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| Higher Education and Skills Group**Participation Branch Memo****Department of Education and Early Childhood Development** |

***NUMBER:*** *2015 / July / XX*

**TO:**

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| Learn Local organisations *– ALL*  |   | ACFE Regional Councils |
| Adult Education Institutions | Learn Local stakeholders  |   |
| Participation Branch staff |   |   |

**FROM:** Bronwen Heathfield, Director, Participation Branch

**DATE:** XX/07/2015

**SUBJECT: Publication of 2014 Learn Local business survey : “The changing face of community business 2014’.**

**ACTIONS / CRITICAL DATES:**

**Note the findings of the 2014 Learn Local business survey.**

**Hard copies of the report have been posted to Learn Local organisations and the report will also be available on the Department of Education and Training Website at** [**http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/ace.aspx**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/ace.aspx)

**Background to 2014 Learn Local Business Survey**

* A survey of Learn Local organisations has been undertaken by CWCC on behalf of the ACFE Board for the past five years. The information collected assists the ACFE Board to plan its support for the sector, and promotes the critical contribution of Learn Local within the Victorian training system.
* A final report on outcomes of the Learn Local survey undertaken over September/October 2014 has now been published. Hard copies are being mailed to Learn Local organisations and it will also be available on the Department of Education and Training Website at [**http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/ace.aspx**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/ace.aspx)
* I would like to thank all those who took the time to participate in the 2014 Survey, which is a key source of advice to the ACFE Board about issues and challenges being faced by the sector.
* I know that for many Learn Local practitioners, finding time to complete the survey can be challenging. Please note that your ongoing feedback through initiatives such as this survey is highly valued, and provides an influential evidence base for many of the ACFE Board initiatives undertaken on the sector’s behalf.

**Highlights from the 2014 Learn Local Business Survey**

**About the survey**

* The 2014 survey included questions about the role of Learn Local providers in their community, key clients, markets and services, partnerships, people capability and capacity and a snapshot of Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and non-RTO providers.
* 125 organisations completed the survey (40% of ACFE funded community organisations) which is slightly lower than the previous survey – possibly due to it being opened later in the year.
* 44% of organisations in the sample were RTOs and 66% were Neighbourhood Houses (consistent with previous years).

**Community Context**

* Most RTO respondents (91%) indicated that their broader community viewed them as an education and training provider – compared to 71% of non- RTO respondents
* Many non-RTO respondents (71%) indicated that their broader community viewed them as a social hub – compared to 29% of RTOs.
* Key challenges in responding to broader community needs primarily related to funding and resources.

**Partnerships**

83% indicated they were working with/partnering with other organisations to provide programs and services including education and training, administration, finance and marketing.

**Training Delivery**

In terms of challenges faced in adjusting delivery to suit client needs, factors raised included

* accommodating different skill levels, cultural backgrounds, language/literacy levels and disabilities
* implementing online delivery
* gathering information about clients
* logistical issues such as location and accessibility of delivery, timing and class sizes.

**RTOs**

* 98% of respondents had been an RTO for five or more years and most were planning to retain their RTO status for the next 2-3 years.
* Most indicated they provided programs to the community that would not otherwise be available.
* Most cited private RTOs as their main competitors, followed by TAFE institutes.

**Non RTOs**

46% of Non RTOs reported partnering with RTOs to provide access to accredited training programs, and the vast majority indicated positive benefits to the organisations and to the community. All expected the partnership to continue.

**Financial**
57% of respondents indicated their organisation made a surplus, 29% a loss and 14% broke even. Corresponding surplus figures over previous years have been 73% in 2009, 69% in 2010, 63% in 2011 and 57% in 2012. It is not clear whether these differences reflect genuine variation or are due to sampling or other issues.