

## **Competitive Grants Program**

### **Assessment Report May 2006**

A total of 156 applications in the form of expressions of interest and full proposals were received in the ratio of about 4:1. From the expressions of interest, the Board Standing Committee has approved 28 applications to submit full proposals and 6 full proposals to be further considered in the second round. Five full proposals have been approved for funding.

The assessment of full proposals was based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to program criteria as listed in the Program Guidelines
- Quality of project design
- Value for money
- Importance of proposed project outcomes to the Carrick Institute's mission, objectives and responsibilities
- Capacity of the project team to deliver the proposed outcomes

The assessment of expressions of interest was based on the following criteria:

- Relevance of program criteria as listed in the Program Guidelines, in particular those dealing with the scope and intent of the program, the significance of the proposed change and potential usefulness beyond the project site
- Approach of the proposed project
- Importance of anticipated deliverables and outcomes

General comments regarding the applications:

- The number and variety of proposals suggested a high level of commitment to teaching.
- The applications represented a variety of interests as was expected in this program. Some important issues were identified in the submissions. These have been noted and will be considered when the guidelines are reviewed at the end of the year.
- There were a number of high quality proposals and promising expressions of interest.
- Many applicants took the team approach seriously. There were many applications that involved collaboration and these were often the strongest applications.
- Quite a number of applications failed to address or gave limited attention to the criteria:

*Potential usefulness of the project and its outcome to any of the following:*

- *the sector as a whole*
- *particular kinds of organisations within the sector*

- *the development of national approaches or policies related to learning and teaching in higher education*

As the range of issues that could be addressed in applications was vast, this criteria was very important when deciding those projects that should be funded or those expressions of interest that should be asked to develop expressions of interest.

- Submissions need to demonstrate an awareness of what has been done in the field in which their project is located in terms of practice and the literature.
- Some applications which were primarily research proposals were not methodologically sound or were limited by the methodology proposed.
- Priority one – *research and development focusing on issues of emerging and continuing importance* was used as a catch-all area to justify projects that did not align with the Carrick Institute's purpose.
- In the poorer proposals, there was often limited consideration given to dissemination and the potential wider implications/applicability. To assist in developing this aspect of the proposal, applicants should refer to the Carrick Dissemination Framework and the two reports on dissemination available under [Dissemination](#) on the Carrick Institute website.
  - *Strategies for effective dissemination of project outcomes (2005)*
  - *Dissemination, adoption and adaptation of project innovations in higher education.*
- All expressions of interest and full proposals must make explicit the nature of the outcomes anticipated from the project including those that focus on research.
- On the whole budgets were not well developed for full proposals and were not supported by explicit links to the project outcomes. If international travel is proposed, there needs to be a clear relationship between the travel and the project outcomes. The Carrick Institute will not fund computers, mobiles and large equipment budgets.
- On the whole there was little evidence that institutions themselves have taken a role in shaping applications, though it was very clear academics in some universities were responding to an institutional priority as there were multiple applications from that institution addressing a particular issue.