

Philanthropy and Partnerships

Context

Queensland state schools currently have a great deal of autonomy. This acknowledges that decisions made at the local level more accurately reflect the needs of the students.

In addition, more flexibilities are being employed through the establishment of *Independent Public Schools* and *Empowering Local Schools*. These initiatives will extend opportunities to cut through red tape and layers of management to enhance Queensland's innovation culture.

Relationships between schools and businesses that employ structured philanthropic activities through the engagement of the broader community can effectively target local priority areas for improvement.

What is it?

Educational philanthropy is the planned and structured giving of money, actions and resources designed to improve schooling experiences and outcomes.

Why do it?

A key purpose of philanthropic engagement in public education is to strengthen social, human, intellectual and financial capital where school and community partnerships create collective action to provide greater opportunities, address educational disadvantage, and ultimately enhance outcomes.

Examples of educational philanthropy:

Areas of local decision making and capacity building include:

- school and business representatives meeting to share information about changes in the nature of the workplace, patterns of employment, and educational priorities and practice
- the establishment of an alumni which encourages former attendees and graduates of the school to volunteer, donate money or in kind gifts, raise funds or advocate for the school
- discussions between businesses and schools to look for opportunities for business to support the local implementation of all areas of the curriculum

- encouraging local business and media to promote the achievements of the local school and students
- arranging for students and their teachers to visit local businesses for real-life experiences related to the curriculum
- collaboration between local businesses and schools to develop and extend existing VET in Schools programs
- school and business groups holding joint training and development events about issues such as attendance, communication, equity, leadership, motivation, change management, quality management, stress management and effective meeting strategies.

Strategies

There are several practical strategies that can be successfully implemented by schools to support and extend their school–business relationships. Some examples are described below:

- develop the school's overall image in the local community
- develop a network of local businesses and industry, including the local chamber of commerce
- identification of a primary spokesperson to represent the school to the local business community
- incorporate school–business activities and events into the school calendar
- establish a public information strategy.

Benefits

Research has identified the mutually beneficial outcomes derived from philanthropic relationships between schools, communities and business. Developing close and beneficial links between stakeholders is fundamentally important and advantageous to public education with outcomes including:

- strengthening social networks and engagement in schooling
- promoting innovation and contributions to policy and practice
- increasing additional capital resources such as information communication technologies
- providing an avenue for growth and refinement of philanthropic and corporate social responsibility practice in business

- highlighting the importance of education in meeting social and economic goals
- providing opportunities to address disadvantage and complex social issues through a collaborative approach
- extending the number of quality participants and strategies that link schools to philanthropic support.

Taxation Incentives

Schools may apply to the Australian Taxation Office for endorsement of Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status for school building funds and/or school library funds. P&C Associations can only establish school building funds.

Endorsement as a DGR means that the donating person or organisation can claim tax deductions for the gifts that they make to the school building or library funds. Gifts for purposes other than these funds are not tax deductible.

However, it should be noted that all gifts of \$2.00 or more to government special schools are tax deductible.

Useful resources

State Procurement Policy

<http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/supplydisposal/GovernmentProcurement/ProcurementPolicyGuidance/StateProcurementPolicy/Pages/default.aspx>

Financial Management Practice Manual

<https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/Finance/FinancialManagement/Pages/Default.aspx>

Australian Council for Educational Research <http://www.acer.edu.au/leap/>