

VET Research Mentoring

AVETRA

Australian Vocational Education and Training Researchers Association

The AVETRA Research Mentoring Network

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During 08/12 AVETRA is developing a mentoring network that supports new practitioner researchers, specifically those practitioners involved in the communities of practice funded by NCVER. The scheme involves linking experienced researchers with new researchers so that the mentors can support their protégés through four contact meetings a year as they complete their first research projects.

AVETRA has gathered a pool of diversely experienced and located mentors. Experienced in supervising higher degree students, or with specific experiences as researchers in related discipline fields.

This is an opportunity to harness the expertise we have gained in the VET research field and to ensure that it is fed back into the network that will emerge in the next decade.

The NCVER Program

NCVER are currently funding a three-year program (2008-2010) to build researcher capacity in the VET sector. The primary objective of this programme is to build the research skills of practitioners by supporting their progress as they produce and present VET research studies, so they may gain, manage and present NCVER research projects in the future.

The program consists of three core initiatives.

- Victoria University are hosting a *community of practice* for specifically selected new practitioner researchers.
- AVETRA are developing a *mentoring network* to support the practitioners involved in those communities of practice.
- The University of South Australia is promoting *academic scholarships* that encourage VET practitioners to access Honours and Masters research training with a focus on VET research projects.

The New Researcher Scheme – VU - CoP and AVETRA Mentors

The NCVER New Researcher scheme is aimed at individuals who would like to develop research skills in the workplace education and training area.

Participants propose a small research project that is supported by their organisation and learning about research by carrying out the project during the year. They may present their findings at a national conference.

NCVER funds the participants to attend a two-day workshop to kick-start the activity and the participants form a collaborative virtual community of practice. There is a further two day workshop for participants later in the year.

Each participant is assigned an experienced researcher as a mentor.

The aim is for the participants to learn about the research project by doing a project themselves. *It is learning from action*, learning about the complete process. The heart of the scheme is in the participant's project action and their learning about research by doing research. However, the new researchers also produce and present their final reports that are published by NCVER.

We are lucky to have pool of nearly 50 experienced VET researchers as mentors and welcome those who are qualified to join the mentoring group.

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