



University Collaboration Workshop



To diversity and beyond workshop

UQ Women in Engineering hosted the following 18 universities from across Australia and New Zealand at the “To Diversity and Beyond” workshop on 10-11 November 2016:

- Australian National University
- Central Queensland University
- Defence Force Recruiting
- Monash University
- Queensland University of Technology
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
- Southern Cross University
- The University of Adelaide
- The University of Melbourne
- The University of Newcastle
- The University of New South Wales
- The University of Queensland
- The University of the Sunshine Coast
- The University of Western Australia
- University of Colorado Boulder
- University of Southern Queensland
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of Tasmania
- University of Wollongong

Day 1 - Presenters

The first day of workshops included presentations from various organisations and programs. The keynote speaker was Dr. Beth Myers from the University of Colorado (CU) in the United States. Beth is the Director of Access and Recruiting for the College of Engineering and Applied Science at CU and presented on initiatives that have increased enrolment of females from 20% to 33% over the last eight years at CU.

CU was also involved in the Changing the Conversations (CtC) initiative by the National Academy of Engineers (www.engineeringmessages.org). The CtC initiative conducted research and provides resources for improving engineering marketing strategies.

The following people also presented at the workshops:

- Bernardo Leon de la Barra from the University of Tasmania presenting on his integrative STEM project;
- Trent Leggatt, UQ’s Marketing & Communications Manager for EAIT, presented on the development of UQ’s Women in Engineering program;
- Mike Griffin from the Australian Power Institute presented on approaching and involving industry; and
- Alex Bannigan, UNSW, presented on the GO8 Made by Me Campaign (www.madebyme.org.au)



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Day 2 - Lessons Learned Group Discussions

On the second day, a facilitator took the group through a number of exercises to identify ways to work together and share lessons learned on the following key topics:

- Marketing and recruiting to females;
- Engaging with schools, parents and teachers; and
- Collaborating with other universities and industry.

The key lessons learned for each topic have been summarised in the tables below.

The key messages that UQ's Women in Engineering team took away from the workshops as key lessons learned were:

- Review admission policies that may be roadblocks to females pursuing engineering (Dr. Myer's research showed that admission policies at CU were gender biased);
- Increase the quantity of scholarships offered to females even if larger values need to be reduced, i.e., it is less about the value of the scholarship and more about the gesture;
- Create marketing campaigns and structure events that follow the guidelines from the CtC initiative;
- Increase activities with teachers to be more effective in reaching the masses. Many STEM programs seem

to "preach to the converted" by only reaching students already on the pathway to engineering.

- Review effectiveness of programs by survey students more and data analysis. A lot of STEM programs seem to be ad hoc with no analysis of results or effectiveness.
- Be better at emphasising the link between studying science and maths and future careers.

Future Collaboration

It was invaluable to meet people from other universities and begin building relationships. During the general conversations, there were so many lessons shared and many great ideas to consider implementing.

Preparations to make the event annual have already commenced for 2017 and a Facebook group has been established as a means to contact each other and share information.

There is also potential for smaller universities to attend and shadow other university events to assist them with developing their own events in the future.



Topic 1 - Marketing and recruiting to females

What works well	What doesn't work well
Engaging current university students and university student groups (EWB, Robogals, etc.) to promote engineering	Not re-evaluating and reviewing admission requirements and processes
Getting the message right (focus on outcomes and impact rather than the need for math and science skills)	Not reaching students that need us ("preaching to the choir")
Educating about the importance of diversity in the industry	No follow-up or no continuity and too many events in isolation

Topic 2 - Engaging with schools, parents and teachers

What works well	What doesn't work well
Provide teachers with the skills and resources to enable them to become active recruiters	Ad hoc engagement that is not attached to a strategy
Educate parents more through year 11 & 12 student and parent information evenings	Lack of engagement with industry bodies
Using student ambassadors as role models	Lack of long-term longitudinal impact and tracking

Topic 3 - Collaborating with other universities and industry

What works well	What doesn't work well
Getting companies involved in outreach (e.g. funding to go to schools, industry-run workshops, engineers to talk to schools, etc)	'Rogue' people within the university, i.e., multiple people talking to the same companies
Sharing of resources for the bigger picture of promoting engineering	Resources to address the extent of the issues – student, industry, engagement
Provide opportunities for sponsorship packages with different levels of sponsorship to be involved in open days, activities etc.	

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