevolent-institutions-and-acnc.
[194] See https://www.fia.org.au/pages/principles-standards-of-fundraising-practice.html.

CCA continues to encourage its members to obtain Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, as a precursor to developing strategic fundraising for appropriate projects. CCA will also continue to encourage major philanthropic funders to partner with community education providers; and to engage with peak philanthropic organisations such as Philanthropy Australia, whose NSW Manager spoke at CCA's November 2018 conference.[195]

One challenge for the community education sector is to obtain standardised and resourced systems in order to measure individual and community level outcomes and long term social impact. While all community education providers measure outputs, almost none have had the capacity to undertake longitudinal research, because of the costs involved and the relatively small size of the organisations. CCA plans to work collaboratively with the social impact sector to establish measures and systems that will enable its members to show how they make long-term, sustainable and profound changes on both individual and community levels, both for accredited and non-accredited education and training activities.

It is recommended that Western Sydney community education providers:

- *Utilise their not-for-profit positions to access "Deductible Gift Recipient" (DGR) status, and obtain funding from Australian foundations and trusts, as well as local donations.*

[195] See https://cca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Judy-Foster-presentation-CCA-2018-conference.pdf.

APPENDIX A: People and Organisations Consulted in Preparing this Report

A.1 Participants in the Western Sydney Economic Development Forum, held in Parramatta on 26 October 2018

Ability Options	Tom McKay	Regional Manager
Adele House	Karen Quinn	Program Manager
ARC	David Hill	CEO
BCC Institute	Shayma Saafan	Compliance
Blacktown City Council	Kerry Robinson	General Manager
BREED Australia	Bob Turner	CEO
City East College	Margaret Teed	Mentor Program
	Libby Waring	Principal
City of Parramatta	Cr Sameer Pandey	Councillor
Community Colleges Australia	Dr Don Perlgut	CEO
	Evelyn Goodwin	Manager Policy & Projects
	Anne Walter	Manager Operations
Curious Minds Co	Michelle Walker	Facilitator
Greater Sydney Commission	Helen O'Loughlin	Social Commissioner
Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Comm Coll	Ted Nabung	Principal/CEO
JobQuest	Ka Chan	Manager
	Fiona Keane	Coordinator
Liverpool City Council	Julie Scott	Manager City Deal
Macarthur Community College	Cliff Pacey	Principal
Macquarie Community College	Stuart Bastock	Head of Training
	Theresa Collignon	CEO
	Sandra McKinney	Marketing Manager
MTC Australia	Carla Dawson	Curriculum Manager
	Lisa Lillis	GM Education Training
Consultant	Camilla Couch	Education and Training
Nepean Community College	Eric Wright	Principal
NSW Business Chamber	Luke Aitken	Senior Manager, Policy
NSW Department of Industry	Zoe De Saram	Deputy Secretary
Penrith Chamber of Commerce	Ian Walker	Representative
Reading Writing Hotline	Vanessa Iles	Manager
Regional Development Australia	Therese O'Dwyer	Sydney Executive Officer
Schools Industry Partnership	Ian Palmer	CEO
	Adrian Rhodes	Inspiring the Future Aust
Seegreen Communications	Daniel Boland	Owner
self employed	Maire Sheehan	self employed
SGS Economics & Planning	Terry Rawnsley	Principal
St George Sutherland Comm Coll	Bernadette Mills	Vocational Manager
Sydney Community College	Tonya Cook-Pedersen	ACE CSO Training
	Jennifer Aldred	Senior Manager
TAFE Community Alliance	Jozefa Sobski	Community Activist
TAFE NSW	Kaye Lockhart	Community Programs
	Paula Abood	CALD Coord Sydney
	Anne Bicer	Community Programs
	Jude Cooke	Head Teacher
	Michael Cullen	Reg Mgr Western Sydney

	Dennis Smith	Multicultural Engagement
The Committee for Sydney	Sam Stewart	Policy & Advocacy Officer
The Hills Shire Council	Alan Haselden	Deputy Mayor
The Parramatta College	Danielle Bensley	Chief Executive Officer
	Syed Moniruzzaman	Education Manager
The Parramatta College	Laura Ribeiro	Business Relations Manager
Training Services NSW	Candice Brennan	A/Training Coordinator
	Tricia O'Donovan	Training Market Ops
	Danny White	Manager Stakeholder Strategy
	Edwina Burge	WS Training Service Manager
	Linna Nguon	Senior Training Market
VERTO	Brittany Jack	Chief Operating Officer
Warakirri College	Carolyn Blanden	Principal
Wentworth Community Housing	Jenny Ranft	Manager Community Services
Western Sydney Community Forum	Billie Sankovic	CEO
WSROC	Charles Casuscelli	CEO
Western Sydney University The College	Nicolene Murdoch	CEO

A.2 Other Organisations Consulted During the Course of the Project

Blue Mountains City Council
Business Growth Centre, Lake Macquarie
Inner West Council
Local Government Association of NSW
My Trade Start
National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
NSW Business Chamber, Sydney
NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS)
NSW Department of Education
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
Parramatta Chamber Of Commerce
Penrith City Council
Penrith Valley Chamber of Commerce Inc
Philanthropy Australia
Settlement Services International
TAFE Directors Australia
UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation
WEA Illawarra
WESTIR Ltd

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