



21C Curriculum Project

Initiative 4: Flagship Curriculum Projects

This paper provides an introduction to the fourth initiative in the 21C Project which is the *Flagship Curriculum Projects*. This initiative (which is described in the [21C Project overview](#)) will support the development of Future of Work and Society *curriculum* in the form of:

1. Learning 'Pods' (or modules)
2. Accelerator Units
3. Advantage Majors and Sub-majors
4. 21C Futures degrees

These will be further enhanced in the second stage of this initiative through pilots of *alternative credentialing* capacity as a record of 'non-enrolled' learning and *alternative entry and exit pathways* to build prospective student access to the new curriculum elements.

This paper provides an overview of the Flagship Curriculum Projects initiative in the following sections:

- A: Design features for 'future-of-work and society' signature curriculum
- B: What curriculum development will be funded
- C: Adding value to the flagship projects
- D: Overview of application process

This paper is an introduction only. The engagement of staff, students and external partners in developing proposals for Flagship Curriculum Projects will be supported through the first two Future of Work Forums, the Learning Futures Showcase in November, the November and December meetings of the *Curriculum Scholars Network* and additional resources provided on the 21C website.

The first Forum will explore the outcomes our curriculum must develop to equip graduates for success in a disrupted future of work and society. The 2017 Learning Futures Showcase will explore the concept and examples of Partnership Pedagogies. The second Forum will explore learning for future professions and provide opportunities to workshop ideas for Flagship Projects with students and partners. The Curriculum Scholars Network meetings will provide opportunities to identify possible ideas for Flagship Projects and build collaborations. The [21C Flagship Curriculum Projects Yammer Group](#) is an additional avenue for seeding and testing ideas, and finding collaborators.

If you have any questions about this 21C Initiative, or would like to discuss an idea for a Flagship Project please contact your [21C School Pilot lead](#) or the [21C Project Manager](#).

A: DESIGN FEATURES FOR 'FUTURE-OF-WORK AND SOCIETY' SIGNATURE CURRICULUM

1. The new curriculum elements will utilise partnership pedagogies to develop *future work (FoW)* and *society* career success outcomes for students across our renewed suite of degrees.



2. The inclusion of these new explicit curriculum elements will convey significant ‘signature’ value to prospective students and will offer existing students the capacity to add breadth and meaningful depth to their higher education experience to increase their career success.
3. The new curriculum elements (modules, new units, and combinations of new units) will be accommodated by the new degree structures proposed through the School Curriculum Pilots (Initiative 2 of 21C). Those degree structures will enable students to include relevant FoW learning experiences drawing on these new curriculum elements and greater opportunities for cross disciplinary study, to enhance our current degrees.
4. The resources developed in the Flagship Curriculum projects will be curated in an online *Curriculum Commons* and available for inclusion in any suitable degree.
5. The resources will be accessible online or through blended learning activities.
6. The new curriculum elements (modules, new units, and combinations of new units) will also be potentially available to external participants as stand-alone alternative credentials or through the University’s Registered Training Organisation (RTO) ‘WSU The College’.
7. The new curriculum elements will be co-created (Partnership Pedagogy) by teams of WSU staff working with students, and either industry, government or community partners.
8. Teams will be supported through a funding scheme to develop these new curriculum elements. Up to \$625K is available across the entire scheme.
9. Teams will be supported in the design and development process through participation in *Curriculum MakerSpaces*, which will provide access to Learning Transformations, Digital Futures, and other relevant resources.
10. The Flagship Projects initiative is intended to advance the ideas from *the Future of Work Curriculum Disruption Forums*, outputs from the *School Curriculum Pilots*, and ideas generated from the university community.

B: WHAT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT WILL BE FUNDED

1. The development of learning ‘Pods’ – (modules) to enhance students’ successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society.
 - These ‘Pods’ comprise learning activities that typically require between 3 hours – 1 week (10 hours) of student learning effort.
 - The ‘Pods’ provide opportunities to develop skills, capabilities or understandings, relevant to the needs of the future of work and utilise partnership pedagogies.
 - They require little or no specialised pre-requisite knowledge beyond that expected for general university level learning.
 - They can be accessed as ‘stand-alone’ co-curriculum opportunities by any interested student or as a ‘module’ embedded in a unit of study in a student’s program of study.
 - Delivered flexibly and have capacity for ‘at-scale’ student participation (>50 students).



- They might offer an entry point (taster experience) to a unit, sub-major, or degree pathway.
- Depending on the assessment component, they may be non-credit bearing however they can generate a record of successful completion for inclusion in a testamur, or as non-graded assessment for a unit, or with the addition of suitable assessment, as partial graded credit to a unit, or as an alternative credential.
- It is envisaged many pods will be non-award co-curricular offerings. However if they are to be credit bearing towards a degree the learning outcomes should be at the relevant AQF level.

Examples of Pods: They might be (for example) online self-study activities, intensive boot camps, skills training and practice, or community/industry/ research projects.

- [Big Data Big Heart Hackathon](#)
- Visit the [Open 2 Study suite of online modules](#) in big data and innovation.
- [QUT's Virgin StartUp Boot camp](#)
- Alison offers short modules in [sustainable business and innovation](#)
- [Arts/Screen Hackathon](#)
- [Random Hacks of Kindness](#)
- EdX offer a module in [Becoming an Entrepreneur](#)
- [UNSW Career Ready Mentoring Program](#) [UNSW Career Ready Mentoring Program](#)
- [UTS Nursing Start-Up and Midwifery Boot camp](#) (orientation to university study)
- [General Assembly short courses](#) in careers, branding, and technology literacy
- Sydney School of Entrepreneurship activity
- Digital literacy
- Coding Camp
- Sustainability Boot camp

If you have an idea for a possible 'Pod', please contact your 21C School Pilot lead or the 21C team to discuss it.

2. The development of new 'Accelerator Units' to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society

- The 'Accelerator Units' comprise learning activities that typically require 10 hours / week of student learning effort across a semester.
- They provide opportunities to develop skills, capabilities or understandings, relevant to the needs of the future of work and society and utilise partnership pedagogies
- The units are available, as electives or core, to students in multiple degrees, or as part of a thematic major that is available across several degrees and Schools.
- The units are credit bearing and comply with university policies.
- The units can potentially be accessed as 'stand-alone' credentialed learning by any interested community member.
- They are flexible in their delivery and have capacity for 'at-scale' student participation (>50 students) across multiple Schools.
- The inclusion of these new explicit curriculum elements will convey significant 'signature' value to prospective students and will offer existing students the capacity to add breadth to their educational experience to increase their career success.
- They only require entry level domain/discipline/field specific pre-requisite knowledge at the relevant unit and course level.
- The new units will be accommodated by the new degree structures proposed through the School Curriculum Pilots.



Examples of Accelerator Units might include:

- [The Big Issue's The Big Idea](#) (social enterprise competition to address homelessness)
- [UNSW Social Impact Hub Projects](#)
- WSU unit: [Incubator 1: Innovation and Creativity for Entrepreneurship](#) (301165)
- University of Melbourne unit (POPH90266): [Leadership for an Ageing Workforce](#)
- La Trobe University unit: [Health data for decision making](#)
- Macquarie University unit: [Access to Justice Placement Program](#)
- [NEXT Innovation Accelerator](#) (12 week partnership accelerator experience)
- [WSU Mass Observations Project](#) (research project)

If you have an idea for a possible new unit please contact your 21C School Pilot lead or the 21C team to discuss it.

3. The development of new 'Advantage Majors' and sub-majors are intended to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society.

- These are thematically integrated sequences of new (or renewed) units as sub-majors (4 units) or majors (8 units) that add substantial *multidisciplinary* or (Future of Work and Society) *capability*-based *depth* and practical (vocational) *applications*, to the student's existing key program.
- The Advantage majors and sub-majors will convey significant '*signature*' value to prospective students by providing a significant potential career advantage for graduates.
- These Advantage majors and sub-majors will be available to students in any WSU coursework degree, where the degree structure flexibility allows it.
- They provide a potential core/key program for a new '21C Futures' degree.
- They will involve contributions from multiple Schools and may also involve partnerships with other education and industry providers to embed vocational qualifications and credentials.
- The majors and sub-majors comply with university policies and will be TEQSA compliant.
- They utilise sophisticated WSU partnership pedagogies and offer a 'flagship' for publicising Western's curriculum transformation.
- The (sub) majors will potentially also be accessible as 'stand-alone' credentialed learning by any interested community member with the relevant capabilities to successfully engage with the learning opportunities they offer (see Stage 2).
- Flexibly delivered and have capacity for 'at-scale' student participation (>50 students) across multiple Schools.

Examples of similar majors might include:

- ANU major: [Innovation and Professional Practice](#)
- ANU minor: [Sustainable Development](#)
- Flinders major: [Innovation and Enterprise](#)
- Edith Cowan major: [Health Promotion](#)
- Curtin: [MicroMasters in a Digital World](#)
- University of Sydney major: [Digital Cultures](#)
- UTS: [Diploma in Innovation](#)

If you have an idea for a possible new sub major or major please contact your 21C School Pilot lead or the 21C team to discuss it.



4. Preliminary proposals will be sought for the development of new ‘21C Futures’ degrees which are aligned with a Future of Work and Society which will demand multidisciplinary capabilities that can apply and transfer across a range of vocational settings. This might suggest an alternative thematic, rather than vocational or discipline based structure to these new degrees.

- Scope and Propose 21C Futures degrees aligned with the ‘capability-sets’ required for the Future of Work.
- The proposed degree should exemplify all the dimensions of partnership pedagogies (co-created/delivered/located etc.).
- The proposed degrees may be strategically positioned as a premium brand offering in partnership with The Academy and/or major industry partners.
- The proposed degrees may build on recently developed more ‘thematic’ WSU degrees (e.g. B Entrepreneurship) to ensure the success of those degrees in a more competitive market.
- Proposals for degrees should incorporate relevant new 21C curriculum elements (Pods, Accelerator Units, Advantage Sub/Majors) developed in other Flagship Projects.
- Proposals for 21C Futures degrees will incorporate alternative degree structures and architectures (thematic first year etc.) informed by the outputs of the School pilots and FoW & Society Curriculum Disruption Forums.

Examples of similar ‘21C Futures’ degrees at other universities:

- UTS: [Bachelor of Technology and Innovation](#)
- UTS: [Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation Courses](#)

Preliminary proposals for 21C Futures degrees will be developed with seed funding in the first half of 2018 under the Flagship Projects initiative, however development will not be funded until proof of concept is ascertained and a ‘Course Concept Proposal’ is endorsed by BIDC and APCAC (and Course Load Planning Group).

C: ADDING VALUE TO THE FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

A second stage funding process:

5. Alternative pathways for entry, re-entry and exits

The development of Pods and Accelerator Units that are accessible to the broader community and professionals seeking to upskill, potentially providing the university with another alternative entry pathway. Prospective students might engage in a series of open access ‘Pods’ or ‘Accelerator Units’ and on the basis of successful completion to an agreed standard, apply for admission to other educational qualifications at the university. Articulations might be negotiated to existing degrees, to thematic ‘Advantage (Sub)Majors’, to The College, or to new thematic ‘21C Future Degrees’. The Pods might be made available to WSU schools participating in the [Big Picture Education Graduation Portfolio](#) as an ATAR alternative pilot program. The new curriculum elements provide the possibility of a staged engagement by prospective students with university study, or as a pathway to non-university study (e.g. VET).

With the requirement that new curriculum elements are co-created (Partnership Pedagogy) with industry, government or community partners, the Pods, Accelerator units and Advantage



(Sub)Majors provide a high touch contact point between the university, industry and community sectors. In addition to providing access to higher education for individuals working in those partner organisations, these curriculum elements will provide opportunities for some students to exit (hopefully temporarily) their degrees to meaningful employment should they choose to do so. Equally, the Pods, Units and Advantage (Sub)Majors might provide opportunities and invitations for colleagues working in those same industry and community sectors, and for our alumni, to re-enter university study.

For inclusion in the alternative pathways pilot, a proposal should meet all the requirements for funding under the relevant category of the 21C Flagship Projects scheme and:

- Propose an articulation into a university program
- Propose opportunities for early exit pathways as a viable alternative to completing a degree for students and degrees where this is appropriate

Submission of a proposal to participate in the Alternative Pathways Pilot will be by invitation following the selection of Funded Flagship Projects. Those Projects selected for inclusion in the Alternative Pathways pilot will receive additional funding support for implementation of pathways in 2018.

6. Alternative Credentials

Alternative credentialing makes it possible for learners to accrue recognition or to collect digital 'badges' for the completion of particular learning tasks. The tasks can involve a very small amount of learning effort 1 – 3 hours (often referred to as a micro-credential). The completion of the task and/or the assessment of the resultant learning generates a 'credential'. It is 'alternative' because it does not necessarily count as credit towards the familiar university credentials of a 'unit' or 'degree' qualification. There is scope for suitably assessed 'alternative' credentials to also be recognised as credit for university credentials. Alternative credentials might be 'stacked' as a University credential, or as an add-on to a university credential. Assessment for alternative credentials is typically not as rigorous as the assessment required for a university qualification. Most micro-credentials are usually achieved online. A system for storing authenticated credentials that is independent of the learning context and independently credible to employers and industries is required. This has prompted some universities to invest in block chain technologies or in portfolio systems that incorporate such technologies. Currently, the verification of alternative credentials does not approach the level of credibility that a university qualification commands. However, micro-credentialing - suitably authenticated - is an opportunity for smaller packages of learning to be formally recognised and verified, and to be added together as entry to, or progress along, an articulated education pathway.

The option of alternative credentialing may add additional value to resources developed through the 21C Flagship projects. For some prospective students, particularly those already working in professions, the time required to complete semester long units and in some cases even intensive block mode offerings and modules, is more manageable if broken up into smaller micro-credentialed components for subsequent aggregation as a 'stackable' credential. Such micro-credentialing also provides an opportunity to aggregate learning across multiple contexts.

21C Flagship Project Pods, Accelerator Units or Advantage (Sub)Majors may also be supported by the scheme to develop an alternative 'credentialed' version to deliver a stackable credential.



Stackable credentials might involve developing micro-credentials for learning Pods, or similar components of units; alternative 'short-course' credentials for Accelerator units or for Advantage (Sub) majors.

Submission of a proposal to participate in the Alternative Credential Pilot will be by invitation. Proposals from selected projects should address a demonstrated community or professional practitioner development need for up-skilling to meet a future of work challenge. Funded Flagship Projects selected for inclusion in the Alternative Credentials pilot will receive additional funding support for implementation in 2018.

In addition to meeting the general requirements, for inclusion in the alternative credentialing pilot, the proposals must:

- Demonstrate significant external demand for the alternative credential in the form of identified potential participants and 'employers' who would recognise the alternative credential in recruitment or advancement
- As an element of partnership pedagogy, the proposal should involve an industry origin and/or destination partner in co-designing, co-delivering and co-assessing the credential
- The form of the credential must be compatible with the University blockchain solutions (TBA) for authentication, storage and communication of alternative credentials
- Where appropriate the credential might be offered as a certified training package through the University College's RTO provider (TBC)
- Propose a strategy for also stacking the alternative credential as a pathway into (basis for entry) or through (as credit towards) a university qualification).

As alternative credentials derived from the learning activities in the Pods, Accelerator units or Advantage (Sub)Majors, the learning activities should meet the pedagogical requirements for funding of each curriculum element. However, the assessment does not have to comply with university coursework policies but must comply with the Australian Skills Quality Authority standards and Standards for Registered Training Organisations if offered through the College RTO.

Possible Examples of alternative credential stacks include:

- [EdX MicroMasters courses](#)
- Udacity Nanodegrees

D: OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION PROCESS & IMPLEMENTATION

Proposals

Schools, Institutes and Divisions will be invited to propose Flagship Curriculum Projects for support under the scheme via an 'expression of interest' (EoI) process.

The 21C Project will support the framing of proposals through the Curriculum Scholars Network meetings to ensure that there is alignment with the aims of the 21C project.

A template will be developed for EoI to support efficient preparation of applications.



Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated by a group drawn from the 21C Steering Committee (Course Load Planning Group) who will then develop recommendations for funding by the 21C Project Sponsors (PVC LT/ DVC A). Executive Committee will endorse the recommendations.

Proposals will be selected for support based on the following guiding principles with a view to equitably distributing resources.

The proposed Flagship Project must:

1. confirm to 'scope' requirements for curriculum elements (see above)
2. contribute significantly to the development of *future work and society* career success outcomes for students
3. convey significant 'value' to prospective students
4. be accommodated by the new degree structures proposed through the School pilots
5. be co-created by a team of staff and students working with external partners
6. be achievable within the institutional resource constraints with realistic budget

Draft Timeline (TBC)

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| • Announce Scheme and Call for nominations: | 8 November 2017 |
| • EOI due | 5pm 31 January 2018 |
| • Review of EOI and funding recommendations proposed | 9 February 2018 |
| • Exec endorses recommendations & teams notified | 26 February 2018 |
| • Teams advised and funds dispersed | 1 March 2018 |
| • Teams invited to nominate for inclusion in the Pathways pilot | 9 March 2018 |
| • Teams invited to nominate for inclusion in the Credentials pilot | 9 March 2018 |
| • Proposals for Pathways and Credentials pilot confirmed | 1 April 2018 |
| • Mid-point report | 1 August 2018 |
| • Projects completed | 30 January 2019 |

Support for Project teams

In addition to the funding provided to each team to support their development work, each successful Flagship Curriculum Project will have access to the resources and expertise of the Learning Futures Portfolio coordinated through *Curriculum MakerSpaces*.

The Curriculum MakerSpaces will be facilitated through the University's new professional development strategy and delivered by:

- Learning Futures Portfolio
- Other Teams (Library, Careers, HR) as negotiated/required

Members of the Flagship Project teams will be supported to apply for HEA fellowships in recognition of their contributions via the new [Educational Fellowship Scheme Western Sydney](#).

The Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) will work with the Flagship Project teams to facilitate any required course approvals, student management systems integration, and support by the Office of Marketing and Communications of new curriculum elements.