

The Project:

Monash Gippsland has received \$1.7m federal funding to increase participation of rural and indigenous students in higher education and has established the Gippsland Access & Participation (GAP) project to address the educational challenges faced by Gippsland students, their teachers and their families. In a departure from standard practice, the GAP project will take the university to the schools and communities of Far East and South Gippsland and it is expected that all Project activities will benefit all Gippsland students and have nation-wide relevance.



The GAP project is closely aligned to the aims of the *Gippsland Youth Commitment* and builds on the close relationship between the university and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The Programs:

Science in Schools aims to increase student participation in maths and sciences in secondary schools and to establish learning networks that will support isolated maths and science teachers. Key activities include the *Monash University Gippsland Campus Roadshow*; increased engagement between secondary and tertiary students through a mentor program and workshops for VCE Science students. Alternative pathways to higher education for regional students, such as TAFE pathways, will also be explored. These measures are aimed at improving participation of regional students in higher education, thereby delivering graduates appropriately qualified to meet the regional demand for skilled science and engineering professionals and addressing critical shortages in the rural and regional medical workforce.

Koorie Access will extend the existing Koorie Footprints program through the funding of a Resource Officer for the duration of the project. This will enable existing workshop and field activities to be expanded; new activities to be further engaged indigenous students to be developed and longer term planning to be achieved.



Funds will also be allocated to support curriculum development for the introduction of the Koorie Diploma of Tertiary Studies (DoTS) (one year program) and to support the Koorie Cohort of Indigenous post graduate students.

Secondary Mathematics will develop online tutorial materials and printed topic guides to support secondary mathematics teachers and students, particularly those teaching in Years 7-10. Secondary mathematics studies are particularly challenging in regional areas where the availability of qualified teachers is limited and access to professional development is restricted; many teachers in rural schools and regional towns feel isolated and unsupported. The GAP project coincides with the first stages of development of a new *National Curriculum in Mathematics* therefore the materials developed will be relevant Australia wide.

Professional development for Gippsland maths and science teachers, traditionally Melbourne based activities, will complement all programs. The project will also deliver local VCE assessors' meetings and an annual maths/science teachers' conference, establishing a true community of maths/science educators throughout Gippsland.

Program Leaders:

Science in Schools:	Jenny Mosse	Jenny.Mosse@sci.monash.edu.au
Koorie Access:	Kylie Clarke	Kylie.Clarke@adm.monash.edu.au
Secondary Mathematics:	Alistair Carr	Alistair.Carr@sci.monash.edu.au

Increasing participation of rural and indigenous students in higher education.

Room 3W148
Monash University Gippsland
Churchill Victoria Australia 3842
Telephone Local 5122 6542 STD 03 9902 6542
GAPproject@adm.monash.edu.au
www.gippsland.monash.edu.au/programs/gap