

## **Priority Projects Program Assessment Report 2008**

A total of 125 applications in the form of 77 expressions of interest and 48 full proposals were received.

The assessment of full proposals was based on the following criteria defined in the program guidelines using a scale of 1- 5:

- Project outcomes and rationale
- Approach
- Value and need for the project
- Value for money and project management
- Capacity of project team to deliver proposed outcomes

The assessment of expressions of interest was based on the following criteria defined in the program guidelines using a scale of 1- 5:

- Proposed outcomes and rationale
- Approach of the proposed project
- Value and need for the project

### **General Comments regarding the applications:**

- Many of this year's projects are genuinely collaborative and utilise the advantage of networking
- 21 applications built on work done previously by other projects funded by Carrick Institute
- The new priority area - Curriculum development/renewal attracted a large number of applications and accounted for the growth in the program
- Applications focusing on peer review need better attention to the criteria of promotion outcome.
- The "success rate" from this round is quite low. There were a lot of projects not worthy of support, but a number of great ideas will be turned down on this round. One assessor wrote in support of the need for better/more funding for the work of Carrick.
- The quality of applications was very varied. One assessor commented that considerable number of EOIs seemed to be at an early stage of development.
- In the stronger applications, there was a good representation of current educational issues with applications demonstrating need and great value using innovative ideas, approaches and solutions

- In the weaker applications, the weaknesses identified in applications included:
  - Methodology and theoretical underpinnings were very poor in some applications; there was also a lack of reference to key literature
  - There was a lack of genuine collaboration with other institutions/professional bodies
  - Where collaboration was proposed, the following observations were made:
    - a lack of clarity of the roles/contributions of each partner
    - a lack of appreciation of complexity/costs involved in collaborative projects
    - very little links to other/previous projects done in that area; this often results in the issue of generalisation across the sector
  - Many applications failed to adapt their project to the particular priority area/criteria.
  - Embedding and dissemination still remains problematic.
  - A lack of understanding of the importance of contributing more broadly to the enhancement of learning and teaching in higher education.
  - Many applications had not been proof-read adequately as applications were incomplete and/or with numerous spelling/grammatical errors which are indicators of them being hastily prepared
  - Some applications applying under the priority area - curriculum development/renewal were within the normal realm of practice.