Values Education Good Practice Schools Project
Stage 2
2006 – 2008

Background information and online application process

Invitation to schools

All schools are invited to take part in the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 2 (VEGPSP-Stage 2). VEGPSP-Stage 2 is part of the Australian Government’s Values Education programme funded with $29.7 million over 4 years (2004–2008). The programme is designed to foster and support improved values education practice in Australian schools. The programme supports the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, which has been endorsed by all Australian Education Ministers.

The VEGPSP-Stage 2 builds on the work of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 1 and will identify, select and fund 25 clusters of schools to design, implement and evaluate quality projects in values education. The projects will have clear objectives, processes and intended outcomes that reflect the adoption and utilisation of the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, with particular emphasis in Stage 2 on:

- integrating values education in teaching programmes in or across key learning areas (KLAs) and into school mission/ethos
- exploring values education in intercultural and global contexts
- explicit values education classroom practices that develop student social skills (by developing student responsibility in intercultural, local, national and global contexts and building student resilience).

This project is being managed by Curriculum Corporation on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

The 25 clusters (between three and ten schools in size) will be selected from an open application process (see details following). Each cluster will be funded with grants ranging from approximately $30,000 to $95,000 to conduct and evaluate projects demonstrating good practice in values education utilising an action research model and then share their findings with the wider education community. Grants will be allocated according to the size of the cluster; however, other factors such as scope and nature of the project will also be taken into consideration.

Successful cluster projects will:

- be of high quality and demonstrate leading practice in values education;
- be funded for a period of 20 months, from July 2006 to March 2008;
- be supported to successfully implement, document and report on their projects by Curriculum Corporation and a university associates network, and by close collaboration with State and Territory departments and the Catholic and independent schools sectors.
The outcomes and learnings from these 25 cluster projects will be disseminated to the wider education community to foster better values education practice in all Australian schools.

**Key dates in the selection of school cluster projects**

1. School clusters submit applications for funding to Curriculum Corporation by COB, **9 June 2006**.
2. Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 2 projects commence July/August 2006.

**Who can apply?**

1. All schools in Australia are eligible to apply. Schools will need to form appropriate clusters.
2. Preferably, clusters will be between a minimum of three and a maximum of ten schools.
3. All applications must be from a cluster of schools, with one school nominated as the lead school.
4. Schools are invited to form clusters that reflect their needs and interests in values education. Clusters could include primary and secondary schools, schools from different backgrounds, schools from across sectors or schools from diverse locations. However, schools may belong to only one cluster for the purposes of this project.
5. Applications are sought from school clusters that reflect different stages in values education: those that are initiating new work, developing further work or consolidating programmes.
6. Please note that for this project multi-campus schools cannot be considered to be a cluster.

**Background to the project**

The VEGPSP-Stage 2 is an initiative of the Australian Government’s Values Education programme. The Values Education programme supports the *National Goals of Schooling for the Twenty-First Century*. The VEGPSP-Stage 2 also draws on the *Values Education Study (2003)*, *National Values Education Forums (2004, 2005)*, the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* and the learnings from the *Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 1 (2005–2006)*. The *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005)* was endorsed by all State and Territory Education Ministers by early 2005. It outlines the vision for values education, guiding principles for effective values education and a set of core shared values, and will be the principal guiding document for the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 2. The Values Education website (http://www.valueseducation.edu.au) provides further background information.

**Project purpose**

The overall purpose of the Stage 2 project is to build on the work of the VEGPSP-Stage 1 and continue to improve values education in Australian schools. It is designed to foster and support future improvements in values education by:

- providing models of good practice in values education developed through the cluster schools’ experience and evidence-based evaluation;
- capturing and disseminating valuable and practical information from school cluster projects that will inform values education practice and teacher professional development within clusters, across clusters and to the broader education community.

**What is a cluster project?**

Projects may be implemented as discrete projects in each school or as an overall cluster project. Clusters should be able to articulate the reasons for joining together as a cluster and how this will facilitate professional learning throughout the project.
How to apply: the application and selection process
Curriculum Corporation will manage the task of identifying and selecting school cluster projects through a competitive application process. This process will identify a variety of well-designed, well-managed school cluster projects that will demonstrate leading practice in values education and have the potential to yield productive outcomes for other school communities. Applicants will complete an online grant application that will be evaluated against a set of criteria (please refer to the section on ‘A quality application’). Final recommendations for the 25 successful projects are made to DEST by a national selection committee. The final selection of clusters will reflect an appropriate balance of schools from a range of sectors (government, independent and Catholic schools) and State and Territory jurisdictions.
Schools interested in applying might refer to the following steps in the process:

**Step 1:** Read all the supporting information:
- Guidelines to completing the application
- The *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools*
- The document entitled ‘Attributes of a Quality Application for the VEGPS Project-Stage 2’

**Step 2:** Identify a number of schools with which to form a possible cluster. Decide which school will take the role of lead school and who might be the lead teacher in developing the application. Decide what your project is in terms of objectives, what you need to do to achieve those objectives and the intended outcomes of your project.

**Step 3:** Proposed school clusters develop, plan and budget for the project proposal. They may seek advice and further information from Curriculum Corporation or from their appropriate local systems officers.

**Step 4:** Complete a response to the selection criteria in MS-Word. Complete the relevant school details on Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 2 Grant Online Application Form. Copy and paste your project description and response (first completed in MS-Word) to the selection criteria section into the grant online application form.

If there are any problems associated with the online application process or if schools prefer to submit a hard copy application, please phone the Values Education Help Desk on (03) 9207 9600 or email: vegps2@curriculum.edu.au

**Step 5:** Applications must be received by Curriculum Corporation by close of business on 9 June 2006.

**Step 6:** Curriculum Corporation will acknowledge receipt of all compliant applications. If applications are deemed non-compliant, the lead schools will be notified. Note that schools will not be allocated additional time to amend non-compliant applications. Applications may be checked or changed at any time until COB, 9 June 2006.

**Step 7:** All receipted and compliant applications will be evaluated against the selection criteria. A short-listed group of applications will be assessed by a national selection panel representative of all jurisdictions and sectors of schooling in Australia. The selection panel’s recommended list will be forwarded to DEST for final approval.

**Step 8:** After the announcement of the successful clusters, Curriculum Corporation will contact these clusters to assist them in developing final detailed project plans prior to signing contracts. Curriculum Corporation will also contact unsuccessful clusters to discuss how they can maintain links with the project.

**Step 9:** Successful VEGPSP-Stage 2 clusters will commence projects in July/August 2006 and representatives from each cluster will take part in a national project briefing session in August 2006.
The application and the selection criteria

School clusters are invited to develop their applications by:

I. Describing their project and how it will place values education at the core of teaching and learning in cluster schools;

II. Addressing the selection criteria. Applications should clearly identify what the schools within the cluster wish to achieve in terms of values education (purposes), how they will go about the work (processes) and what outcomes are expected as a result (products).

I. Describe your project and how it will place values education at the core of teaching and learning in cluster schools

Clearly describe how the project will develop and implement values education in the participating cluster schools by focusing on one or more of the following areas:

• integrating values education in teaching programmes in or across KLAs and school mission/ethos
• exploring values education in intercultural and global contexts
• explicit school and classroom practices that develop student social skills (by developing student responsibility in intercultural, local, national and global contexts and building student resilience).

Your project description should demonstrate your capacity to reflect on existing school practices in consultation with your communities and to plan for improvement.

II. Selection criteria:

1. Use of the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools

Clearly articulate how the project reflects and uses the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005). Before commencing your application you should carefully read the National Framework and decide which aspects of it you intend to implement. A copy of the framework can be downloaded from the values education website. Ensure your intended implementation is realistic. In your application you should specifically indicate where your emphasis will lie in implementing the framework. Every effort should be made to show how your purposes relate to the framework and how your processes will implement some aspect of the framework.

2. The whole-school approach

Describe how the project uses a whole-school approach to values education. The whole-school approach is one of the key principles of the National Framework and states that ‘values education occurs in partnership with students, staff and families and the school community as part of a whole-school approach to educating students, enabling them to exercise responsibility and strengthening their resilience’ (National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, p 5). The application needs to demonstrate how the project proposes to use a whole-school approach in values education.

3. A clear project plan and desired outcomes

In this section describe why you have chosen to focus on a particular area/s and what you intend to achieve in terms of purposes, processes and products. In your application you should explicitly spell out the purpose/s, processes and intended products of your project.

• The purpose/s should indicate what you hope to achieve (these should be stated as goals or objectives), and why you have chosen these particular goals.

• The processes should indicate how you are going to go about achieving your objectives. The application should provide a description of project activities, how they relate to the project purposes, and who will be involved and what their roles will be. This should include a realistic and well-articulated project plan and timeline.
• The **products** are the outcomes you anticipate achieving in the schools as a result of this project.

4. **Capacity and capability to lead and collaborate professionally in a cluster**
   You will need to provide an outline of how the project will be facilitated and managed within the cluster.
   The application should make clear how the cluster arrangement will be used to:
   • provide support for all members of the schools as they implement the project
   • manage the project
   • ensure maximum participation of all cluster schools
   • identify possible risks and strategies to manage those risks, including changes to key staff involved in the project
   • facilitate teacher professional learning that will contribute to quality teaching related to values education
   • provide a professional learning network for those involved.

   The management information should include:
   • the name and role of the overall project coordinator,
   • who will be from the nominated lead school,
   • the names and roles of other identified project leaders from all participating schools within the cluster,
   • and a description of how the cluster schools will participate and work together effectively.

   In this section also indicate what strategies may be undertaken by the cluster to sustain the project beyond the funding period.

5. **Effective and efficient use of resources**
   The project proposal should include an indicative budget that reflects realistic costing and an efficient use of resources. The budget should state explicitly what you propose to use the funds for and what proportions of the total would be used for what. The budget should be presented as a set of discrete line items. To facilitate the development of your budget, a number of suggested line items are included in the budget section of the online application.
   Please note that the grant cannot be used for capital expenditure items.
   Suggested line items include:
   • teacher release for a range of project activities
   • student activities
   • consultants
   • professional development for teachers (conferences, workshops and seminars)
   • visits by staff to other schools and organisations
   • research, evaluation and development of reports
   • administration
   • teaching and learning resources
   • other (you may add a number of other specific line items).

6. **Links with relevant State and Territory policies on values education**
   Before preparing any application prospective applicants should familiarise themselves with the values education policies and frameworks of their State/Territory. Where appropriate the application must make clear how it links to and supports any expressed jurisdictional policy on values education. These links will relate to the sustainability of values education beyond the funded life of the project.
7. Support from school management
   It is a requirement that all applications demonstrate the support of school management in each of the cluster schools nominated for the duration of the project. Brief principals’ testimonials, electronic signatures and other evidence indicating support for the proposal and how the project will contribute to the sustainability of values education in the school should be included in the application. The application should articulate your willingness to share the outcomes of the project with other schools around Australia and with the Australian Government.

Linkages
The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 2 relates to a number of existing programmes in schools, including:

- building student resilience in secondary schools through the National School Drug Education Strategy (funded by the Department of Education, Science and Training) and the MindMatters programmes (a whole-school mental health promotion initiative funded by the Department of Health and Ageing (http://cms.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters/index.htm);
- learning about civic values through the former Discovering Democracy programmes and the Australian Government’s current Civics and Citizenship Education Programme (http://www.curriculum.edu.au/democracy);

Support during the application process
Curriculum Corporation will provide general enquiry support to all clusters during the application process through its Values Education Help Desk. This will be primarily via the Values Education website (http://www.valueseducation.edu.au) and through direct phone and email contact: phone (03) 9207 9600, or email vegps2@curriculum.edu.au.

The State and Territory Values Education contact officers may be able to provide assistance and support during the application process. For information about your State and Territory Values Education contact officers, go to the State and Territory section of the values education website at http://www.valueseducation.edu.au/values/default.asp?id=8772.

Support during implementation of the projects
Curriculum Corporation will use a variety of approaches to provide advice and assistance to school clusters during the implementation phase of their projects. This is to ensure the best possible outcomes for the projects and to ensure that key learning and information about leading practice in values education are gathered to inform future developments in Australian schools.

1. National briefing sessions
   Once clusters have been confirmed, Curriculum Corporation will conduct an initial national briefing session in August 2006 for representatives from each successful cluster. This briefing session will be followed by two further briefing sessions throughout the project. Curriculum Corporation will manage these events and fund representatives from each cluster to take part.

2. State and Territory links
   To provide additional local support Curriculum Corporation will collaborate closely with associates nominated from State and Territory jurisdictions. Curriculum Corporation will support coordinators from each State and Territory jurisdiction in working with clusters through the
establishment of Values Education Networks of Engagement (VENE’s) for each jurisdiction. These networks will meet formally three times in each jurisdiction throughout the life of the project, as well as being a source of jurisdictional support.

3. **University associates network**
   Curriculum Corporation has also established a university associates network (UAN) to support the clusters and the research component of the project. The network will provide expertise from faculties of Education, particularly in relation to school-based action research, the gathering of data, the use of evaluation tools, reporting and evaluating project impacts.

4. **Mentors**
   Curriculum Corporation will facilitate and coordinate ‘mentor partnerships’ between VEGPSP-Stage 1 and VEGPSP-Stage 2 clusters to support and build the capacity of successful VEGPSP-Stage 2 clusters through a direct link to the lessons and expertise of VEGPSP-Stage 1. These partnerships will facilitate the development of professional learning communities, as well as provide support for VEGPSP-Stage 2 clusters.

5. **A help desk**
   Throughout the project Curriculum Corporation will also provide support to clusters via a [Values Education Help Desk](http://www.valueseducation.edu.au). The help desk will use the Values Education website (http://www.valueseducation.edu.au) and direct phone and email contact with the project’s managers. The website will include general project information and updates for participating clusters, including announcements, reports, outlines of projects, a quarterly newsletter, a web-based discussion group for grant clusters/schools, facilitating contact with other clusters/schools, a calendar of events and other materials relating to the project.

**Reporting requirements**
During the project, clusters will be required to submit an initial report, two interim reports and a final report along with supporting documentation. Curriculum Corporation will develop guidelines and templates for all reports to assist clusters. Curriculum Corporation will incorporate findings from the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project-Stage 2 in its final report to the Australian Government in April 2008.

**Further enquiries**
For further information, contact:
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