

## **Tasmania's Place in the Asian Century**

Response from the University of Tasmania to the White paper

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## **Executive Summary**

This is the official University of Tasmania response, noting that formal communication between UTAS and the Government on matters related to the White Paper will be conducted through the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement), Professor Peter Frappell.

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) response follows the format of the Tasmanian Government's issues paper and provides detailed discussion of a range of matters designed to ensure that Tasmania derives full benefit from its participation in the Asian Century. In this executive summary we profile key matters and provide core recommendations, particularly in areas that relate most closely to UTAS activity. These key issues are:

- The need for full social and cultural engagement with Asia to ensure sustainable economic relationships
- The expansion of overseas student numbers in Tasmania and the clear social, cultural and economic benefits this expansion will bring to the State
- The provision of Asia-related skills and knowledge for Tasmanians – especially the young Tasmanians who will lead the State into the Asian Century
- The significance of UTAS research to Asia
- The need to regard Asia as a site of diversity and to respond accordingly with a range of Asia-related expertise
- The desirability of establishing an Asia Engagement Council with State Government, UTAS, business and community representation, including representation from Brand Tasmania

These issues align with those noted by Dr Henry<sup>1</sup>, the author of the Commonwealth Government's White Paper on *Australia in the Asian Century*:

- How we educate our children
- How business operates in the region
- Cultural and language competency, and
- Australia's place in the strategic architecture of the region.<sup>2</sup>

Each of the points raised by Dr Henry can and should be translated to the Tasmanian context if the State is to develop its full economic, social and cultural potential over coming decades. Entry into Asian related endeavours and enterprises will present research and development challenges and innovation opportunities for all Australians. This initiative on the part of the State Government will position Tasmania in the most advantageous possible way in forthcoming Asia-related activities.

In the following we detail the above key issues associated with successful Asian engagement and provide core recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Ken Henry, 'The nation's biggest public policy challenges and opportunities.' Address delivered to Structural Change and the Rise of Asia conference jointly hosted by the IMF, Treasury and RBA, Wednesday 19 September 2012. Available at [http://www.treasury.gov.au/PublicationsAndMedia/Events/~/\\_media/Treasury/Publications%20and%20Media/Upcoming%20Events%20and%20Presentations/Structural%20change%20and%20the%20rise%20of%20Asia/Transcripts/PDF/2\\_Dr\\_Ken\\_Henry.ashx](http://www.treasury.gov.au/PublicationsAndMedia/Events/~/_media/Treasury/Publications%20and%20Media/Upcoming%20Events%20and%20Presentations/Structural%20change%20and%20the%20rise%20of%20Asia/Transcripts/PDF/2_Dr_Ken_Henry.ashx). Accessed 1 October 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Key issues and core recommendations

1. The need for full social and cultural engagement with Asia to ensure sustainable economic relationships

The key questions given in the Tasmanian Government's issues paper reads as follows:

*How can Tasmania best position itself to capture current and emerging economic opportunities in Asia?*<sup>3</sup>

As explained in our detailed response, UTAS recommends modifying the question given above to read:

*How can Tasmania integrate its engagement with Asia in order to promote the State's growth, prosperity, and economic and social security throughout the Asian Century?*

We strongly support the position that high-powered economic engagement with Asia is most sustainably achieved by full social and cultural engagement, in addition to education, business and financial undertakings.

***That the State Government integrate its engagement with Asia – and the many diverse sites that comprise Asia – into its strategic policies and plans for Tasmania in order to promote the State's growth, prosperity, economic and social security throughout the Asian Century.***

2. The expansion of overseas student numbers in Tasmania and the clear social, cultural and economic benefits this expansion will bring to the State

UTAS is strongly committed to the expansion of international student numbers and the social, cultural and economic benefits these will bring. The substantive section of our response draws on a number of recent papers that provide evidence of the relationship between international student presence and the cultural and economic prosperity of communities. We also refer to successful partnerships between tertiary providers and State Governments in other parts of Australia which have maximised the benefits, cultural and social as well as economic, of encouraging the reception of overseas students among members of the broader community.

***That the State Government works in partnership with UTAS to develop strategies for a positive whole of Tasmanian community reception for overseas students studying around the State.***

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<sup>3</sup>Department of Premier and Cabinet (Tasmania) Policy Division, *Tasmania's Place in the Asian Century: Issues Paper*. August 2012. Available at: [http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/171448/Issues2012.pdf](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/171448/Issues2012.pdf). Accessed 24 September 2012, p. 5/35.

3. *The provision of Asia-related skills and knowledge for Tasmanians, especially the young Tasmanians who will lead the State into the Asian Century.*

A high level of Asia-related skills and knowledge – including Asian languages – will be critical for Tasmania’s full and successful participation in the Asian century. UTAS has a wide suite of Asian related offerings and looks forward to further collaboration with the State to determine how these might be best expanded or modified to meet Tasmania’s needs. In the substantive response we detail a number of concrete policy initiatives that can assist to this end, particularly in the schooling sector.

***That the State Government implement the necessary policy initiatives to ensure the long-term development of the Asia-related skills and knowledge, particularly among the young people of Tasmania, necessary to permit the State to gain maximum economic and social benefit from its participation in the Asian Century.***

4. *The significance of UTAS research to Asia*

UTAS offers world-class research in many areas, including those directly relating to Asia. Asia specific research conducted by UTAS staff who often have high levels of Asian language proficiency enables UTAS to provide expert advice in areas that include Indonesia, Burma, China, Taiwan, Singapore, and Japan. With respect to discipline expertise, UTAS is recognised through the Commonwealth Government’s *Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2010 National Report* (next report due in 2012) for outstanding performance above or well above world standard in inorganic and analytical chemistry, astronomical and space sciences; earth Sciences and geology; plant biology; agriculture, horticultural production and animal production; oceanography; fisheries and aquaculture; and clinical Sciences. Much of this research has application in Asia and already a number of collaborative research links exist between UTAS and Asia in agriculture, fisheries, epidemiology, and geology, to name a few. An emerging forte is in the creative arts, with our proposal to create a broadband-enhanced Academy of Creative and Performing Arts. The establishment of an Asia expert research database including both area specialists and discipline specialists would facilitate State Government access to UTAS expertise on an on-going basis.

***That the State Government in conjunction with UTAS establishes a UTAS Asia expert database to facilitate government and community access to the strong body of Asia-related research expertise available at UTAS.***

5. *The need to regard Asia as a site of diversity and to respond accordingly with a range of Asia-related expertise*

We strongly recommend that the State Government acknowledge the diversity of Asia and encourage an understanding of Asia as a collection of multiple sites. Further justification of this position is provided in the substantive response.

***That the State Government approach Asia as a site of diversity and respond accordingly with a range of Asia-related expertise.***

6. *The desirability of establishing an Asia Engagement Council with State Government, UTAS, business and community representation, including representation from Brand Tasmania*

Given each of the points raised above and the desirability of the various stakeholders working in partnership to coordinate the State's entry into and full participation in the Asian Century, UTAS recommends the establishment of a Tasmanian Asian Engagement Council with representation drawn from government, UTAS, business and the wider Tasmanian community. Such a council would facilitate the development of a coherent and coordinated approach to matters relating to Asia in this State. A key participant in such a council would be Brand Tasmania who have already conducted a number of highly successful Asia-related campaigns and who have a key role to play in marketing the State to overseas students.

***That the State Government establish an Asia Engagement Council with representation from the State Government, UTAS, business and the wider community.***

**Conclusion**

**Tasmania can play a leading role in and benefit from the Asian Century with exemplar programs (e.g. State to State links) by investing and collaborating with the University of Tasmania in educational and research initiatives, and by encouraging a culture that acknowledges the diversity of Asia.**

## **About Asia**

*It seems to me that [an instrumental approach to education for the Asian Century] will create a cohort of people who speak just enough of an Asian language and understand just enough about Asian business practices, without actually having a deeper appreciation that comes through genuine cultural curiosity. Creating this genuine demand is a much more daunting task because it means challenging the Euro-American centrality of our popular and political culture. It means profoundly re-orientating our intellectual maps of where we sit in the world.*

Michael Wesley, former Head of Griffiths University Asia Institute and former Head of Lowy Institute 2009-August 2012, quoted in *The Australian* 12 September 2012.

*The benefits of international education to Australia are substantial yet often go unheeded by those outside of the sector. As well as the much touted economic contribution [...] international students enhance the social and cultural fabric of the universities at which they study and the communities in which they live. Their presence fosters a mutual appreciation and respect for other cultures and experiences, and helps cement Australia's reputation as one of the most innovative and educated nations in the world.*

Universities Australia submission to *Australia in the Asian Century* white paper, January 2012.

*As the rest of the world goes about honing their English fluency, monoglot English language graduates are failing to reciprocate by learning the languages of our major cultural and trading partners. By putting all of our eggs into the English-only basket, we may run a risk of relative cultural and economic isolation.*

David Graddol, cited in DASSH (Australasian Deans of Social Sciences and Humanities) submission to *Australia in the Asian Century* white paper, March 2012.

**Acknowledgments:** Dr Barbara Hartley, Head of School of Asian Languages and Studies, provided substantial contribution to this report.

## **Response to Issues Paper Questions: Preamble**

1. UTAS compliments the Tasmanian State Government and particularly the Office of the Premier on its foresight in promoting consultation on the issue Tasmania's place in the Asian Century, an issue of state and national significance. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process. In this respect, we look forward to a long-term future exchange of ideas and engagement with the Tasmanian Government, and the State's business and community sectors, regarding the matters raised in our response.

The Tasmanian Government Issues paper was developed in consultation with the Crawford School of Public Policy located within the Australian National University College of Asia and the Pacific. This, of course, is a centre with a high level of expertise particularly related to security and public policy issues. Nevertheless, we would suggest that collaboration with a national centre in the development of the local issues paper resulted in the elision of a number of Tasmanian specificities. We would contend that it will be the leveraging of these specificities that give Tasmania the necessary edge over other states in future Asia-related development. Tasmania clearly lacks, for example, the massive resource reserves of either Western Australia or Queensland and any attempt to compete with these sites in exports of this nature is clearly without logic. Nevertheless, this State has a cluster of unique characteristics which, we would argue, make it highly attractive to other Asia-related enterprises, particularly service industry undertakings such as education and tourism. There is also growing recognition for our world-class research and related facilities. The strategic development of these enterprises has the potential to contribute in a very beneficial manner to this State and to the well-being of all Tasmanians. UTAS has a particular role to play in the development of the future education exports for the State. The success of this UTAS endeavour will be greatly enhanced, however, by working in partnership with the State Government and the communities that both UTAS and the State serve.

We also note some points raised in the issues paper that UTAS would robustly challenge. The most significant of these is the claim that there are perceptions that "learning languages like Indonesian and Chinese is not cool."<sup>4</sup> We would also point out that, contrary to the argument presented regarding the relationship between the presence of an expatriate community and the take-up of language study,<sup>5</sup> Japanese language study in this State has been strong and relevant for over thirty years, in spite of the very small community of Japanese nationals in Tasmania.

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<sup>4</sup>Department of Premier and Cabinet (Tasmania) Policy Division, *Tasmania's Place in the Asian Century: Issues Paper*, p. 22/35.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22/35.



2. As Dr Ken Henry has observed, the forthcoming White Paper will merely be “the beginning of a much longer conversation.”<sup>6</sup> Dr Henry has informally noted in a public address that his project operates under broad terms of reference. These include, in his own words:
- How we educate our children
  - How business operates in the region
  - The cultural and language competency Australians will need to prosper in the decades ahead, and
  - Australia’s place in the strategic architecture of the region.<sup>7</sup>

We draw the Tasmanian government’s attention here to the priority given by Dr Henry to the matter of education. Each of the points listed, nevertheless, can and should be translated to the Tasmanian context if the State is to develop its full economic, social and cultural potential over coming decades. Entry into Asian related endeavours and enterprises will present research and development challenges for all Australians. This initiative on the part of the current State Government will assist in positioning Tasmania in the most advantageous possible way in forthcoming Asia-related activities.

Related to the issue of higher education is research capacity. UTAS offers world-class research in many areas, including those directly relating to Asia. Asia specific research conducted by UTAS staff who often have high levels of Asian language proficiency enables UTAS to provide expert advice in areas that include Indonesia, Burma, China, Taiwan, Singapore, and Japan. With respect to discipline expertise, UTAS is recognised through the Commonwealth Government’s *Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2010 National Report* (next report due in 2012) for outstanding performance above or well above world standard in inorganic and analytical chemistry, astronomical and space sciences; earth Sciences and geology; plant biology; agriculture, horticultural production and animal production; oceanography; fisheries and aquaculture; and clinical Sciences. Much of this research has application in Asia and a already a number of collaborative research links exist between UTAS and Asia in agriculture, fisheries, epidemiology, and geology, to name a few.

State Government access to UTAS expertise in both specific area studies and discipline based research with relevance to Asia would be enhanced with the establishment of an Asia expert research data base

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<sup>6</sup> Ken Henry, ‘The nation’s biggest public policy challenges and opportunities.’ Address delivered to Structural Change and the Rise of Asia conference jointly hosted by the IMF, Treasury and RBA, Wednesday 19 September 2012. Available at [http://www.treasury.gov.au/PublicationsAndMedia/Events/~/\\_media/Treasury/Publications%20and%20Media/Upcoming%20Events%20and%20Presentations/Structural%20change%20and%20the%20rise%20of%20Asia/Transcripts/PDF/2\\_Dr\\_Ken\\_Henry.ashx](http://www.treasury.gov.au/PublicationsAndMedia/Events/~/_media/Treasury/Publications%20and%20Media/Upcoming%20Events%20and%20Presentations/Structural%20change%20and%20the%20rise%20of%20Asia/Transcripts/PDF/2_Dr_Ken_Henry.ashx). Accessed 1 October 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. This was Dr Henry’s informal summation. The full terms of reference of the Federal Government’s White Paper can be found on the Australian Government website at: <http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/about>. Accessed 12 September 2012.

3. The key purpose of the Tasmanian White Paper is to provide an answer to the following question:

*How can Tasmania best position itself to capture current and emerging economic opportunities in Asia?*<sup>8</sup>

The first quote that opened this substantive discussion cited Michael Wesley's insightful observations regarding the need for a challenge to "the Euro-American centrality of our popular and political culture" by "profoundly re-orientating our intellectual maps of where we sit in the world."<sup>9</sup> Drawing on Wesley's ideas, UTAS suggests modifying the question given above to read as follows:

*How can Tasmania best integrate its engagement with Asia – and the many diverse sites that comprise Asia – in order to promote the State's growth, prosperity, and economic and social security throughout the Asian Century.*

We encourage the State Government to, over the long term, embrace a policy position which provides opportunities for all Tasmanians to engage with Asia at the level that they are willing to and able. This engagement will run the gamut from elite completely Asian language proficient and Asian skills and knowledge adept UTAS graduates to retirees whose interest in Asia may be related to cultural exchange or travel.

In September, 2012, Asialink, the Melbourne University centre that 'promotes public understanding of the countries of Asia and of Australia's role in the region,'<sup>10</sup> released their report detailing a national Asia-directed labour market strategy entitled, *Developing an Asia Capable Workforce*. This report, compiled by a committee of Australian business leaders chaired by ANZ CEO, Mike Smith, has a range of extremely useful recommendations, some of which will be discussed below, that we commend to the Tasmanian Government.

We would argue, nevertheless, that this report does not, in fact, go far enough. Michael Wesley's comments given above were in response to the direction of that report which, in focussing on business, failed to acknowledge the necessity of 're-orientating our intellectual map of our place in the world' in order to understand and successfully engage with Asia.

Wesley's comments are representative of a growing body of evidence which indicates that approaching Asia merely as a source of economic opportunity will paradoxically fail to capitalise on the many economic possibilities presented. Establishing sustainable economic links with Asia will require in-depth socio-cultural and linguistic understanding and a willingness on the part of Tasmanians to embrace Asian ideas and practices. Furthermore, as the Council for the Arts and Humanities submission to the Henry paper notes, 'Australia can have lessons to learn from its

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<sup>8</sup>Department of Premier and Cabinet (Tasmania) Policy Division, *Tasmania's Place in the Asian Century: Issues Paper*, p. 5/35.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Wesley, cited in Bernard Lane, 'Universities face Asia revolution,' in on-line *The Australian Higher Education*, 12 September 2012. Available at: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/universities-face-asia-revolution/story-e6frgjcjx-1226472101747>. Accessed 20 September 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Asialink Taskforce for an Asia Capable Workforce, *Developing an Asia Capable Workforce: A National Strategy*, September 2012. Available at: [http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/619793/Developing\\_an\\_Asia\\_Capable\\_Workforce.pdf](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/619793/Developing_an_Asia_Capable_Workforce.pdf). Accessed 19 September 2012.

Asian neighbours.<sup>11</sup> While doing this, Tasmanians can also simultaneously proudly maintain and profile the unique cultural, natural and social characteristics of this State. Many of these non-economic links have already been established by people on the ground through organisations such as the Tasmanian branches of the Australia China Friendship Society and the Australia Japan Society. Similar societies exist for people with interest in other sites in Asia.

We refer again to Dr Henry's prioritisation of the education of our children as a key factor in enhancing relations with Asia and look forward to further discussions with the State Government in developing a whole-of-Tasmania joint schooling sector and university sector set of programs to ensure that Tasmanians acquire the skills and knowledge required. As noted later in this document, this partnership has already commenced with the UTAS College Program. Japanese, Chinese and Asian Studies staff at UTAS has each played a key role in these programs, as expanded upon below.

In 2012, Tasmania is already well positioned to expand engagement with Asia and to benefit from the opportunities this expansion promises. The state has an excellent record with respect to Asian relations. Tasmania received Hmong refugees in the early 1970s and more recently gave strong support to the establishment of a refugee reception centre at Pontville.<sup>12</sup> Local people embraced these communities (the Pontville community made several unsuccessful appeals to Federal authorities to have permanent status given to the centre that operated there). This is indicative of Tasmania's capacity to engage in dialogue with Asia in a manner that is beneficial to both parties. As late as 28 June 2012, local media featured stories urging that more refugees be brought to Tasmania for integration into the local community.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, as the collection at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston attests, Chinese have a long although sometimes forgotten history of activity in northern Tasmania. The UTAS role in promoting contact with Asia, limited until now, will in partnership with the State Government expand with recent targets set for international student growth. These targets will complement existing local programs offered by the University itself and in conjunction with community partners including the schooling sector. We have already referred to the unique cluster of factors that prevail in Tasmania which, if skilfully marketed, have the potential to see this state establish itself as an exemplar of whole of community engagement with Asia.

4. In concluding this preamble, we note that the purpose of the Tasmanian issues paper, as per the website of the Department of the Premier, was to provide an overview of some of the issues facing Tasmania in the Asian Century, specifically:
  1. an outline of the Tasmanian and Australian White Paper processes;
  2. an outline of what the Asian century means;
  3. the current structure of Tasmania's exports of goods and services to Asia; and
  4. potential barriers and opportunities for increasing Tasmania's engagement in the region.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper Submission, March 2012. Avail at: <http://www.chass.org.au/submissions/pdf/SUB20120305PM.pdf>. Accessed October 1, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of the Tasmania Hmong community, see the article by UTAS academic, Assoc-Professor Roberta Julian, "Living Locally, Dreaming Globally." Available at <http://epress.anu.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/living.pdf>. Accessed 12 September 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Matt Smith, 'Call to bring refugees here,' in on-line *Mercury*. Available at [http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2012/06/28/340831\\_tasmania-news.html](http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2012/06/28/340831_tasmania-news.html). Accessed 1 October 2012.

<sup>14</sup> *Issues Paper: Tasmania in the Asian Century*, p. 5/35.

As a source of Asia expertise UTAS takes this opportunity to make comment in relation to the latter three points in the context of the discussion questions posed in the issues paper. In doing so, we have maintained the issues paper format and thus respond through the framework of the sections and accompanying questions listed in the paper

## **ISSUES PAPER SECTION 1 - Discussion Questions**

### *1.1 Should Tasmania consider itself part of Asia?*

As implied above, in a sense Tasmania is already part of Asia. In addition to support for the specific communities referred to in the preamble, and as the discussion given in the white paper indicates, we have an exponential growth in new trade with China complementing strong existing trade relations with, for example, Taiwan and Japan through a range of highly effective small to medium industries (wasabi, soba, organic cherries, INCAT ferries). We also have the comprehensive 'other-Asia' trade contacts referred to on page 25 of the issues paper.

UTAS has a growing body of Asian background international students, about whom more detailed discussion will be provided below, who bring a distinctly Asian 'feel' to certain precincts in Tasmania associated with the University. Planned expansion of the UTAS overseas student cohort will enhance possibilities in this respect.

Through its School of Asian Languages and Studies, UTAS offers a range of studies related to East and South East Asia. This School now has three generations of graduates who add to the stock of Asian informed Tasmanians. These graduates – young people who know Tasmania but who also know Asia - will play a key role in leading future Asia-related developments in the State. As mentioned above, part of the UTAS offerings on studies related to Asia and Asian languages involves the delivery of programs to college students in Asian Studies, Chinese and Japanese. Further information on selected UTAS Asia-related offerings is provided in Appendix 1 of this document.

We raise here a matter not addressed in the issues paper, that is, outbound student mobility. Through agreements with a range of partner universities, UTAS supports young Tasmanians undertaking short and long term study programs at universities in various sites throughout Asia. In some instances this study is designed to enhance language and cultural proficiency. In other instances, the exchanges relate to skills acquisition (such as for AMC students) at facilities in Asia. Some students also undertake volunteer studies in approved sites in Asia. UTAS will later suggest in this document some State Government involvement in identifying and arranging (although not necessarily overtly funding) further opportunities of this nature.

***That the Tasmanian State Government, building on its previous successful engagement with diverse representations of Asia, consider itself part of that site.***

***That the Tasmanian State Government support UTAS efforts for outbound student mobility in order that young Tasmanians can have learning experiences in Asia that will add to the State's future stock of Asian expertise.***

1.2 *Is there a case for including the Middle-East in an assessment of Asian opportunities as part of the Tasmanian White Paper process?*

Regarding the status of the Middle East, there are many contemporary classifications of Asia that include this region. The Asian Triennial, conducted by Queensland's Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA) and now one of the major art exhibitions of the Asia Pacific region, has recently included sites as far west as Turkey in its definition of 'Asia.' UTAS recommends as wide a definition of Asia as possible in order to embrace the full richness and complexity of this site.

***That the State Government include the Middle East in any understanding of Asia used to determine Asia-related policy positions.***

1.3 *Should the existing developed East Asian economies be considered distinctly from China and the rest of Asia?*

Asia is a site of widely divergent language, societies and ways of life. The national curriculum program's cross-cultural priority website for the priority entitled 'Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia,' notes the following:

*This priority will ensure that students learn about and recognise the diversity within and between the countries of the Asia region. They will develop knowledge and understanding of Asian societies, cultures, beliefs and environments, and the connections between the peoples of Asia, Australia, and the rest of the world.<sup>15</sup>*

Given the importance of this diversity in the National Curriculum document and other discussions of Asia, rather than dividing the area in developed economies versus China and the rest, UTAS recommends engaging with Asia as a collection of many different regions. In this respect, China itself is almost as diverse as the rest of Asia. Even a much smaller country such as Japan has widely diverse linguistic and cultural conventions in different regions. Reflected in its national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), Indonesia is home to more than 700 living languages and hundreds of ethnic groups. A secular state with a majority Muslim population, religious pluralism is a highly regarded value, and is enshrined in the national constitution.

Such engagement will require a wide range of language and culture skills on the part of Tasmanians. UTAS has effectively provided these skills in the past and is well positioned to provide them into the future. While our current curriculum offerings in the areas of Asian Studies, Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese, we have research expertise, too, in these fields and also in the areas of Taiwan, Burma and

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<sup>15</sup>Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), *Cross Curricular Priorities: Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia*. Available at: <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/CrossCurriculumPriorities/Asia-and-Australias-engagement-with-Asia>. Accessed 2 October 2012.

Singapore across a range of issues that include media in China, Sino-Burmese relations, Indonesian and Chinese diaspora, and Taiwanese identity.

UTAS looks forward to further discussion with the State Government on collaborative means of offering more Tasmanians with opportunities to develop those skills. Of particular concern is the expansion of Asian languages and cultures (studies) offerings in the schooling sector in order to ensure strong progression of student numbers in UTAS programs. We see this as a key element of any State Government UTAS partnership.

While it is clearly important to particularly support young Tasmanians in this respect, we also note interest among older Tasmanians in Asia. A previous post-graduate student investigated Chinese learning among members of the local University of the Third Age. These older Tasmanians embraced the opportunity to engage with Asia through language and culture activities and arguably will add indirectly to the desirability of Tasmania as a tourist destination for Chinese visitors. The University's 2012 morning for Seniors elicited a similar response regarding Japanese language learning.

***That the State Government in conjunction with UTAS establish a UTAS Asia expert data base to facilitate government and community access to the strong body of Asia-related research expertise available at UTAS.***

1.4 *How should the West Coast of North America be considered in the process? A potential market that is part of Asia, or potential competition with similar competencies and brand values to Tasmania? What about New Zealand?*

We would recommend a positive approach regarding relationships between Tasmania and other sites around the Pacific Rim, not restricted to the West Coast of North America. The Pacific Rim, including Asia, has unmatched material and human resources and without comparison has the potential to be the leading economic region in the world and to set the agenda for progress in the 21st century. Promoting dialogue and collaboration between countries in this region will be influential in expanding Tasmania's educational, economic, and technological cooperation among the Pacific Rim economies. In other words, rather than being competitors, these sites can usefully be regarded as sources of economic development and income. In the field of education, Tasmania has elements that would attract, for example, international students from New Zealand and both North and South America, as much as from Asia. Furthermore, there are possibilities for collaboration with partner institutions with whom UTAS might offer joint programs that can benefit both outbound local students and incoming overseas students.

***That the State Government consider collaborative development opportunities – especially in the provision of education services – with other similar sites around the Pacific Rim***

## **ISSUES PAPER SECTION 2 - Discussion Questions**

### *2.1 What are the key opportunities for Tasmania from the growth in Asian economies?*

As a number of submissions to the *Australia in the Asian Century* process make clear,<sup>16</sup> there will be no productive engagement with Asia without comprehensive education at both the schooling and tertiary levels. UTAS has noted above that the recent Asialink paper suggests a national strategy for an 'Asian-capable' workforce. This strategy lists '11 Critical Capabilities.' These capabilities, which include 'sophisticated knowledge of Asian markets/environments and customised offering/value proposition based on customer insights', are largely designed to maximise profits. This, of course, is highly appropriate.

However, UTAS repeats its position that, perhaps paradoxically, successful business ventures will be the result of high levels of understanding among Tasmanians of Asian societies, Asian practices – including business practices – and Asian languages. The Asialink report adopts the position that understanding Asia is more than language proficiency. Nevertheless, this document itself suggests those who wish to engage in business with Asia need 'a useful level of language proficiency' in order to 'demonstrate better communication and cultural sensitivity.'<sup>17</sup> The key here is the definition of the term 'useful.' It is certainly not necessary that every employee in an enterprise have a functional level of Asian language proficiency. Attempts by, for example, a CEO to at least express greetings in the local language would demonstrate a degree of cultural sensitivity. However, as evidence presented below suggests, companies that confine their Asia engagement to this level will be disadvantaged. There needs to be a pool of Asia-educated – including language proficient – Tasmanians in order to drive and sustain economic development with that region. UTAS has a key role to play in ensuring the acquisition of the relevant skills among all interested Tasmanians.

***That the State Government acknowledge the importance of Asia-related skills and knowledges, including language proficiency, in the development of sustainable economic relations with various sites in Asia***

### *2.2 Are Asian market opportunities for Tasmania sustainable?*

Developing the argument presented above, we suggest that sustainability will come through Asia-related skills and knowledges. As noted in the Australasian Deans of Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) response to the *Australia in the Asian Century* call for submissions, businesses that operate on an English only basis are increasingly disadvantaged. DASHH, for example, cites figures relating to English language use on the internet falling from 90% in 2000 to less than 20% in 2010.<sup>18</sup> One third of users were the 'big three' East Asian languages – Chinese, Japanese and Korean. As early as 2006,

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Australasian Deans of Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH). *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper Submission, e.g. p. 1; Universities Australia *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper Submission. Available at, p. 6; Languages and Cultures Network in Australian Universities, White Paper Submission, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> For the 11 Critical Capabilities, see pages 14 and 15 of the report. Available at [http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/our\\_work/business/asialink\\_taskforce](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/our_work/business/asialink_taskforce). Accessed 2 October 2012.

<sup>18</sup> DASHH submission, pp. 2-3.

the British Council (a peak global English language certification authority) noted that English only speakers were losing any advantage they may previously had as more and more high proficiency bilingual (English and another language) speakers came into the labour market.<sup>19</sup> In fact, this report notes a tendency among larger UK and US companies to hire from elite universities that operate outside a purely English language sphere as graduates from these institutions have English *and* another language that supports enterprise activities.<sup>20</sup>

### 2.3 *How can Tasmania manage the risks associated with Asian economic growth?*

UTAS argues once again that the key to managing risk is educating a pool of Asia-knowledgeable and Asian language proficient Tasmanians. The Tasmanian Government issues paper notes that tourism and related service industries (personal travel export) make a very significant contribution to the Tasmanian economy,<sup>21</sup> as does the provision of UTAS places for international students. The DASSH paper points out that, unlike mining for example, ‘linguistic capacity is the key to the services sector.’<sup>22</sup> Drawing on a wide range of international sources, this report goes on to conclude that the sector will in future ‘rely heavily on Australia’s ability to promote itself as a multicultural, tolerant society’ and that a drift towards ‘monolingualism seriously undermines our reputation’ and the service sector’s potential for growth and success.<sup>23</sup>

### 2.4 *Should Tasmania focus on accessing Asian opportunities broadly, through capabilities, or by targeting specific markets and export products and services?*

While a scatter-gun approach is clearly fraught, there are also concerns with trying to target a too limited number of sites. There is a volatility to economic growth in some parts of Asia that makes it difficult to predict the future from past trends. Furthermore, statistical information regarding sustainability can create a problematic impression. Comments drawn from statistics given, for example, about Japan’s so-called “lost decade” (page 29/35) elide the fact that the Japanese economy – although now closely followed by India - remains the world’s fourth largest behind the EU, the US and China by IMF, World Bank and CIA statistics. It is to be expected that there will be some fluctuations in various national economies throughout Asia. Nevertheless, diverse (although not random) rather than limited engagement should protect against the risks that might be generated by devoting too many of the State’s resources to selected sites or markets.

The direction of future markets by businesses in the state is an important issue for UTAS. In addition to Asian Studies, the University currently offers three Asian languages – Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian. The economic case for Chinese is apparent while Japan remains a key trade partner for this state. Indonesian, once the ‘poor relation’ in this respect, is about to enter the world’s top ten economies, making a strong argument for its maintenance as a UTAS offering. However, Tasmanian

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<sup>19</sup> DASSH submission, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Department of Premier and Cabinet (Tasmania) Policy Division, *Tasmania’s Place in the Asian Century: Issues Paper*, e.g. p. 5/35.

<sup>22</sup> DASSH submission, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 2.



businesses may wish to enter additional markets. If this was the case, UTAS would be eager to discuss how the necessary educational offerings might be provided for Tasmanians.

***That the State Government work in partnership with UTAS in identifying the Asia-related skills necessary for optimum Tasmanian engagement with Asia.***

### **ISSUES PAPER SECTION 3 - Discussion Questions**

#### *3.1 How well prepared is Tasmania to receive Asian tourists?*

Although this point too is to some extent outside the UTAS purview, we note that the presence of Asian educated Tasmanians in the community makes a very positive impact on service industry provisions around the State. The presence of international students from Asia is also cited in the issues paper as a very significant factor in attracting tourists from Asia, particularly family members who come to visit those studying here.

With respect to facilitating the arrival of both tourists and international students – from Asia and other sites, while acknowledging the difficulties associated with the provision of such a facility we nonetheless would be very supportive of an international terminal in Tasmania, as suggested on page 33/35 (Question 4.9) of the issues paper.

#### *3.2 Are there specific Asian markets or income segments that Tasmania should target?*

As noted above, we support a sustainable degree of diversity.

#### *3.3 How well prepared is Tasmania to receive Asian students?*

Education, in the form of providing programs for overseas students either in-country or overseas, is Australia's third largest export commodity behind only iron ore and coal. Furthermore, with 19% of enrolled students in Australia being international students, Australia has by far the largest overseas student cohort of any OECD member country.

To date, however, overseas students have been underrepresented in the UTAS student population and there is a great capacity for expansion in this area. This issue is currently being addressed by the University.

The benefits for a community – particularly the social and cultural benefits - of the presence of international students has been unequivocally stated in the 2009 paper by Universities Australia (the peak body representing universities throughout Australia) on *The Nature of International Education*

*in Australian Universities and its Benefits.* These benefits, which are often difficult to measure, are summarised in the introduction to that report as follows:

*This study documents important non-economic benefits of international education. As well as through the economic sphere, international students enhance in many less easily measurable ways the social and cultural fabric of the universities at which they study and the communities in which they live while in Australia, or while studying at Australian overseas campuses. They bring back new understanding and insights to their own countries. The internationalisation of education is therefore important for these social, cultural and intellectual benefits. It potentially facilitates depth of understanding and cooperation among people from different countries, their governments and international communities.*

*Former United States under secretary of state, Karen Hughes, argued that there was “no doubt in my mind that student exchanges have been our single most effective public diplomacy tool in the past 50 years – there is simply no substitute for bringing people here where they learn with us and from us and make up their own minds about America.” In Australia this explicit connection between education and the extension of international understanding is occasionally asserted but has not been systematically examined.<sup>24</sup>*

To date, as noted, Tasmania’s involvement in international student activities has been limited in comparison to mainland institutions. Nevertheless, a commitment to global engagement, including the provision of the highest standard of education experience for overseas students will lead to considerable growth in the numbers of this cohort in both the short and longer term futures.

The Universities Australia paper on the benefits of overseas education makes clear that there are whole of community benefits around welcoming young people from Asia into a community. International student related expenditure increases employment (1.2% across Australia) through driving business expansion.<sup>25</sup> The report noted the impact in, for example, Melbourne of having a high international student population and the ‘significant contribution to the lifestyle, culture and vitality of the city.’<sup>26</sup>

This report further noted that in four states the support of state governments has been a catalyst in assisting local universities to expand overseas students numbers and to enjoy the benefits that thereby accrue.<sup>27</sup> As stated on a number of occasions, UTAS embraces a working partnership with the State to promote Tasmania as an overseas student destination.

In this respect, Tasmania has a unique set of factors that can be profiled to appeal to Asian students in a manner that can clearly differentiate the international student experience here from that of students attending mainland universities. These include:

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<sup>24</sup> Universities Australia, *The Nature of International Education in Australian Universities and its Benefits* (September, 2009). Available at: <http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/page/submissions---reports/commissioned-studies/benefits-of-international-education/>. Accessed on 28 September 2012, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20-21.

- Research Reputation – UTAS has an international profile in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean, known strengths in aquaculture, fisheries, agriculture, maritime logistics and engineering, mineral exploration and a developing prowess in broadband and ICT. In addition, we are at the frontier in terms of research in areas of epidemiology and population health. An emerging forte is in the creative arts, with our proposal to create a broadband-enhanced Academy of Creative and Performing Arts.
- Teaching Reputation – UTAS is renowned for its teaching excellence. ASEAN, for example, has expressed concern that international tertiary institution ranking mechanisms do not give enough acknowledgement to teaching and pastoral care. UTAS is currently reviewing its delivery of offerings to international students to further enhance the learning experience for this group.
- Environment and Sustainability – Tasmania has a reputation as clean and green, a key factor in attracting an increasing number of environmentally aware young people throughout the globe looking to acquire tertiary qualifications.
- Relative proximity of accommodation to campus – the compact nature particularly of the UTAS Hobart campuses is a key drawcard that can be promoted to appeal to prospective students. This factor will be enhanced with a federally funded building project (National Rental Affordability Scheme) recently awarded to UTAS that will see 720 self-contained apartments for students across the State.
- The provision of student support – UTAS has a number of programs for international students including The Community Friends and Network Program, English Language Centre welcome programs, the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) student counselling and advice service – particularly but not only for students on humanitarian visas - and a designated international student advisor. In addition, UTAS offers English language support and study skills through its EnglishAssist program for international students.

The importance of a whole of community approach to creating an ‘Asia-embracing’ community to enhance Asia engagement becomes evident when we consider the nature of the submissions to the *Australia in the Asian Century* white paper. Of 246 submissions in total, although 150 related to business links with Asia, there were 160 that related to people-to-people links. In other words, there is a clear understanding among many in Australia’s Asia-interested community of the importance of more than merely entering into trade and business relations. Again, we reiterate *that while business links with Asia are critical for the future of the State, the likelihood of maximising economic opportunities and future prosperity will be greatly enhanced if attention is also given to social and cultural engagement.* Furthermore, Tasmania’s unique environment and heritage characteristics give the state the capacity to be a highly attractive site for people from Asia – including international students - for reasons that may be related to but that are more than just economic development.

***That the State Government in partnership with UTAS to create a Tasmanian community culture of positive reception for overseas students studying throughout the State***

***That the State Government investigate initiatives taken in other States to support the positive reception of overseas students across the Tasmanian community***

### 3.4 What actions should the Tasmanian government, community and educators take to attract Asian students and ensure they have a positive educational experience?

Although UTAS is grateful for early discussions to date with the State Government, we offer the following preliminary points for consideration:

- Public transport is a key factor for students who come from sites such as large cities in Asia where this is the principal form of daily commutation and mobility. Tasmanian public transport, while adequate during working hours of 8-6 Monday to Friday, is provided sporadically outside these times. Consideration of this is an important factor to ensure Tasmania as a desirable study site.
- Greater promotion of bicycle travel with bike lanes on major roads – in addition to existing off road bike paths - would also assist.
- A further factor for consideration is the creation of more effective structures for community engagement on the part of international students. The Universities Australia report noted that while overseas students were very satisfied with their academic experience in Australia, some concern was expressed about lack of opportunity to interact with local Australians.<sup>28</sup>
- Many overseas authorities at the state and municipal level have international support groups. Often sustained by volunteer activity with one or two waged positions for coordinators, these organisations can play major roles in assisting overseas residents – temporary or permanent – to integrate into the community. A Victorian State Government initiative cited in the Universities Australia report can be used as a model for Tasmanian action on this matter. Other States have also been active in this respect.<sup>29</sup>
- While Tasmania has a migrant support centre, consideration might be given to modest funding for a structure that particularly assists overseas students to have a role in the wider Tasmanian community. UTAS already has such a framework promoting international student engagement with the local community. Nevertheless, the involvement of the State Government in such a project – and Government assistance in coordinating the involvement of business and other community groups - would greatly enhance the service provided. .
- Safety is also an issue for overseas students. While Tasmania has an excellent record as a state that demonstrates tolerance towards diversity, a small number of local people have engaged in acts of low-level violence towards international students. Although the local police response was swift, reluctance to report on the part of students remains an issue. This can be addressed through a State Government sponsored advertising campaign that depicts Tasmania as a site that active embraces the overseas student. The Lowy Institute for International Policy noted that even isolated acts of violence against overseas student generated a very negative response in the student’s country of origin.<sup>30</sup> UTAS looks forward to working in partnership with the State to ensure that all Tasmanians embrace visiting students from Asia.
- With regard to the issue of an international airport in Tasmania, it is likely that the double-leg journey to Tasmania acts as a disincentive, even if only for a small group.

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<sup>28</sup> Universities Australia, *The Nature of International Education*, p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21-22.

<sup>30</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, p. 63.

***That the State Government in conjunction with UTAS implement the appropriate initiatives to ensure that Tasmania offers a whole of community supportive environment for overseas students.***

3.5 *Are there specific Asian markets that Tasmania should target?*

*See above.*

3.6 *Should the emphasis on delivering education be in-country, online or in Tasmania?*

With the economic benefits that accrue to local study, the UTAS preference is for in-Australia study, whether face to face or more flexibly delivered. Overseas delivery with UTAS in full quality control can also be an option with institutions that are prepared to enter into this relationship in a manner that is compliant with local regulations. UTAS through office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Global Engagement, would be happy to explain these options and the implications of each with the State Government.

#### **ISSUES PAPER SECTION 4 - Discussion Questions**

4.1 *How important is Asian literacy to your business or work?*

UTAS advises that this is crucial, although as comments by ANZ CEO, Mike Smith, make clear, Australian businesses are uncertain as to the benefits.<sup>31</sup> This Australia-wide uncertainty may be even more pronounced among Tasmanian businesses. Nevertheless, the DASHH report cited above refers to the loss of opportunities among small and medium sized businesses (SMB) in other places as a result of an inability to successfully operate in markets where cross-cultural knowledge and skills are crucial.<sup>32</sup> We repeat our position given at the outset of the paper that providing young Tasmanians with these abilities, including in some cases language proficiency, will be critical to Tasmania's future growth and prosperity.

UTAS would warmly welcome any opportunity to discuss future collaborations with the State Government in ensuring that young and older Tasmanians attain the skills and knowledges necessary.

***That the State Government encourage an understanding of the importance of Asia-related skills and knowledge among Tasmanians in order to promote the State's growth, prosperity, economic and social security throughout the Asian Century.***

<sup>31</sup>Mike Smith cited in Peter Cai, 'We are not ready for Asia, says banker,' in on-line *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September 2012. Available at: <http://www.smh.com.au/business/we-are-not-ready-for-asia-says-banker-20120906-25h77>. Accessed on 10 September 2012.

<sup>32</sup> DASSH submission, p. 4.

#### 4.2 *What actions should the Tasmanian government, community and educators take to improve Tasmania's Asian literacy?*

The acquisition of Asian-related skills and knowledge must begin in the schooling sector. We are currently in a time of budgetary constraint and UTAS recognises the necessity of all areas in the public sector sharing the burden created by limited funds. Nevertheless, we would argue that, as a key to the future of the State, Asian literacy needs to be considered an area of priority funding.

We would therefore strongly recommend reinstating previous levels of funding to this area in the primary, secondary and college sectors. We also recommend ensuring a culture in schools whereby administrators and non Asia-related staff understand the value of study of this nature. It is also important that the parent body engages in this discussion. In collaboration with the State Government and other schooling authorities (e.g. Tasmanian Catholic Education Office) UTAS has a role in leading community discussion in this respect. Submissions to the Henry review indicate that difficulties currently experienced in Tasmania are not confined to this State. Matters that require an action plan include:

- Ensuring that the students studying language to tertiary entry level are not disadvantaged by State education authorities with respect to tertiary entry.<sup>33</sup>
- Coordination of language offerings to ensure consistency between feeder high schools and colleges.
- Support for primary school programs of both Asian languages and studies of Asian societies.

In this respect we recommend ensuring that the State tertiary entrance system gives appropriate acknowledgement to the achievements of young Tasmanians who acquire Asia-related skills and knowledge, especially Asian languages, during their college years of study. This can be done by practical means such as ensuring that a high weighting is given to Asia-related study. However, there are also cultural shifts (recalling Wesley's 'intellectual shift' referred to earlier in the paper) to be undertaken to ensure that on the ground support is given in schools and colleges in terms of encouraging students to enter Asia-related fields of study.

A further area of State government support concerns the creation of reciprocal opportunities for both UTAS students and Tasmanian teachers of Asia, particularly Asian languages, to work and study overseas in order to develop and maintain their skills. This can be achieved through state-to-state and sister city links. Even a few opportunities of this nature can have huge benefits for the participants and for the communities to which they return.

***That the State Government ensure that optimum conditions prevail in the schooling and college sectors for the study of Asian studies and languages including, if necessary, a review of tertiary entrance procedures that gives appropriate acknowledgement to the achievements of young Tasmanians who acquire Asian-related skills and knowledge, especially Asian languages, during their college years of study.***

<sup>33</sup> UTAS will seek an opportunity to provide the Premier's Office with a full discussion of this matter after further consultation with colleagues in the College sector.

#### 4.3 Could more use be made of students to improve Tasmania's Asian literacy?

This is a question of crucial significance as it will be the current young people of the State who will lead Tasmania into the Asian Century. Below is a selection of Asia-skilled UTAS graduates. The potential contribution that these young people can make to the State is unlimited:

##### **Sam Forbes (Graduate Certificate in Arts (Asian Studies) 2009, BA 2008)**

Sam majored in both Chinese and Japanese as an undergraduate degree, undertaking in-country study in Japan and China. In 2009 he was awarded a Chinese government scholarship to undertake a three-year Masters degree in Linguistics at the Nanjing University, which he will complete this year. During his last year he has been lecturing in Chinese to students of Linguistics.

##### **Jodie Everson (Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice 2011, BA Honours in Asian Studies 2010, Combined Bachelors degree in Arts and Law 2009)**

Jodie's undergraduate degree consisted of Law, Japanese and Asian Studies majors. She undertook Honours study with a Japan focus.

##### **Mark Hotson (Bachelor of Science (Economic Geology) Honours 2010, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science 2008)**

Mark elected to combine Geophysics and Japanese in his undergraduate degree. He undertook in-country student in Fukuoka, Japan and gained a scholarship to study for his Honours project in Laos. Mark was an enthusiastic ambassador for Asian language study and participated in workshops for school student visits to university campus.

##### **Lorelle Knowles (BA in Asian Studies and Japanese, 2010)**

Lorelle undertook in-country study in Japan as part of her undergraduate degree. In her Asian Studies major she elected to explore such topics as Volunteering in Asia, Islam in Asia, War and Peace in the Pacific. Lorelle is currently in Japan teaching at the university where she was an exchange student.

##### **Renee McCall (Graduate Certificate in Indonesian 2011, BA (Asian Studies and Indonesian) 2010)**

Renee has undertaken three separate in-country study programs in Indonesia to support her majors in Asian Studies and Indonesian, and has achieved a high level of fluency.

##### **Ruth Middleton (BA Chinese and Asian Studies 2010)**

On graduating Ruth successfully secured a position in the VIP section of the Australian Pavilion at the Shanghai Expo 2010, gaining valuable work experience representing Australia in China. Ruth is currently undertaking an Honours degree in Chinese studies.

##### **Hayley Saltmarsh (BA 2008, Honours in Japanese 2009)**

Hayley majored in Journalism, Media and Communication and Japanese in her undergraduate degree, and undertook in-country study in Japan. Currently Hayley is in the final semester of a Master of Teaching degree, specialising in Japanese, as well as English.

##### **Callum Findlay (BA Asian Studies and International Relations 2010)**

Callum took full advantage of overseas exchange and in-country study opportunities to achieve high levels of fluency in Chinese, Japanese and Korean languages during his undergraduate degree, even though his majors were Asian Studies and International Relations.

A further factor is State Government support for the employment of international student graduates. While the current economic situation may prevent the State Government itself providing jobs to international student graduates, there is a role in promoting awareness of value adding to the stock of Asia knowledge of the state when the private sector employs an international student UTAS graduate. We previously noted that the Universities Australia report lists the concrete benefits relating to the employment of international students and, by inference, their being granted permanent residence. Currently very few UTAS international student graduates gain local employment thus leading to the loss of a valuable possible resource.

With a labour market that includes local graduates with Asia-related skills and knowledge and international student graduates with local qualifications coupled with knowledge of their home country languages and business cultures, Tasmania will be ideally positioned to take every advantage of the Asian century.

***That the State Government encourage businesses and other enterprises to support the employment of UTAS Asia-educated graduates who can assist in leading Tasmania into the Asian Century.***

***That the State Government implement strategies to promote local employment opportunities for overseas student UTAS graduates.***

#### 4.4 *Could more use be made of Tasmania's international migration program to improve Tasmania's Asian literacy?*

The international migrant immigration program has great potential in terms of bringing Asia-related skills and knowledges to the State. The response of the Business and Skilled Migration team (BSM) of the Tasmanian Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts to the Tasmanian issues paper noted that while Australia was a very popular migration destination, this was not the case for Tasmania specifically.<sup>34</sup> Noting a lack of awareness of Asia among Tasmanians (e.g. while 7.4 percent of Australians speak an Asian language, only 1.6 percent of Tasmanians have this skill), the paper acknowledged the lack of 'pull factors' in Tasmania such as a high growth economy or established ethnic communities.<sup>35</sup> It is probable that the absence of established communities of Asian background residents in Tasmania has the circular effect of discouraging those who might be thinking of migrating to Australia from choosing Tasmania as a final destination.

UTAS would like to suggest that the State Government advocate with the Federal Government for more opportunities for permanent residence for international student graduates who give a guarantee of perhaps five years residence in the State. With respect to fears of 'leakage,' or the fact that these graduates may not remain in the State indefinitely, the report notes that even a relatively

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<sup>34</sup> Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts (Tasmania), Issues Background Note: *Tasmania in the Asian Century Paper* Tasmanian International Migration (11 October 2012).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*



short stay by migrants value-adds to the Tasmanian economy.<sup>36</sup> Lengthening that stay to five years would be most advantageous for the State. There is also no doubt that this would be a significant incentive for study in Tasmania.

***That the State Government consider strategies, such as encouraging the employment of overseas student UTAS graduates, to ensure a local presence of residents from Asia who will further attract home-country interest in the State.***

4.5 *How important is access to international freight to your business or work? What sort of freight is most important (bulk, container, air)?*

N/A

4.6 *What actions should the Australian and Tasmanian governments take to improve Tasmania's access to international ports, shipping or air freight?*

N/A

4.7 *Are there opportunities that may be available to you with changed freight arrangements?*

N/A

4.8 *How important is direct passenger air access to your business or work?*

See above.

4.9 *Do you think direct air access to Asia would provide additional opportunities for exports of goods or services? Which markets are most important?*

As noted above there are probably some disincentives to international student arrival through the absence of direct air travel to Tasmania.

4.10 *What other sectors should the White Paper process consider for accessing opportunities arising from the Asian Century?*

Currently there are many Tasmanians engaging with Asia on an individual basis. The State Government has a role to play in bringing these individuals together in order to maximise their collective impact. To this end, UTAS advises the collaborative establishment of an Asian Engagement data base in order to collect information about on-the-ground community and business activities that involve Asia and gather this information together in one e-site.

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<sup>36</sup> Suggested but also justified in *ibid.*

While UTAS would welcome the opportunity for involvement in such a project, basing this in the Premier's office would give the strong message to the Tasmanian community that the State Government is very serious about engagement with Asia and supports such engagement by all Tasmanians.

***That the State Government establish an Asian Engagement Data Base to collect information about on the ground community and business activities that involve Asia and to gather this information together in one widely accessible e-data base .***

4.11 *Do you agree with the assessments on capacity for the sectors identified?*

N/A

4.12 *What are the priorities for investment in increasing capacity in the sectors?*

N/A

4.13 *What do you believe is the role of governments in general in facilitating opportunities arising from the Asian Century?*

As implied above, UTAS strongly supports partnership between the State Government, the general community and the tertiary sector in any endeavours designed to prepare Tasmanians to capitalise socially, culturally and economically on the benefits of the Asian century.

To this end we recommend the establishment of an Asia Engagement Council with wide ranging representation from the State government and the community. While we have made limited reference in this response to Brand Tasmania, we acknowledge their expertise and regard that organisation as a key stakeholder in any future Asia-related activities in Tasmania.

***That the State Government establish an Asia Engagement Council with representation from the State Government, UTAS, business and the wider community.***

4.14 *Should government or business take the lead in identifying commercial opportunities?*

Once again, this will need to be a collaborative effort, although the State Government has a key role to play in promoting a culture of interest in and engagement with Asia.

***That the State Government take the lead in promoting a state-wide interest in and engagement with Asia.***

4.15 *What is the role of government in facilitating infrastructure, skills and training, entry into international markets, migration, land-use, and facilitating access to services from other levels of government?*

As above.

## Summary of Recommendations

*That the State Government integrate its engagement with Asia – and the many diverse sites that comprise Asia – in order to promote the State’s growth, prosperity, economic and social security throughout the Asian Century.*

*That the State Government approach Asia as a site of diversity and respond accordingly with a range of Asia-related expertise.*

*That the State Government implement the necessary policy initiatives to ensure the long-term development of the Asia-related skills and knowledge, particularly among the young people of the Tasmania, necessary to permit the State to gain maximum economic and social benefit from its participation in the Asian Century.*

*That the State Government work in partnership with UTAS to develop strategies for a positive whole of Tasmanian community reception for overseas students studying around the State.*

*That the State Government in conjunction with UTAS establish a UTAS Asia expert data base to facilitate government and community access to the strong body of Asia-related research expertise available at UTAS.*

*That the State Government establish an Asia Engagement Council with representation from the State Government, UTAS, business and the wider community.*

*That the State Government, building on its previous successful engagement with diverse representations of Asia, consider itself part of that site.*

*That the State Government support UTAS efforts for outbound student mobility in order that young Tasmanians can have learning experiences in Asia that will add to the State’s future stock of Asian expertise.*

*That the State Government include the Middle East in any understanding of Asia used to determine Asia-related policy positions.*

*That the State Government consider collaborative development opportunities – especially in the provision of education services – with other similar sites around the Pacific Rim.*

*That the State Government acknowledge the importance of Asia-related skills and knowledges, including language proficiency, in the development of sustainable economic relations with various sites in Asia.*

*That the State Government work in partnership with UTAS in identifying the Asia-related skills necessary for optimum Tasmanian engagement with Asia.*

*That the State Government investigate initiatives taken in other States to support the positive reception of overseas students across the Tasmanian community.*

*That the State Government encourage an understanding of the importance of Asia-related skills and knowledge among Tasmanians in order to promote the State's growth, prosperity, economic and social security throughout the Asian Century.*

*That the State Government ensure that optimum conditions prevail in the schooling and college sectors for the study of Asian studies and languages including, if necessary, a review of tertiary entrance procedures that gives appropriate acknowledgement to the achievements of young Tasmanians who acquire Asian-related skills and knowledge, especially Asian languages, during their college years of study.*

*That the State Government encourage businesses and other enterprises to support the employment of UTAS Asia-educated graduates who can assist in leading Tasmania into the Asian Century.*

*That the Tasmanian State Government implement strategies to promote local employment opportunities for overseas student UTAS graduates.*

*That the State Government consider strategies, such as encouraging the employment of overseas student UTAS graduates, to ensure a local presence of residents from Asia who will further attract home-country interest in the State.*

*That the State Government establish an Asian Engagement Data Base to collect information about on the ground community and business activities that involve Asia and to gather this information together in one widely accessible e-data base.*

*That the State Government take the lead in promoting a state-wide interest in and engagement with Asia.*

## **Appendix 1 – A Selection of Current UTAS Asia-related Programs**

### *On campus programs offered in Hobart and Launceston*

Asian Studies major with electives that cover Asia general and area specific units of study

Chinese language and studies major

Indonesian language and studies major

Japanese language and studies major

Postgraduate research programs are offered in each of the above.

### *Overseas study Opportunities*

Asian Studies – students undertaking studies in volunteering and development are able to undertake project work at an approved site in Asia

Chinese – partner-university programs in Xian and Taiwan

Indonesian – exemplar programs conducted through consortia with other Australian universities in Lombok and Jogjakarta

Japanese – short-term and long-term (one year) study opportunities at one of several partner universities in Japan

Philosophy - Summer School at the Central University of Tibetan Studies with a curriculum comprising an intensive introduction to Buddhist philosophy, Tibetan Buddhist Hermeneutics and Tibetan History and Culture.

### *University College Program*

The University offers extension study through the University College Program for year 11 or 12 students undertaking the tourism component of 'Australia in the Asia Pacific' (AAP), and in Chinese and Japanese for year 11 or 12 students studying pretertiary level language.

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