

Professional Participation

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Project Title	Enhancing the Professional Participation of Science Teachers
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Period	2007
Funding Agency	SiMERR
Organisational Base	SIMERR WA

Description

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This initiative was aimed at encouraging and supporting the work of rural or remote WA science teachers, by providing them with a unique and rare opportunity to have access to and contribute to an international science education community. Specifically, following advertisement to all school and individual members of the Science Teachers Association of Western Australia (STAWA), four teachers were sponsored to attend and present at an international science education conference – the 2007 World Conference on Science and Technology Education (ICASE2007 – Conference of the International Council of Associations for Science Teaching, and CONASTA 56 – Conference of the Australian Science Teachers Association). The conference was held in Perth, 8-12 July 2007.

Participants

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Four teachers (2 primary and 2 secondary) from regional, rural or remote schools in Western Australia.

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The four presentations at the World Conference were:

- Implementing an Inter-School Science ‘Carnival’ – Michael Smith, Frankland Primary School
- Bush Science with Technology, Enterprise and Environmental Education – Allan Whittome, Badgingarra Primary School
- Exploring How Using Interactive Whiteboards in Teaching Engages Indigenous Students in a Remote Community – Hannah Nagle, Laverton Remote Community School
- Engaging Students in Local Agricultural Issues – Jacqueline Wheatley-Chadwick, Boddington District High School

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This project focused on encouraging science teachers to share ‘best practice’ endeavours with the wider science education community, particularly with regard to science learning and teaching practices that cater for and reflect features of rural or remote school education. Although small in scope, involving only four teachers (two secondary and two primary teachers), the impact on professional learning was broader, because of the participatory nature inherent in professional sharing with an international audience.

In addition, later in 2007, one of the teachers in this project was awarded the WA Premier’s Award for Primary Science Teaching. Thus, through SiMERR contact with the school a new SiMERR project was established, Science in the Bush, a case study of a rural school’s implementation of school-wide, across the curriculum, successful science education programs.

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