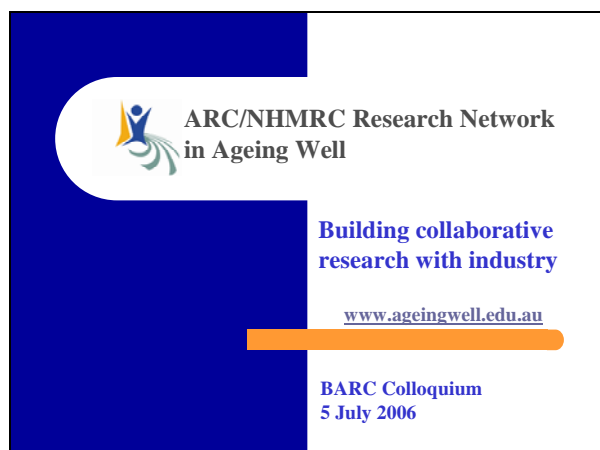


BARC Policy and Practice on Ageing Colloquium, Canberra, 4-5 July 2006

ARC/NHMRC Research Network in Ageing Well Research Development & Communication Processes

Workshop 4 - Building Collaborative Research with Industry

Presentation Slides:



ARC/NHMRC Research Network
in Ageing Well

Building collaborative
research with industry

www.ageingwell.edu.au

BARC Colloquium
5 July 2006

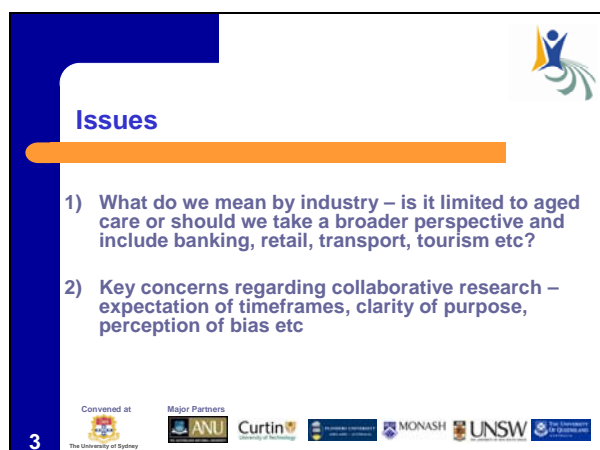


Aims

- 1) To facilitate collaborative research around Australia between industry and research
- 2) To highlight to research, industry and government the benefits of collaborative research and the best way to conduct linkages
- 3) To promote the involvement of a broader range of industries in research collaborations


Convened at 

2

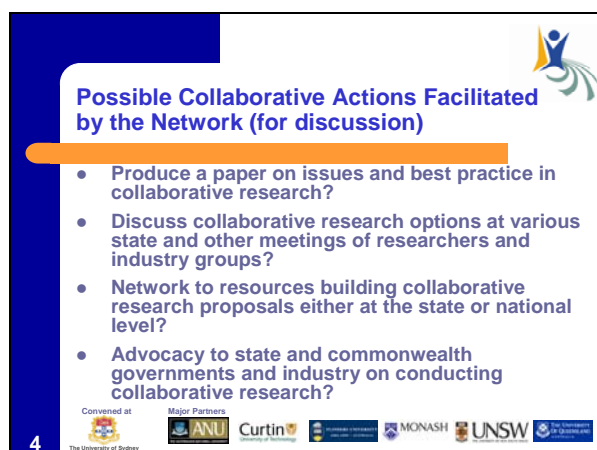


Issues

- 1) What do we mean by industry – is it limited to aged care or should we take a broader perspective and include banking, retail, transport, tourism etc?
- 2) Key concerns regarding collaborative research – expectation of timeframes, clarity of purpose, perception of bias etc


Convened at 

3



Possible Collaborative Actions Facilitated
by the Network (for discussion)

- Produce a paper on issues and best practice in collaborative research?
- Discuss collaborative research options at various state and other meetings of researchers and industry groups?
- Network to resources building collaborative research proposals either at the state or national level?
- Advocacy to state and commonwealth governments and industry on conducting collaborative research?

Convened at 

4

Workshop Summary

Workshop Chairs:

Paul Sadler (Chair – not in attendance due to unexpected circumstances)
CEO, Aged and Community Services of NSW & ACT

Associate Professor Laurie Buys (Co-chair)
School of Humanities and Human Services, Queensland University of Technology
Incoming President, Australian Association of Gerontology

Greg Mundy (Co-chair – stepped in for Paul Sadler)
CEO, Aged and Community Services Australia

Workshop Rapporteur:

Sarah Fogg
Senior Project Officer, Centre on Ageing, Benevolent Society

Greg Mundy

- Collaboration is a 2-way street – need to meet half way
- A lot of collaborative research is happening already (e.g. aged care practitioners are interested in engaging with researchers, on aged care smart home projects, aged care IT etc).

Laurie Buys – key questions

- What is industry? – Goes far beyond “aged care services”
- Who are the end-users of our research?
- Do they identify with ageing communities?
- How do we engage with these?

General discussion from the floor

- Who are we talking about? How old is old? In employment circles the interest is in the 45+, ageing workforce. Some researchers are talking with major employers
- Design of transport systems and road safety etc to support the ageing population is a critical issue that will require collaboration with industry and local government etc to design areas to suit the needs of the older population as they age.
- Need to support a very broad view of who collaborators might be.
- Talking about very large group of people (2.5 million) – not homogeneous, one size does not fit all.

Productive ageing – workplace issues

- There is a lot of interest in productive ageing – e.g. research on grandparents very important regarding whether they free up younger people to work. Ageing is relevant to all employers as they either employ older people or employ people who depend on older people to enable them to work.
- Need to better understand age discrimination against older workers. The current obsession with overwork and long hours doesn't work for mature workers.
- Need to consider how to shape the workplace and how to engage with the employer
- Employees caring responsibilities for older parent and spouses becoming a bigger issue than caring for children; enabling carers to keep working

How to engage partnerships

- Problem is not getting industry partners as there is no shortage of big companies that will explore possibilities and invest in this area. The issue is coming up with a compelling, rigorous proposal that can demonstrate major benefits (both clinical and financial)
- Partnerships must be 50/50 with both sides committed to full participation
- Use your Business Liaison Officers (most universities have one) and consulting arms, to avoid doubling up, lawyer will go through the agreements, timeframes clarified etc
- Prepare everybody for the long time frames – causes problem for industry who want the research and may not like what you find out (need to work out beforehand how to handle this)
- Start with small amounts of money to establish good faith

Partnership issues

- A number of issues were identified where more clarity, discussion and guidance wanted (especially for new researchers), including:
 - ◆ Establishing full commitment from all parties
 - ◆ Tax advantages for business
 - ◆ Intellectual property
 - ◆ Conflict of interest
 - ◆ Need for long term partnerships and the often conflicting time frames
 - ◆ How to suss each other out and understand each others needs
 - ◆ Disadvantages of going into partnership for researchers (less prestigious?)
 - ◆ Use Uni Business Liaison Officers and uni consulting arms

Examples of collaboration with industry

- Catherine Bridge (University of Sydney) - worked with timber industry regarding timber decking used by National Parks and Wildlife Service and older people's safety – so well outside traditional industry areas
- Julie Byles (University of Newcastle) - meeting with key players in Newcastle (community, state government, local government, industry/businesses) and trying to tune them into 'ageing'. They realised there were a whole lot of opportunities for them (eg. older people as customers, new ways of delivering goods and services to older people). Huge opportunity for research collaborations with the private sector but there are issues including how to do it well, safely and ethically.
- Sue Richardson - the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia has conducted research on the impact of mobile phones for the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association.
- The collaboration between Alzheimer's Australia and University of Western Australia is an example of a successful long term relationship as has been holding meetings, exchanges etc for 3 years.
- Consumers Health Forum and Medicines Australia have developed a guidelines for health consumer groups and pharmaceutical companies working together (i.e. two very different sorts of groups with a major power imbalance). Is a good model which took a long time to develop.
- Petrina Casey (Insurance Australia Group) - largest workers compensation insurer. Has lots of data that would be of value to researchers and is interested in finding out more about:
 - ◆ Risk prevention
 - ◆ Older drivers
 - ◆ Older people being injured, return to work strategies that work for older people (is harder to get older employee back to work)
 - ◆ What we could do better and how to educate OH&S providers
 - ◆ Communication gaps
 - ◆ About designing work to maintain older people in work (will help younger people as well).

Possible Network actions

Network should consider fostering partnerships with industry through the following:

- ◆ Providing seed funding to support collaborations meeting the Network's research criteria
- ◆ Promote ageing researchers to industry?
- ◆ Act as a connection point to bring researcher and industry together (and help avoid 'wrong' partners getting together)?
- ◆ Hold state-based workshops with key people in the Network, ageing constituencies and industry to consider how to engage partnerships, avoid issues, possible collaborations etc?
- ◆ Develop paper on guidelines and issues (should be across all the Network Research Themes – so take input from the Theme Convenors and from the state workshops)?
- ◆ Promote examples of successful partnerships?