███████ Consultation Submission

Implementing Suburban University Study Hubs

As an integral part of addressing workforce shortages and removing barriers to studying in ███████, ███████ would be an essential addition to any Suburban University Study Hubs established here.

A place-based approach for the Suburban University Study Hubs in ███████, especially when incorporating the strengths and offerings of institutions like ███████, will ensure that the hub is not just a generic educational facility but an integral part of the community, tailored to its specific needs and aspirations.

The Suburban University Study Hubs can benefit by including institutions like ███████ to create a multifaceted educational environment and leverage state-based initiatives such as the █████████████████████████ that provide VET and University pathways referrals. This, in turn, broadens participation and presents diverse study opportunities tailored to the specific needs and aspirations of the community.

Moreover, a large proportion of the current ███████ workforce demand requires some type of vocational competence to get the job. This can include all or part of a qualification through the use of Skill Sets and ticket-based short courses. Graduates from both VET and the University have interchangeable opportunities to enhance their employability in the local market through hands-on or theory-based study from ███████ or the ███████████████.

Equity in the design of Suburban University Study Hubs involves proactive measures to ensure all community members, regardless of their background or circumstances, can access, participate in, and benefit from the services and opportunities the hubs offer. Within the ███████ training landscape, ███████ is the primary provider of foundation and support programs that enable individuals to enter and succeed in a training pathway. If each provider can play to its strengths, reduce duplication, and provide complimentary services, this will ensure the best use of investment, resources, and outcomes for ███████ learners.

Suburban University Study Hubs must adopt an inclusive, proactive, and adaptive approach to meet the needs of co-existing communities within the same area. This will ensure access to the most suitable provider who is best placed to support the training needs of the individual. Recognising, valuing, and celebrating the community's rich diversity will enhance the student experience and elevate the hub's role as a pivotal community resource and gateway to a full suite of learning within the VET and University Sectors.

Consultation Questions and Responses

How can a place-based approach be fostered, as part of the Suburban University Study Hubs program, that ensures the voice of local communities is integrated in their design and operation?

Engage with Local Expertise: ████████ has membership in various industry, local, regional and community workforce advisory groups (or equivalent) across ████████. This coordination with community and ████████ delivery teams provides a range of place-based project activities that deliver targeted training offerings and pathway opportunities. An example of this would be the █████████████████████████, which provided opportunities for new entrants to the civil sector and degree-qualified participants needing practical hands-on skills to put their knowledge into practice.

Collaborate with Existing Institutions: Collaboration with established educational institutions, like ████████, offers dual advantages. Firstly, it draws upon the existing infrastructure, and secondly, it leverages the expertise of institutions familiar with the educational and vocational needs of the community. This offers alternative pathways to university and ensures the practical, hands-on components that ████████ excels in are integrated.

Customised Programs and Services: Understand the local community's specific needs regarding academic and vocational pursuits. In ████████, given the diverse range of industries and the specific demands of the local job market, customised programs offering academic and vocational training can greatly benefit students who face multiple barriers to entering a study pathway. ████████ is best placed to prepare and support individuals seeking a return to study or who require an alternative entry point to a degree pathway. This is especially pertinent for mature students, workers in transition or those seeking to up-skill or re-skill.

Localised Data Collection and Sharing: ████████ works collaboratively with existing Jobs Hubs, Workforce Australia and Industry. ████████ would assist the Study Hubs program by supporting and providing data specific to each location. Connection to place and the surrounding community helps foster learning pathways that connect to careers in the region.

How can the Suburban University Study Hubs widen participation and support and extend further study opportunities, adding to existing or planned investments?

Embed Vocational Training: By incorporating institutions like ██████ within the Study Hub program, students are presented with alternative pathways that don't solely focus on traditional academic routes. This caters to those seeking vocational training or hands-on skills to complement their theoretical knowledge. This integration also ensures a more holistic approach to education, recognising the significance of vocational skills in many job markets.

Student Support and Foundation Skills Initiatives: ████████ already provides a range of supports to support individuals into study or work. The linkage of ███████ in the program would especially help those from low socioeconomic backgrounds or those who may find the financial aspect a significant barrier.

Transition Programs: For those who have left education but are considering re-entering, offering short transition or 'taster' courses can help them ease back into the academic world. Such programs can demystify the university experience and break down perceived barriers. It can also assist university students by providing short courses focused on the practical hands-on skills and workplace tickets needed to apply their theoretical knowledge in the workplace.

Building on Existing Infrastructure: Utilise and build upon existing or planned investments, such as the ███████████████ facilities of ███████ and other educational institutions, ensuring optimal use of resources and immediate accessibility for students. This collaboration makes financial sense and allows for a more integrated educational ecosystem.

Life-long Learning Programs: Beyond formal qualifications, hubs can offer workshops, short courses, and seminars on topics of local relevance or general interest, fostering a culture of continuous learning in the community through a mixture of accredited and non-accredited learning endorsed by local industry.

How can equity be embedded into the design of Suburban University Study Hubs?

████████ **Support Services:** Implement support services like academic counselling, mentorship programs, and mental health resources. Ensure that these services are culturally competent and equipped to handle the diverse needs of all students.

Inclusive Curriculum Design: Collaborate with institutions like ████████ to design programs and courses that reflect the community's diverse needs, ensuring both academic and vocational pathways are accessible and promoted equally.

Entry Pathway Programs: Partner with local schools, community organisations, and businesses to promote the hub's opportunities and to identify and support individuals who might otherwise not consider further education.

Collaborative approach to career planning: Working alongside the local Jobs Hubs, University and Schools, the benefit of having services collocated makes it an easy starting point for those in the community unable to navigate training and education options in isolation.

Where multiple communities may co-exist within the same area (for example, ethnic, cultural, industry-based, etc.), how can Suburban University Study Hubs ensure they meet the needs of these different communities?

Student Support Services: ███████ has Aboriginal Support officers, who are connected and familiar with or belonging to the local indigenous and cultural communities. They can act as bridges, ensuring that the services and resources provided by the hubs are culturally sensitive and relevant.

Collaboration with Local Organisations: ███████ already works with various partners, such as the Migrant Resource Centre of ████████. These collaborations can offer a deeper understanding of community needs and provide avenues for tailored program designs to enhance the Suburban Study Hub model.

Diverse Curriculum: Collaborate with institutions like ████████ to offer courses catering to different communities' skills and interests. For example, if there's a significant community interested in a particular trade or craft, introduce courses or workshops that focus on those areas linked to local employment or study outcomes.

English Language Programs: ████████ offers a range of English Language Programs to support new migrants in ████████. This includes ████████ management of the ████████████████████████████████████ across Southern ████████. With many migrants settling on the urban fringes of the major ████████ population centres co-location within the hubs, ████████ would be able to provide access and referral to the ██████ program.

Centralised Information & Resources: Including ████████ within the hubs would offer information, materials, and tools relevant to various communities. This would include information about all available courses, training programs, and degrees from various providers, including universities, VET providers like ████████, and other institutions. This helps students make informed decisions based on their personal and career goals.

How can we ensure that Suburban University Study Hubs operate to support students engaging with any provider, while also ensuring strong connections with local providers, campuses and leaders?

Flexible Learning Spaces: Design study areas that can cater to the diverse needs of students, irrespective of their education provider. This includes common workspaces, dedicated quiet areas, group collaboration zones, and tech-enabled rooms for virtual learning and connection to ███████ ██████████ programs.
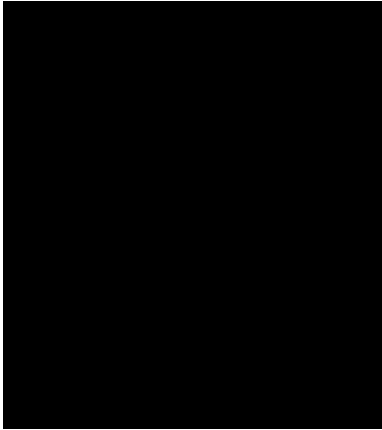
Transition and Pathway Programs: Collaboration with local providers and the community to design transition or pathway programs. For instance, a student completing a VET course at ████████ might be looking for an advanced degree in a related field at a university. Having programs that facilitate such transitions can be invaluable.

Active engagement with local stakeholders: ████████ already holds and maintains a mechanism for regular communication and feedback with various providers and industry and community-based organisations. This ensures the hub aligns with the changing educational landscape and remains current with course offerings, regulations, and student requirements.

Opportunity for Unified Student Support Services: Including ████████ within the hub network would ensure the full range of student support services across the board, irrespective of the VET or University provider. This includes academic guidance, mental health support, career counselling, and administrative assistance.

Local Collaboration: The hub could also benefit from the range of events offered by ████████ that brings together information sessions, expos, employer presentations, workshops, or even short courses that can be conducted in the hub, allowing students to experience and get to know what it's like within different industry sectors, and the VET and University Pathways to get there.

Case Study: University to ███████

██████████ is a ███████████ with the ████████ ██████████████. A highly experienced project manager, she previously worked with ████████ ██████████ business ████████, where she led the development of climate-smart strategies for farm business and impact growth.

██████ also has experience in agricultural policy, agtech development and farm business management.

██████ holds a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Commerce and Master of Agricultural Sciences and is currently undertaking a Certificate III in Agriculture at ████████.

██████ learning journey demonstrates the complementary aspects of VET hands-on skills and University theory that enhance outcomes and opportunities for employment in the region.

Consultation Questions and Responses continued

Where will the Suburban University Study Hubs be located?

What factors should be considered when selecting locations for Suburban University Study Hubs?

Alignment with Existing Initiatives: The presence of the local jobs hub and ███████ active engagement with local industry presents a solid foundation. Choosing a location that complements these initiatives will ensure continuity of services and support.

Local Demographics: Given █████ suburban classification, ensure that the hub addresses the specific educational and training needs of the local population, including under-represented groups.

Ease of Access: █████ location should be well connected by local transport, making it easily accessible to a wider community.

Feedback from █████: Leverage insights from █████ engagement with local industry to determine the specific courses, training, and support services that the hub should offer.

Economic Integration: With a local jobs hub nearby, ensure that the courses and training provided align with the region's job opportunities and industry demands.

What other types of social infrastructure should be located in close proximity to Suburban University Study Hubs to maximise their success?

Collaboration Spaces: Facilities where local businesses, students, and educators can collaborate on projects, fostering a bridge between academia and industry.

Networking Events and Workshops: Regular events that bring together students, local businesses, and █████ representatives to discuss industry trends, job opportunities, and academic advancements.

Local Business Integration: Opportunities for students to have internships, work-study programs, or part-time positions with businesses in █████, facilitating real-world

experience. Taking advantage of other government programs such as Launch into Work to support entry into local jobs.

How can Suburban University Study Hubs complement, rather than replace, the innovative solutions being implemented by education providers to support students in outer metropolitan and peri-urban areas?

Partnerships with █████████: Given █████████ existing presence and role, the University Hub can work in tandem, where █████████ focuses on vocational training and the Hub concentrates on tertiary educational support and resources.

Engage with Local Jobs Hub: Ensure that students at the University Hub have direct access to job opportunities and networking events at the jobs hub.

Industry Feedback Integration: Regularly update course offerings and training programs based on feedback from local industries, ensuring that students are well-prepared for the local job market.

Community Engagement: Host community events, workshops, and seminars that address both academic and industry trends, ensuring that the wider community is integrated into the hub's operations.

Locating the Suburban University Study Hub near Business and Employment Southeast █████████ in █████ capitalises on existing infrastructure and initiatives and ensures a holistic approach to education, employment, and community engagement.

What skills, services, and attributes should an organisation be able to demonstrate as evidence of their ability to establish and operate a Suburban University Study Hub?

Community Engagement Expertise: The ability to actively engage with local communities, understand their unique needs, and adapt services accordingly.

Educational Expertise: A demonstrated track record in providing or supporting tertiary education or vocational training, ensuring that academic standards and student support mechanisms are in place.

Cultural Awareness: Proficiency in creating inclusive environments that cater to diverse student populations, including under-represented groups.

Infrastructure Management: Experience in establishing and managing physical locations, from logistical operations to creating conducive learning environments.

Partnership Development: Proven ability to establish and nurture partnerships with educational institutions, local businesses, and community groups.

Feedback Mechanisms: Systems for collecting, analysing, and acting upon feedback from students and the wider community to continuously improve services.

What governance mechanisms should be in place to ensure each Suburban University Study Hub is operating effectively and meeting the needs of the local community?

Oversight Board or Committee: Comprised of community representatives, educators, students, and local business leaders to provide direction and oversight.

Regular Audits & Evaluations: Conducting internal and third-party audits to assess performance and adherence to objectives.

Feedback Channels: Platforms for students and community members to raise concerns, give suggestions, and provide feedback.

Stakeholder Meetings: Regular meetings with the community stakeholders to provide updates and gather insights.

Should a single organisation be eligible to operate multiple hubs? If so, how could local community drive and engagement be built into the Suburban University Study Hub operating model?

A single organisation can operate multiple hubs, provided they have the capacity and expertise. However, we would recommend:

University or TAFE/VET: a single institution leads establishment and operates a Hub, working collaboratively with other providers and the community to ensure students have access to appropriate support, regardless of their institution.

With capacity to implement and manage:

Localised Management: Each hub should have local management teams to meet each community's specific needs.

Community Advisory Groups: Establish advisory groups for each hub location to ensure local concerns and insights drive the hub's operations.

Regular Local Needs Assessment: Conduct regular assessments of each hub's community to tailor services.

How could the Suburban University Study Hubs encourage collaboration between hubs and education providers (including universities and VET)?

Shared Platforms: Create digital platforms for sharing resources, curriculum insights, and best practices between hubs and educational providers.

Joint Initiatives: Collaboratively run courses, workshops, and community events that draw upon the strengths of both hubs and educational providers.

Rotational Faculty & Staff: Allow faculty and staff from universities or VET institutions to spend time at the hubs, and vice versa, to foster shared understanding.

Regular Collaboration Meetings: Periodic meetings between hub representatives and educational providers to discuss opportunities, challenges, and strategies.

Combined Student Programs: Facilitate student awareness of VET and University education providers by running combined cohort activities that expose each group to gain awareness of providers and their benefits. Especially in cases where a VET student may be a "first in family" to enter a degree pathway. The shared activities would build an understanding of the varied resources and environments a degree pathway could offer.

Consultation Response Contact:

███████████

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