

# Enhancing Relationships in school communities (ERIS)

## An invitation to participate in professional inquiry & learning CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

- What?** An opportunity for primary schools and teachers to explore, learn and rethink ways to:
- build a whole school culture that respects and values cultural diversity and opposes racism
  - develop a school culture that handles differences and conflict between individuals and groups in ways that enhance relationships
  - enact curriculum on these topics
  - increase students' knowledge, skills and attitudes in respecting diversity and managing conflict constructively
  - enrich VELS focus in the domains of interpersonal learning; civics and citizenship; the humanities (history); languages other than English and communication.
- Why?**
- Australia's increasing cultural diversity promises many benefits but also creates significant challenges, including the potential for conflict that reduces social cohesion. School communities are increasingly being called on to respond productively and proactively to these challenges. However, there is little research-based evidence of what best supports schools in this work.
  - This project will redress this by researching how best to support schools to navigate the challenges and grow the benefits of living in culturally diverse communities and build more respectful, inclusive and productive school communities.
- How?** For participating primary schools we will provide during 2008 & 2009 at no cost:
- For ALL staff: The opportunity to attend one full day of professional development in cultural diversity and conflict resolution.
  - For a core team of 3-5 staff (including the Principal), 6 days of high quality professional development in cultural diversity and conflict resolution over an 18 month period.
  - Ongoing support throughout this time to develop and implement programs in their school.
- Who?** The project team is:
- Glenda MacNaughton, Liz Freeman, Eleanor Wertheim, Margot Trinder, Merlyne Cruz, Anne Farrelly. We work at the University of Melbourne & La Trobe University



FACULTY OF  
EDUCATION



The Project is funded by the **Australian Research Council Linkage Grant program 2007 - 2009**

## Interested? Like to know more?

**What do schools need to do?**

*Schools need to commit to:*

- All staff attending one full professional learning day
- A core team of 3-5 staff (including the Principal) attending 6 days of professional learning over an 18 month period
- Providing opportunities for dissemination of the information to the school community
- Providing teacher replacement costs

**What do teachers need to do?**

*Teachers need to:*

- have an intention to remain at the same school for the duration of the project
- complete activities between professional learning days
- participate in the research component of this project through the completion of questionnaires

**What next?**

- Contact the ERIS team to discuss any questions you may have
- Visit the ERIS website <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/psy/research/eris/index.html> and download the powerpoint presentation for staff and the application form
- Present this information to staff and discuss:
  - Is this an area our school would like to work on?
  - Does our school have the capacity to support this project over the next two years?
  - Do at least 80% of the staff support participating in the project?

*If 'Yes' to all these questions, complete the 'expression of Interest form' below by*

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

**Further enquires?**

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Key dates		Key events
2007	Term 3	Schools download ERIS presentation and present to staff
	Term 4	Submit 'application form'
	October 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Schools are notified of outcome of applications. School visit by ERIS coordinator. Schools establish Core teams.
2008	Term 1	Core team attend Professional Learning day 1
	End Feb 13 Mar. or 14 Mar.	Whole staff attend Professional Learning day
	Term 2	Core team attend Professional Learning day 2
	Term 3	Core team attend Professional Learning day 3
	Term 4	Core team attend Professional Learning day 4
2009	Term 1	Core team attend Professional Learning day 5
	Term 2	Core team attend Professional Learning day 6

**Our partners in this project**

■ Scanlon Foundation	■ Catholic Education Office Melbourne
■ St Anthony's Primary School, Alphington	■ Haig St Primary School, Heidelberg
■ Australian Psychological Society, Psychologists for Peace Interest Group	



## Application to participate in professional inquiry & learning

Name of School	
Address	
Details of contact person	
 Name	
 Email	
 Phone	
Preferred contact method and times	
• The number of students in your school	
• The number of staff you expect to have in your core team	Please circle: 3, 4 or 5
• Will the principal be part of the core team?	
• Briefly describe why your school would like to be part of this project	
• Does your school have the capacity to support this project over the next two years?	
• Do at least 80% of staff support participation in the project?	
• Will the school support staff to participate in the research component of this project?	

ERIS is a research project funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant Program. Places are limited. Selected schools will be randomly assigned to an intervention or a comparison group. Schools in the comparison group will be asked to assist in the project by having teachers complete on-line questionnaires (with teacher release funds to aid participation), and by facilitating student interviews. These schools will be offered a modified professional learning activity at a negotiated time and be given access to program resources at the end of the study.

**Due date: Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

<mailto:trinderm@unimelb.edu.au>