

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Growth opportunities in international education in focus**

Australia is poised to capitalise on enormous opportunities in the international education industry, delegates at the Asia Pacific International Education Forum in Hobart were told today.

The forum, initiated by Australian Council for Private Education and Training, is an annual event bringing together education providers, state and federal governments and international guests to discuss onshore and offshore opportunities in international education.

ACPET CEO Rod Camm said international education was a hugely valuable and rapidly evolving industry for Australia.

“International education is already Australia’s largest service export industry and third largest export industry overall, generating \$18.8 billion in export value,” he said.

“Austrade expects that figure to double by 2025 as the number of international students in Australia grows from the current 650,000 currently to approximately 940,000 by 2025.”

The forum was told that international education had attracted an unprecedented level of focus, funding and effort from the Federal Government and Australia’s state governments and territories would collectively spend \$20 million per annum over the next four years implementing international education strategies.

“This momentum is fantastic but we know we need even greater levels of coordination, collaboration and consistency across the country to continue to grow the industry,” Mr Camm said.

Delegates were told that there was stiff global competition for international students with 39 locations around the world aggressively marketing themselves as study destinations.

“There was consensus at the Forum that the key to attracting international students to Australia is a greater focus on the whole of student experience, both inside and outside the classroom,” Mr Camm said.

In addition to attracting international students to Australia, the forum also discussed the opportunities for Australian education and training providers to participate in skilling efforts offshore.

“We’ve heard from speakers from Singapore and India talk about their governments’ efforts to upskill their populations and some great ideas from New Zealand about how we can collaborate across the Tasman,” he said.

India, in particular, has enormous potential as a market for quality Australian education and training providers with their investment of US\$6 billion over three years to upskill their population.

Delegates were also reminded about the power of education and training with a presentation from India’s Meera Shenoy, founder of Youth4Jobs, which provides training for people with disabilities and works with companies to provide employment opportunities.

In four years the organisation has grown from one skilling centre to 22 across 11 Indian states.

“In four years we have touched 125,000 households and worked with 500 companies, convincing them that hiring our people was good for their business,” Ms Shenoy told the Forum.

“One job for a poor young person can lift the entire family out of poverty in a sustainable way. A job is about so much more than money, it creates pride, confidence, self-esteem and builds a better world for tomorrow.”



The Asia Pacific International Education Forum wraps up this afternoon and will be followed by ACPET's National Conference on Thursday and Friday.

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