

Ci2013 WHITE PAPER

Creative Innovation Asia Pacific 2013. Race to the future:E6

The Creative Innovation (CI) conference by using a unique format that unlocks both 'left brain' and 'right brain' potential, and featuring a number of the world's best thinkers and achievers, is able to bring valuable insights to current issues.

Ci2013 looked at what would be needed for Australia to succeed in an age of endless and rapid change. For clarity, it grouped issues under six "E"s: - Education, Entrepreneurship and the Economy, Energy and the Environment and Ethical leadership

Education

Australia will not be able to develop the skill base it needs to compete effectively without a world leading education system. It is therefore disappointing to see us dropping down the table of global education rankings. Clearly, an increased investment in education, as envisioned by the Gonski report, will do a lot to address the problem but that is not the whole story.

Professor Stephen Heppell, a UK education expert, believes better outcomes can be achieved for a modest investment. Examples include:

- *Trusting the children.* Involve them in classroom and curriculum design and they will often come up with better ways of learning.
- *Using play in learning.* Making learning joyful will result in children looking forward to going to school. Putting method before learning blunts children's natural creativity and leaves them ill-equipped in adult life to deal with the unexpected.
- *Creating Super Classes.* 60 or more children together in an open space with three teachers taking different roles.
- *Interactive learning.* Children learn by asking questions. Using children as tutors, will encourage leadership, role modeling, and promote admiration"
- *Flexibility.* Not expecting children to be simultaneously hungry whenever we ring a bell or at the same standard because they were born in the same month.
- *Embracing technology.* Rather than restricting mobile phones and treating them as an unwelcome distraction encourage children to bring them to school and use them as learning platforms and teaching aids.

Meagan Fallone from India's Barefoot College also believes we need to rethink education. She advocates for system wide change through decentralisation. In India, moving from a rigid centralized beauracracy and putting decision making in the hands of the local population is the solution to reduce illiteracy.

Looking at higher education, **Professor Rufus Black**, Master of Ormond College, Melbourne, believes that universities are well behind the starting blocks in the race to the future. He too is an advocate for student directed learning and breaking out of traditional systems to find new ways to embrace learning.

Dr Alan Finkel, Chancellor of Monash University, believes universities should allow passions and talents to grow and flourish, not repeat the churn model of course delivery. He believes that technology should add to the teacher student face to face relationship, but not replace it. To thrive universities need to build meaningful partnerships and global connections, embrace technology and build brand and quality.

Richard Bolt, Secretary of the Victorian Department of Education, also believes that the future of education lies in empowering children and engaging them in the process. He believes we need to optimise the first three years of our children's lives. Our education systems should offer 'equity with choice' and synthesize learning and creativity.

Australian Governments have the capacity to address most of these reforms now.

We can make learning seductive, playful and collaborative.

Entrepreneurship and the Economy

For it's economy to perform well Australia needs to not only develop creative leaders but also to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour, in large corporations as well as in start-up businesses.

Doron Ben Meir, CEO Commercialisation Australia, believes successful entrepreneurs engage both their left brain; to develop and test the product or service and demonstrate its potential profitability; and right brain to understand the emotional appeal of the product and engage stakeholders in their vision. To sell an idea you have to be inspiring.

Scott Anthony, Managing Partner of Innosight, believes success comes when you let the right strategy emerge from the marketplace. Successful start-ups keep the team small, act with precision and have a bias towards action.

He described the latest wave of innovation where large organisations with innovative cultures are acting as corporate catalysts; working with local start-ups or NGOs to solve local issues, create new markets and develop successful businesses.

Company Director **Steve Vamos** believes a good leader recognises the potential of his people and trusts them to deliver. "Success is a holistic thing, organisations need to involve their people to achieve success. Define success and align people with that definition."

Serial entrepreneur **Jason Drew** believes that only creative thinking and the willingness to take a risk can result in sustainable growth solutions for the planet. Entrepreneurs shouldn't accept the status quo and must question everything. Areas for Australia to focus include:

- *3D printing*; will revolutionise manufacturing and be more powerful than the internet revolution.
- *Singularity*; within 5- 8 years artificial intelligence will advance beyond human understanding leading to even more extensive use of computers and robots.
- *Nanotechnology*; including new healthcare solutions.
- *Beyond Consumerism*; goods will once again become more durable and capable

of re-sale; goods will last longer and consumers will pay for upgrades; suppliers will take goods back to be recycled.

Environment and Energy

Given the importance of energy to our economy, both in terms of supply and the strength of the mining sector, Australian's need to use creativity and innovation to develop strategies that are both economically and environmentally sustainable.

Dr Alan Finkel believes we need a carbon tax but should focus on carbon consumption rather than emission.

With concentrations of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere having now reached 400 ppm it is becoming increasingly harder to ignore the "Greenhouse Effect". He suggests Australia should:

- *Clean up its energy supply*; and then generate lots more of it.
- *Encourage take up of electric powered cars*;
- Invest in *wind, solar, natural gas* as the key energy sources of the future
- Reconsider new cleaner *nuclear* technology.

He is concerned that every year, our energy demands go up by 2.5% and our clean energy resources are not keeping up. We need a bi-partisan political solution.

Peggy Liu, a sustainability expert based in China, is motivated by the rapid increase in both air and water pollution she has witnessed as the downside of China's rapid economic growth. However, she believes that there is an opportunity for China to lead the world in "reimagining prosperity"

This would involve putting a price on damage to the natural environment; stopping corruption that results in existing laws and controls being ignored and changing the pattern of urbanization to develop truly sustainable cities.

She believes that to achieve this re-imagining we need to change mindsets. "The only way to create change is to touch hearts. We need to communicate a new prosperity vividly, we need better visual storytelling across all media."

Bjorn Lomborg, author of 'The Skeptical Environmentalist', also believes we need to focus on fixing air and water pollution.

However, he disagrees with environmentalists such as Peggy who believe that environmental damage must create some limits to growth. He believes the answer instead lies in innovation and wants to see more investment in innovative technologies.

He points out that meaningful and useful innovations usually come to us gradually and do not disrupt but rather enhance our life. "We were told we'd run out, but we're not running out, we're creating substitutes and alternatives. We've also learned how to do more with less – we haven't expanded our farmland, we've trebled our output." He believes the answer is for the world to come together, to set goals against a global

agenda.

Ethical Leadership

For a fair and harmonious society Australia needs not just creative leadership but ethical leadership.

Elizabeth Broderick, Australia's Sex Discrimination Commissioner, believes ethical leadership is underpinned by dignity and respect and valuing basic human rights.

Power should be shared between men and women. To achieve this goal men will need to loosen their grip on power. "We need powerful men to influence other men to step out!" We need to break away from the idea that an ideal worker is available 24/7 and has no obvious caring responsibilities.

Leading businesswomen **Carol Schwartz** agrees with Elizabeth and believes we need positive discrimination to get more women onto Australian boards. She believes ethical leadership is underpinned by moral courage and strategic vision.

Indigenous cultural leader **Deborah Cheetham** believes that ethical leadership is underpinned by honesty.

"To lead ethically means to understand who we are, how we live today and how we arrived at this moment. It is about asking ourselves if we have the appetite for the truth. We have some deeply held beliefs that need to be challenged before we can change our culture. The gap we need to close is ignorance. We have shared issues. We need to understand diversity. There is enough for everyone, but not everyone has enough - that's at the heart of ethics."

Rufus Black believes that it's hard to do what is right. Peer pressure to conform is so strong and this makes ethical leadership challenging.

"Leadership is about wearing the cost of speaking truthfully; are we ready for that?"

Jon Duschinsky, CEO of the Conversation Farm, defines a new age of marketing and communication. He argues that increasingly it is only ethical leaders and organisations that are worth talking about.

"We've gone from the digital age, to the age of conversation. If you are not working for change, you are not worth talking about. Great conversations are grounded in social good. If you're not part of the conversation, you can't do anything good. No one is talking about you!"

He describes a process to get the conversation started:

- What is the problem you want to solve?
- What do you want to say and what does the world want to hear from you?

Find the connection between the two.

- What is your belief system? What do you stand for?
- What is your idea? What will you do that will get people talking about you?
- How can people join you and get involved?
- How are you going to listen to them and react?

“The more good you do the more money you can make. If you do not know what you believe, what you stand for, how can I stand by you?”

Jason Drew asks, “If you don’t stand for something, are you willing to fall for anything?”

And the last word to **Peggy Liu**, “We need to stop talking and start doing, we do far too much talking and so little doing!”

Stephen Grant

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