**Nanjing No.1 Kindergarten Knowledge Exchange Program**

**Expression of Interest Guidelines**

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE: Friday 15 December 2017**

**1. The Nanjing No.1 Kindergarten Knowledge Exchange Program**

1.1 About the program

The Department of Education and Training (DET), in collaboration with the Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education (JPDE), is pleased to invite applications for the Nanjing No.1 Kindergarten (NNK) Knowledge Exchange Program (the Program).

The Program will see three Victorian early childhood teachers (ECTs) undertake a pilot knowledge exchange program at NNK. Three ECTs will be selected for this program and will complete their in-country visit to China from 11 May to 25 May 2018.

This exciting opportunity will allow participants to:

* build new professional partnerships
* share their knowledge of the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and the underlying theories and pedagogy
* optimise leadership skills through leading reflective discussion
* consider new pedagogy and practice and its application to the Victorian early childhood context to improve outcomes for children.

1.2 About NNK

Nanjing No.1 Kindergarten is the oldest and largest kindergarten in Jiangsu Province, China and is widely respected for its approach to early childhood education and care. As the first certified Chinese/English bilingual early childhood service in Jiangsu Province, NNK places great value on knowledge sharing with international education organisations and has previously hosted ECTs from the United States, Canada and New Zealand.

The Nanjing Early Childhood Development Research and International Exchange Centre is co-located on campus and aims to create an international hub for early childhood excellence. As well as providing innovative learning environments for the children, the Centre conducts collaborative research programs. A recent project has seen NNK build its own ‘Children’s Museum’ for children to explore, discover and initiate their own learning.

1.3 Program outcomes

The Program will aim to achieve the following outcomes:

* identify good practice and its application in a Victorian context while in-country
* develop professional partnerships and share Victorian practice and pedagogy
* optimise the ability to articulate the *why* behind practice and pedagogy
* build, develop and expand the leadership capacity and capabilities of Victorian early childhood teachers.

**2. Terms and Conditions**

2.1 Funding

* DET will fund the program including flights, accommodation and a daily allowance. Pro-rata relief teaching backfill for time spent in-country and attendance at program commitments will be provided for approved participants.

2.2 Eligibility

Applicants must be Australian citizens/permanent residents who are:

* ECTs, fully registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, with a minimum of four years’ teaching experience in the early childhood sector
* currently delivering a state-funded kindergarten program at a Victorian early childhood education and care service
* delivering this kindergarten program at an early childhood education and care service with a service quality rating of Exceeding the National Quality Standard in Quality Area 1 (Educational Program and Practice), or has previously worked at a service at the time it was rated Exceeding in Quality Area 1.

Please note that an ability to speak Chinese or experience with Chinese culture and/or language is **not** a requirement for this program.

2.3 Participant requirements

Participants will be expected to:

* seek endorsement for their application from their service management and/or approved provider prior to submission
* attend a pre- and post-travel support briefing and be available to travel to China from 11 May to 25 May 2018
* under guidance of a DET group leader, undertake an action research project on an agreed pedagogy or practice within agreed timelines.
* present their findings on return to Victoria at a network and/or conference event as agreed with the Department.
* participate in an interview and photoshoot with the Department’s Communications Division to create a short news article on their experience as required.

2.4 Action research project

Victoria is committed to building genuine connections in China, with cooperation in the early childhood sector representing an exciting step in the Victoria-China early childhood relationship. Reflective practice is a core part of all early childhood professionals’ work. It is vital that Victorian services encourage a learning culture and aim for continuous improvement to enable all children to thrive.

Throughout the program, participants will use the VEYLDF Practice Principles and Learning and Development Outcomes as tools to apply reflective thinking skills around pedagogy and practice.

A DET group leader will assist participants to identify educational practice or pedagogy that holds shared value in both China and Victoria. Participants will then reflect on the approaches to implementation across differing cultural contexts. Upon arrival back in Victoria, participants will present on their experiences at an appropriate early childhood network and/or conference event as agreed with the Department. Presentations will include an overview of the research and findings.

Upon arrival back in Victoria, Communications Division will conduct a photoshoot/video and interview with participants about their experiences in Nanjing. For example, the interview and photos may feature on the Department’s website or in a publication such as the Early Childhood News.

2.5 Selection criteria

The key selection criteria will guide the assessment of applications. The key selection criteria are as follows:

1. Demonstrated understanding of how program participation will benefit your role and work
2. Demonstrated ability to develop professional partnerships
3. Ensures equity and inclusion for all children
4. Strong understanding of the VEYLDF
5. Demonstrated leadership ability

Each application must address the key selection criteria within the word count specified in the expression of interest form.

**3. Application and approvals process**

**EOIs must be submitted between Monday 13 November 2017 – Friday 15 December via the following link:** [**https://detearlyyears.smartygrants.com.au/nnkknowledgeexchange**](https://detearlyyears.smartygrants.com.au/nnkknowledgeexchange)

**Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.**

3.1 Stage 1 – Expression of Interest Approval

* Applicants are required to submit detailed responses to the key selection criteria via the link above.
* EOIs must be approved and endorsed with comments by the applicant’s service coordinator/director, early years manager, a member of the committee of management or equivalent.
* The Department may contact the applicant or their service to obtain further information in relation to applications if required.

3.2 Stage 2 – Shortlisting and interviews

* A panel will short-list applicants on a competitive basis based on their responses and in accordance with the Program’s Terms and Conditions.
* The Department will contact the applicant regarding the outcome of their EOI in late-January 2018.
* Applicants will be invited to attend a panel interview if their application progresses past shortlisting.
* Due to the large volume of anticipated applications, the Department may not be able to provide individual feedback on unsuccessful EOIs.

3.3 Key dates

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| Stage | Date |
| EOI applications open | Monday 13 November 2017 |
| EOI applications close | Friday 15 December 2017 |
| Notification of outcome | Late January 2018 |
| Panel interviews (if requested) | Early February 2018 |
| Pre-travel support briefing | Late April 2018 |
| In-country component | 11-25 May 2018 |
| Post-travel support briefing | Early April 2018 |
| Action research projects due to DET | November 2018 |
| Presentation at conference | TBC 2019 |

3.4 Contact

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