**FAQ**

**Q: What are the expected outcomes of the project? How will these outcomes be measured?**

**A:** The Small Town Rejuvenation Community Action Plan project is expecting to achieve the following outcomes:

- Identify specific community assets and windows of opportunity for which individual action plans are prepared
- Produce a community five year plan
- Undertake a tangible physical project that enhances the community of Coleambally
- Provide UOW students with the opportunity to take their skills into rural NSW, work collaboratively and engaging with people from different backgrounds.
- The town of Coleambally will be empowered to have the ideas, motivation and tools to seek rejuvenation. The project requires that the community be responsible for the future direction and success of the town. The team of students will be responsible for the successful facilitation of this process.
- Enhance the graduate qualities of participating students and their overall student experience by making an important contribution to society and their chosen field.

The success of the project will be measured through:

- The number of students that get involved in the project
- The number of community members the team will engage in conversation
- The attendance and participation in the week’s events, most significantly the final town meeting
- The number and value of ideas that are developed
- A general evaluation of the overall experience through an evaluation survey, feedback and interviews.

**Q: How these outcomes will be self-sustaining after the funding period?**

**A:** Our goals are to assist every community member during our visit, helping them to see their town in a new light. This will be measured by the number of people that we engage in conversation with, the attendance and participation in the week’s events, most significantly the final town meeting, as well as the number and value of the ideas that are developed.

The tangible measurement of this project is the presentation of an action plan which compiles the key findings of the week’s activities. This will be presented to Coleambally within a month of the week that we spend in the town. This action plan will be a 5 year plan which will be implemented by a local committee which has already been established and has agreed to take on this task.

There is a clear understanding between the Student Community Impact Team, The Bank of Ideas and Coleambally that this is an ongoing project based on the charrette process. The town of Coleambally will seek funding from adequate sources to implement the recommended changes.

This project and the group’s ongoing experience will be documented and developed into a project frame work. This can then be used in the future as a model for other small town rejuvenation projects giving the opportunity for future students to be engaged in and contribute to society.

**Q: How will this project benefit the community? How can we demonstrate that there is a community need or demand for the project’s outcomes?**
The community of Coleambally has had its main industry removed by legislation. This has brought the town to a cross road at which it is vital to foster new ideas and innovations to ensure the town’s future. The town itself has sought the opinion of small-town renewal expert Peter Kenyon in order to solve their current problems. This project meets the specific needs of the town and is recommended by Peter Kenyon as the most effective means of enhancing the future prospects and rejuvenation of Coleambally.

The Bank of Ideas website recognises that rural communities have been subjected to great change in the last few decades. This change has been influenced by shifts in the demand for land and resources, technological advancement, environmental concerns and the transformation of national and international economic systems. The results of these influences can be found in the changing profile of rural communities. Where some rural areas and regional centres have grown, other small towns have declined, losing residents, valuable services and employment opportunities.

The ultimate aim of this project is to have a lasting effect in Coleambally through the development of skills, local leadership and competencies within the town to enhance their capacity to manage change and stimulate local development. The Student Community Impact Team aims to empower Coleambally to overcome weaknesses through building upon the vision, skills, opportunities, imagination and spirit of the local community.

The University of Wollongong community will benefit from this project as it will gain more highly educated, knowledgeable and professionally capable students which could ultimately enhance the university’s reputation as an innovative educational institution, which provides diverse opportunities for its students.

Q: How does this project relate to the University’s strategic priorities in community engagement?
A: It is one of the University’s strategic priorities to “strengthen connections to the community through improved channels for interaction and mutually beneficial projects”.

The ‘Small Town Rejuvenation’ project aims to form a mutually beneficial partnership with the rural town of Coleambally through which the community will gain access to the skills and expertise of UOW students and staff and at the same time provide UOW students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge and work collaboratively with people in a rural environment.

It is a fantastic opportunity for UOW students to engage with a community that is in need of support and to assist in making a difference.

The team’s strong partnership with the Bank of I.D.E.A.S is likely to create a number of future opportunities to undertake similar projects in conjunction with small towns in NSW.

Q: Who supports this project?
A: “It will be a privilege and a pleasure to work with the team. I love your passion and enthusiasm and I’m sure we can create a memorable and lasting impact for both the town and the participating students.” – Peter Kenyon

Peter Kenyon, the founder and Director of the Bank of IDEAS is working closely with the student team and provides guidance for the project. Peter is a social entrepreneur and community enthusiast. Over the last decade he has worked with
over 1000 communities throughout Australia and overseas seeking to facilitate fresh and creative ways that stimulate community and economic renewal.

Peter has been in regular contact with the team over the planning of the project. He will also be a key figure on the ground during the project.

The town of Coleambally has submitted a project proposal to the student team (proposal attached) outlining their support of the project and any assistance the town will be able to provide. Lynne Stuckings, president of the Coleambally Chamber of Commerce and leader of a local resident action group, is the team's key contact in the town of Coleambally. In addition, the team has asked the town to form a task group to support the Student Community Impact Team and to promote and improve the success of the project.

The Centre for Student Engagement at the University of Wollongong has provided close guidance in the development of this project and is committed to ensuring the successful achievement of the project's outcomes.

Q: What's the proposed schedule for the project and how's the progress so far?
A: The Community Impact Team has been engaged in the process of designing a small-town rejuvenation project for the past two months. As a part of this process we have undergone a training day with representatives of the Bank of I.D.E.A.S. and have laid substantial groundwork for the success of the project.

Starting during mid year Orientation Week the team will recruit students to participate in the project. Faculties will be approached for recommendations of high achieving and motivated students.

The team is planning to visit the town of Coleambally on August 7th to familiarise itself with the town, undertake surveys, meet with the local committee and engage in further consultation within the community.

From 28th September to 2nd October 25 University of Wollongong students, two Centre for Student Engagement staff members and two representatives from the Bank of I.D.E.A.S. will engage the town of Coleambally in a series of community discussions and facilitate activities to enhance their capacity to manage change and stimulate local development.

Within 4 weeks of this week long process, an action plan will be presented to the town, including the findings of the charette process and key recommendations. This action plan will be a 5 year plan which will be implemented by a local committee which has already been established and has agreed to take on this task.

Simultaneously, the Student Community Impact Team will develop a blueprint of the process used in order to provide a model for future students working in small-town rejuvenation.

Recently, the project has been on the front pages of Coleambally news paper.

Q: What are students' roles?
A: Student participation involves:
- Assist in physical project to leave a long term impact at town
• Facilitating communication to draw out the visions and ideas that the locals hold about their town to identify potential areas of opportunity for them to move forward
• Assist in drafting an action plan for Coleambally
• Be involved in one of five focus groups as your major role during the week at Coleambally

Q: How to apply and when does the application close?
A: Applications must be received by 16th August 2009 (end of week 3), sent either via email to Lee at fj941@hotmail.com.au or to Katie in person at the CSE offices, on the first floor of the UniCentre (Building 11). The Community Impact Leadership Team will undertake the assessment process and final decision is made by Hendrik, the project facilitator.

Q: When is the training day for students and what is it about?
A: The Training Day is on Saturday of week 5 29th August The goal of the Training Day is to install creativity, the passion for positive change into students and black opal in line with the community project. Make each student know others better through communication. Sometimes people fear to do so because of negative norms (protect the status quo). Use our activities to build positive norms of communication, such as Open communication.

Q: What are the five focus groups students can join and what is it about?
A: There will be five main target groups available to join:

• Youth
• Art/Culture/Infrastructure
• Tourism
• Business
• Environmental Sustainability

Successful applicants will be working in a team to facilitate a community action plan for the rural town Coleambally. This involves event planning and event facilitation and participation. Students’ major role during the week at Coleambally will be work focus on one of the topic listed above.

Q: Can students gain credit points from this internship?
A: Those students wanting to gain credit points for this position need to enrol for ARTS301. The pre-requirements for ARTS301 are: You need to have 96 credit points and need to have a selective interview with Glenn Mitchell (email: glmitchel@uow.edu.au, or phone 4221 3723) from the faculty of Arts. The subject ARTS301 worth 8 credit points. You don not need to be an arts student to enrol, the credit points may go as elective.