

CASE STUDY

Pulling Together Resources to Power Classrooms with Technology



Schools need to prepare students for a technology-driven world. Photo: ADB.

A school consortium in Australia partners with industry to create a high-tech learning lab where students get the latest in technology and career opportunities.

Overview

In Australia, a group of secondary schools, each unable to afford top-of-the-range science and technology equipment, have joined together to create a state-of-the-art shared resources center. Based in suburban Melbourne, surrounded by schools, a university and a TVET institute, the Knox Innovation, Opportunity and Sustainability Centre (KIOSC) provides hands-on training in industrial and other technological skills. Its goal is to equip senior students with the knowledge and practical training to enable them to step into technical jobs in the future.

It was set up with support from the Swinburne University of Technology, the Australian Commonwealth Government's Trade Training Centres in Schools Program, and the Knox City Council. .

This case study is based on the presentation of KIOSC director Kate Kent Evans at Asian Development Bank's 2016 International Skills Forum in Manila in September.

Project snapshot

Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• April 2013: Opening Date
Institutions and Stakeholders	Financing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bayswater Secondary College• Boronia K-12 College• Fairhills High School• Rowville Secondary College• Scoresby Secondary College• Wantirna College• Swinburne University of Technology• Knox City Council• Australian Commonwealth Government's Trade Training Centres in Schools Program, Swinburne University of Technology, the Knox Schools Consortium, and the Knox City Council.

Challenges

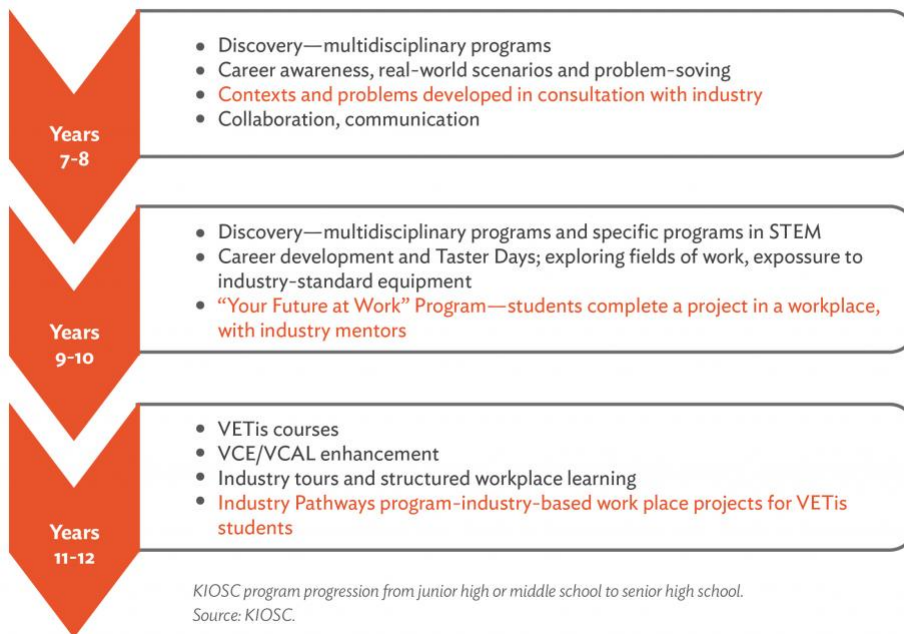
There is a high demand for highly skilled workers in technical jobs. Some schools in Melbourne however were unable to fund their own high-quality science and technology labs, which students need to raise their aspirations and prepare them for careers in technical fields.

Solutions

In response, the Knox Consortium of Schools, the Swinburne University of Technology, and the Knox City Council joined together to establish KIOSC on the Wantirna Campus of Swinburne University. The goal was to pool resources to create a modern high technology learning center that all the participating schools could benefit from. The center provides classroom learning in "real life" work skills that reflect the modern labor market.

The programs provide a hands-on curriculum, high-quality equipment, and support from industry mentors.

KIOSC Program Progression



KIOSC program progression from junior high or middle school to senior high school.
Source: KIOSC.

Results

KIOSC is now working on scaling up projects that resulted from the students' learning experiences with industry. This will give more students the opportunity to understand and prepare for the world of work.

Participating industries are sharing their experience through their contacts and industry organizations. The local Economic Development team is actively seeking more industries to participate in the program.

Some projects are being written up as long-term projects that can be done in schools or at KIOSC to enable mentoring and project guidance in a less intensive way. These projects will all include industry site visits.

Because of the early indicators of success, the Government of Victoria in Australia is now using KIOSC as a model for 10 similar centers.

Lessons

KIOSC is a cost-effective model for sharing resources to give a large number of students access to state-of-the-art technology, training, and career opportunities.

By forming a range of partnerships with industry, schools can access specialists in each field to contribute to curriculum design. And real-world learning experiences.

Resources

Evans, KK. 2016. Engaging with Industry: The KIOSC Approach. Presentation at the 2016 ADB International Skills Forum in Manila on 19 September 2016.

Evans, KK. 2016. Knox Innovation, Opportunity and Sustainability Centre (KIOSC). Slideshow presentation.

Knox Innovation, Opportunity and Sustainability Centre (KIOSC)

Swinburne Institute of Technology. 2016. Tech schools inspired by KIOSC at Swinburne Wantina. April.

Related links

Explainer: Partnering with Industry: Employer and Institute Linkages



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Karina Veal served most recently as a senior education specialist for the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where she provided strategic advice and technical expertise to governments across Asia. She also advocated new approaches for ADB's \$2.7 billion TVET portfolio. Prior to joining ADB in 2012, she provided consulting services in skills for development, advising UN and bilateral agencies; and held public policy roles in the Australian TVET system.

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