



Asia Education Foundation

Building Demand - What Works

The Study of Asian languages

>> from parents and community

Building Demand: engaging parents and community

myfuture: Asia Skills

In 2009, the Australian Industry Group partnered with the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) and Education.au in a National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) funded project intended to build student demand for Asia literacy. The project aimed to do this by providing career information to students, their families, school principals and career counsellors about the type of Asia skills required of the Australian workforce, now and into the future.

Among its achievements, the project:

- >> established a discrete Asia-skills section called myfuture: Asia Skills on the myfuture website;
- >> developed a set of 20 video vignettes of Australians in a range of professions and occupations working in Asia, with Asian partners or Asian customers and clients.

The project responds directly to a large gap in knowledge or understanding of the need for Asia skills in the Australian workforce among Australian students, their parents, school principals and career counsellors.

It builds on the work of the AEF's Business Alliance for Asia Literacy which involves businesses and peak associations joining in a call to ensure that education in Asia skills, including Asian languages, is a core part of the Australian curriculum. Alliance member organisations played a central role in the delivery of the project.

Work and Asia skills

The myfuture website is Australia's national career information and exploration service for secondary students, teachers, career practitioners and families seeking information.

Adding the myfuture: Asia Skills section builds student demand for Asia literacy in schools by integrating information and resources that assist students, principals, career counsellors and parents to better understand the career and employment opportunities that Asia skills offer.

Features of myfuture: Asia Skills include:

- >> a landing page that outlines the importance of Asia skills to Australia's future;

The support of business groups promotes Asia skills for students

A partnership between the Australian Industry Group, the AEF and Education.au led to the development of a section of the myfuture website specifically focused on Asia skills. It also developed a popular set of video vignettes in which Australians talk about their real-life career engagement with the peoples and cultures of Asia.



The myfuture website is Australia's national career information and exploration service for secondary students, teachers, career practitioners and families seeking information. It receives high levels of traffic in providing this service.

- >> articles such as *Learning about Asian countries*, *Working in Asian countries*, *Working in Australia with, and for, Asian people*, *Culture in Asian countries*, *Speaking an Asian language* and *Real life experiences*;
- >> pages about a range of Asian countries, providing further detail about the relationship of each to Australia, particularly in economic terms;
- >> links to relevant external websites.

Asia skills digital vignettes

The Australian Industry Group played the lead role in identifying employers and employees from member organisations to be filmed for the 20 Asia skills vignettes. Efforts were made to represent people from a range of businesses and with diverse experiences, and the vignettes have subsequently been very popular with schools and individuals.

One indicator of their popularity is that for several months after publication, the short compilation video was the most popular item among visitors to the AEF website. It appears that students in particular appreciate and believe people speaking from their own experience. In that sense, the vignettes clearly build demand among students for Asian languages and Asia skills more generally.

Conclusion

This ongoing project represents a significant engagement of the commercial world with the need to promote Asia skills in the education sector. In terms of building student demand for Asian languages and studies of Asia, the Asia skills vignettes have proven to be a significant and popular contribution.



About AEF

The Asia Education Foundation provides teachers, education leaders and school communities with innovative programs, curriculum resources and networks to support the achievement of Asia literacy for every young Australian.

AEF is a joint activity of Asialink at the University of Melbourne and Education Services Australia. It receives core funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

AEF leverages funding to support Asia literacy in Australian schools from a broad range of government, philanthropic and corporate partners in Australia and Asia.

Related links

- >> myfuture: Asia Skills website www.myfuture.edu.au/asiaskills
- >> myfuture website www.myfuture.edu.au/
- >> Business Alliance for Asia Literacy www.asiaeducation.edu.au/calltoaction
- >> Asia skills video vignettes www.asiaeducation.edu.au/asiaskills
- >> The Australian Industry Group website www.aigroup.com.au/

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