



ATN in PROFILE

Volume 5, Edition 1 – February 2009

Welcome ...

to the 11th Annual ATN Conference 2009

Welcome to the 2009 ATN Conference. This event brings together senior staff from our member universities and allows us to discuss and agree upon directions for the year, explore and develop new ideas and form stronger relationships.

In 2009, the conference will focus heavily on strategies for the network for the future. Policy directions of the Rudd government, as well as world events, underline the need for universities to be forward thinking. Universities are at the forefront of change and innovation, so in addition to examining the implications for the higher education sector of new government policy, we will be looking at avenues in which the ATN can lead the way in dealing with the challenges of the future.

The theme for the 2009 Conference is "sus.tain'a.bil'i.ty n – Defining the Future Finding Solutions". Following the announcement of upcoming environmental targets at last year's event, the event will focus on:

- environmental sustainability – including the announcement



■ Professor Margaret Gardner, AO

of ATN sustainability targets

- sectoral sustainability and the future of the higher education sector.

In that vein, keynote speaker Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley AO, Chair of the Higher Education Review Board, will address the conference about the outcomes of the "Bradley review". The recommendations in the Bradley paper represent the best chance in more than two decades for revitalising investment in quality education and research, breaking out of the existing equilibrium and focussing attention on those areas where changes in policy are needed and are likely to have a positive effect.

Delegates will also hear from social researcher and novelist, Dr Hugh Mackay, who has made a lifelong study of the attitudes and behaviour of Australians. Dr Mackay will provide an insight into the student of the future.

We also welcome to the conference ISTA delegates from the newly formed ATN/ISTA NanoNetwork and the South African Technology Network – two of our important and significant international alliances.

The long-term sustainability of the higher education sector is vital to Australia's ongoing global competitiveness and the ATN will continue to work with the government on issues we see as important to realise the goal of Australia having one of the best university systems in the world.

I trust you will find this event a valuable experience and invite you all to work and interact with your colleagues from other ATN universities and our partners during the conference – enduring institutional alliances are built on personal relationships.

Margaret Gardner

– ATN Chair Professor Margaret Gardner, AO

11th Annual ATN Conference 2009
"sus.tain'a.bil'i.ty n – Defining the Future Finding Solutions"
4 - 6 February 2009
 Hosted by: Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane
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member universities

- University of South Australia
- Curtin University of Technology
- RMIT University
- University of Technology, Sydney
- Queensland University of Technology



11th Annual ATN Conference 2009

PROGRAM

Wednesday, February 4

5.30pm - 7pm

Registration and welcome cocktail function at Owen J. Wordsworth Room, Gardens Point Campus

Host: Professor Peter Coaldrake

Vice Chancellor, Queensland University of Technology.

Thursday, February 5

8.30am - 8.45am - Registration

8.45am - 9am - Conference Opening by Professor Margaret Gardner AO, ATN Chair, Vice Chancellor and President, RMIT University

9.05am - 9.50am - Plenary Session - Rudd 12 months on: Politics and higher education with George Megalogenis, Senior Correspondent, News Limited

9.55am - 10.40am - Keynote Speaker

Higher Education Policy Directions with Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley, AC Chair, Higher Education Review Panel.

11.15am - 12pm - Plenary Session - Our changing society: who our future prospective students are likely to be with Dr Hugh Mackay.

12.05pm - 1pm - Plenary Session - On the Couch: Q&A with Vice Chancellors.

2.05pm - 3.15pm - Partnerships in action

Chair: Prof. Jane den Hollander, DVC (Academic), Curtin
Sustaining students: Social inclusion and equity
Speakers: Professor Trevor Gale, Director, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education; and Dr Lawrence Stedman, Principal Policy Advisor, QUT

3.50pm - 4.10pm - ATN/ISTA MOU signing

4.15pm - 5pm - Plenary Session

Taking Student Retention Seriously: Rethinking the First Year of University with Professor Vincent Tinto, Chair, Higher Education Program, Syracuse University

7pm - 10pm Conference Dinner (business attire)

Friday, February 6

9.30am - 11.15am - Plenary Session - Sustaining quality, defining diversity

9.30am - 9.45am - Introduction: Professor Peter Høj
Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)

9.45am - 10.15am - Professor Margaret Sheil, CEO, Australian Research Council (ARC)

10.15am - 10.45am - The Implications of Compact Funding with Jessie Borthwick, Head of Science & Research, Department of Innovation, Industry, Science & Research.

11.30am - 12.15pm - Plenary Session - Sustainable Campuses with Professor Stuart White, Director Institute for Sustainable Futures, UTS.

12.15pm - 12.30pm - Conference Close with Professor Ross Milbourne, Vice Chancellor UTS and ATN Chair Elect.

Funding package put to government

The ATN has put forward to Government a Federal budget package which reflects the current economic times and the Government's commitment to a university system which is capable of meeting the needs of the Australian community and economy.

Acknowledging the substantial financial commitment to the sector from the Rudd Government in its first year of office the ATN believes it will be more critical than ever in this current economic climate, to ensure our universities are equipped with the capacity to provide the people and ideas that inform and stimulate our economy, society and culture.

ATN Director Vicki Thomson said the university sector, as both the training ground for our future workforce and a source of innovation in its own right, had a significant part to play in securing our national economic future. "A policy focus supported by sound and long-term fiscal investment is vital for both our innovation efforts and to meet Australia's skills and productivity needs. "The Bradley and Cutler Reviews provide the foundation from which long term decisions about our future as a nation can be made. These reviews chart a course for the future of higher education in this country for the next decade and beyond."

The 2009-10 Federal Budget will be an opportunity to build on the reform process begun by the Rudd Government in 2008. The ATN group of universities is committed to working proactively in partnership with industry, government and the community to deliver sustainable solutions and, importantly, results for the long term.

Together with Universities Australia, the ATN supports a package of responsible budget measures which includes the following:



■ ATN director Vicki Thomson

An additional \$330 million in 2009-10 for teaching and learning including a 10 percent expansion of the base Commonwealth Grant Scheme amount as recommended by the Bradley Review.

Additional funding for access and participation of underrepresented groups of students to a level equivalent to 4 percent of the total grants of teaching as recommended by the Bradley Review. This funding should be over and above the 10 percent recommended increase for teaching and learning.

An additional \$390 million in 2009-10 in Research Infrastructure Block Grants to bring the RIBG level in line with actual indirect costs which is estimated to be 50 cents in the dollar for each dollar provided through competitive grants.

An additional \$100 million to arrest the declining success rates for ARC Grants.

An additional \$150 million for Research Training to expand the number and quality of research degrees through the RTS.

Additional funding to support an increase in the postgraduate stipend from \$19,616 to a minimum of \$25,000 per year as recommended by the Bradley and Cutler Reviews.

Funding to support a Strategic Initiative Scheme to allow for strategic investment to align the research and research training capacity of universities with the national innovation priorities.

Bradley Review a turning point in policy debate

The ATN has hailed the Bradley Review of Higher Education as an historic watershed in higher education policy debate in Australia.

ATN Chair, Professor Margaret Gardner, AO, said the review had addressed the core issues raised by the sector relating to university access, the misalignment between vocational education and universities, funding and quality.

"The recommendations in the Bradley paper represent the best chance in more than two decades for revitalising investment in quality education and research, breaking out of the existing equilibrium and focussing attention on those areas where changes in policy are needed and are likely to have a positive effect," Professor Gardner said.

"The Bradley Paper makes a series of recommendations which go to the core of what must be done to ensure that Australia meets the nation's graduate and research needs, remains an integral part of international education and research networks and draws greater numbers of students from around the world."

The Chair of the review panel, Professor Denise Bradley AO will be a keynote speaker at the 2009 ATN Annual Conference.

"We note that the Bradley Paper supports the implementation of targets around participation, both by domestic and international students; research expenditure and the quality of our national system in relation to international benchmarks," Professor Gardner said.



■ Professor Denise Bradley AO was the chair of the Bradley Review Panel and will be the keynote speaker at the 2009 ATN conference.

"We strongly endorse target setting as a means to social, economic and cultural development for the nation.

"We acknowledge that this will require a strong and long term commitment from all stakeholders – government, industry, the professions and universities – to achieve.

"And it will not be achieved without the structural reforms recommended by Bradley.

:This review and the way government and policy makers choose to respond will shape the future of our universities and Australia's place at the international education table.

"With one in five Australian university students studying at an ATN university, and one in four international students at an ATN, we look forward to working with the Government, business and industry in laying the groundwork for the next two decades of higher education in Australia."



■ Ben Sowter, Head of Research QS Limited, will address the ATN conference on system rankings and trends.

Address on World University Rankings

Nothing sparks lively debate across the higher education international community quite like the issue of rankings. Love them or loathe them, they are a reality. The ATN has argued that Australia should focus on what it takes to produce a top ten or world-class university system. In a country as small as Australia we need more than one or two top 10 universities – we require a commitment to excellence across the entire university system. Unfortunately the debate in Australia about the quality of our universities has focused on the international reputation of a few individual universities as measured through university rankings. One such ranking system is the Times Higher-QS World University Rankings. Ben Sowter Head of Research QS Limited will address the ATN conference on system rankings and trends relating to Australian universities.

Playing a key role in the development of the THES – QS World University Rankings since their inception in 2004, Ben is essentially the operational project manager behind all the numbers. Managing a team of researchers to collect the data each year, nobody has a more detailed knowledge of how the results have been reached. While many of us are familiar with the Times Higher Education Supplement methodology, conference delegates will have the opportunity to hear first hand on implications for Australian institutions.



■ UTS Vice Chancellor Ross Milbourne will be the new ATN Chair.

Professor Milbourne to be new chair of ATN

UTS Vice Chancellor, Professor Ross Milbourne takes over as ATN Chair from February 6. Professor Milbourne replaces Professor Margaret Gardner who has held the position for the past two years.

Professor Milbourne received his Bachelors and Masters degrees from the University of NSW, and his PhD from the University of California,

Berkeley. His interests have been in the general area of macroeconomics and, in particular, the mathematical modelling and statistical testing of macroeconomic theories. During the last decade his research has focused on economic growth in open economies - economies that allow free international movement of goods and capital.

His previous appointments include Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of New South Wales, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of Adelaide and Chair of the Research Grants Committee of the Australian Research Council.

QUT Vice Chancellor, Professor Peter Coaldrake will take up the position of Chair of Universities Australia in May.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

CONFERENCES

Supported by the ATN

Financial Review Higher Education Conference 2009

"A new start for higher education"

When: 9-10 March, 2009. **Where:** Four Seasons Hotel Sydney.

The ATN is pleased to endorse the annual Financial Review Higher Education Conference, which has become one of the premier higher education conferences in Australia. The event is designed for and in association with leaders in the sector, and creates excellent opportunities for interaction and networking. Its success is built on unique content and a senior speaker and delegate list ranging from Vice-Chancellors to business managers, political leaders and government officials. This event aims to links national policy to the educational imperatives and business drivers of Australia's higher education sector.

■ To attend and register your details, go to <http://www.afr.com/home/events/higher-education/>

7th Annual Higher Education Summit

"Exploring issues of interdependence, connectivity & the development of the individual institution"

When: 2-3 April, 2009. **Where:** Grand Hyatt, Melbourne

The ATN also supports the Higher Education Summit as an event involving key representatives who will discuss the future of higher education in the context of the post-Bradley Review environment. It will draw from the vibrant discussions and debates that are taking place and the agenda has been centred on the theme of – "interdependence", "connectivity" and "the development of the individual institution". The summit will include a state keynote ministerial address, four international speakers, and the speaking participation of five TAFE directors. In addition, the inaugural Regional Higher Education Engagement Forum will be hosted by BHERT.

The speaker faculty also includes 13 VCs as well as many other key higher education representatives. In total, an expected 48 speakers will be joining the Summit speaker faculty, making this event an excellent opportunity for networking and sharing information.

■ To attend and register your details, go to <http://www.highereducationsummit.com.au/informa0z/highereducationsummit/home/>



member universities

University of South Australia

Curtin University of Technology

RMIT University

University of Technology, Sydney

Queensland University of Technology

www.atn.edu.au

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

FINDING SOLUTIONS



THE Australian Technology Network brings together five of the most innovative and enterprising universities in the nation.

We are committed to forging partnerships with industry and government to deliver practical results through focused research.

We educate graduates who are ready to enter their chosen profession, dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and eager to claim a stake in building sustainable societies of the future.

ATN universities teach around 180,000 students, or almost 20 % of Australia's student population. With 1 in 4 international students choosing to study at an ATN university, we are also the largest provider of international education, both with our onshore and offshore students.

The ATN's aim is to help secure Australia's reputation as the clever country, and contribute to its social and economic wealth, while championing the principles of access and equity that have ensured its members are the universities of first choice for more students.

■ For more information about the ATN, our organisation and activities, please visit our web site at www.atn.edu.au

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