

THE ETHOS RESEARCH LEADERS FORUM

Testimonials from 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011

Prof Tim Smith University of the Sunshine Coast

The Ethos Forum was an invaluable learning experience. The ability to meet with other research centre directors and discuss the various structures, processes, resourcing and performance measures has contributed significantly to my ability to plan strategically. Through this experience, I have become better equipped to navigate both the external and internal operating environments for the good of my centre and those within it. The camaraderie developed during the Ethos Forum sessions allowed us to openly discuss emerging challenges within a confidential setting and I believe all of us gained a huge amount from being able to discuss those issues among peers with first-hand experience of those challenges we all faced.

Many thanks for a very valuable learning experience

Prof Jiwa Moyez Curtin University of Technology

“ The leaders forum provided a unique opportunity to reflect on challenges we all face in establishing our credentials as leaders in our respective fields and institutions. The case study approach, with an emphasis on confidential and honest reflection gave every member of the group a personal forum to explore challenges we faced at that point in our careers. We benefited from the reflections of members with much greater experience but also from the great wisdom of more junior people. The combined effect of the group led to life changing experience for many of us. Added to this we had the opportunity to meet in person individuals with a stellar profile in the national and international scene. Some of these networking opportunities promoted collaboration long after the group disbanded. A fabulous forum to nurture academic careers and more importantly person growth for those who were lucky enough to be selected for the program. “

Associate Professor Michael Kimlin from the Queensland University of Technology's Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation

“I really appreciate the opportunity to get together with others from a variety of backgrounds, including deans of research, directors of research institutes and other senior researchers, to discuss key issues that seem to affect all of us – it's nice to know I'm not alone, The group has become a great resource for finding solutions to common problems and provides an opportunity to refocus and to really think strategically about what you are doing and how that fits in with the bigger picture

Testimonials from 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (cont.)

Assoc. Professor Alexandra McManus, PhD, MPH
Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute (CHIRI)

'A wonderful course, excellent keynotes, learned facilitator and a great group of attendees. I would recommend it to senior research leaders with a passion for excellence in research.

The course content was relevant, easy to implement in a research environment and produced very good research. The networking and sharing of issues, problems, successes with those in similar positions in an environment of complete confidentiality was invaluable. The honest and constructive criticism offered, whilst not always easy to hear, was accompanied by possible solutions and the ensuing discussion and support provided the impetus for change. The professional relationships formed have also provided excellent opportunities for future collaborations.

Finally, the keynote addresses by leading researchers in Australia were an added bonus. Where else do you get the opportunity to spend quality time with those who have already reached the pinnacle of success and who are willing to sit down and chat about how you can grow as a research leader. Overall a very rewarding experience.'

Professor Cory Xian from the Bone Growth and Repair Research Unit at the University of South Australia

"It's been great having the chance to learn from some very successful and outstanding research leaders in Australia," he said.

"Through discussions with my peers I've been able to find solutions to some of the common problems I face as part of my work, including developing better team management skills and forming more collaborative external relationships. We've also agreed to keep in touch in the future which will be really useful."

Professor Craig T. Simmons
Director, National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training, Flinders University

Many thanks for the Ethos Forum. I have really enjoyed being a participant in the workshops and would certainly highly recommend them to others to attend.

I am sure we will cross paths again in the future.

Testimonials from 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (cont.)

A Professor from the University of Newcastle

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for conducting the Ethos Research Leaders' Forum. The Forum provided me with the opportunity to engage with other researchers from various universities and to benefit from the advice of leading researchers who attended as guest speakers. From my researcher peers, I gained insight into common predicaments faced, like competing demands, time management and productivity issues. It was so reassuring to hear peers facing very similar dilemmas and benefiting from hearing how they handled their own and receiving advice specific to my situation. This advice helped me to sharpen focus on research priorities and set an agenda for future research activities. The overall impact of the course built confidence in one's research strengths and also in how to handle challenges.

The guest speakers were simply inspirational. Their advice was practically relevant and their career trajectories and stories of drive and determination very motivating.

In summary, I found the insights I gained, the camaraderie experienced and the opportunity to identify and focus on individual research goals enormously encouraging and confidence building. I highly recommend the Ethos Research Forum to research active academics wanting to build their research leadership skills and potential.

Associate Professor Martin Johnston, Ph.D School of Chemical and Physical Sciences Flinders University

The ETHOS research leaders forum is an excellent program that brings together research leaders from within the university sector. I found the commonality of issues between various and states institutions allowed for highly relevant discussions to be had between the participants. Indeed this networking is a key aspect of the forum.

The examination of our personality profiles and the discussions of roles within teams was very interesting. This indicated to me that as leaders we need to be aware of ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses and how we fit into the overall team effort.

The insight and wisdom provided by senior external speakers from both industry and university settings was terrific. Think-Tank type discussions were supported by insightful comments by Mark who identified key issues and suggested strategies for success. I would certainly recommend this program for anyone with a leadership role in research.

Testimonials from 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (cont.)

Associate Professor Marcus Foth

Director, Urban Informatics Research Lab Queensland University of Technology

Universities offer many useful resources to develop research and teaching skills. However, building a successful career in academia poses a wide range of new challenges in addition to the pure craft of scholarship alone. The level of know-how, leadership skills, experience and resilience one needs in order to shape an academic career path often appears ambiguous and daunting, especially in the cross-disciplinary field of Urban Informatics. I was grateful when QUT sponsored my participation in the Ethos Research Leaders Forum 2010. It provided a unique venue that offered a supportive and constructive environment to discuss career development related issues that were highly relevant and of specific interest to me as an early career academic building my own research lab.

Mia Woodruff

Senior Research Fellow. Biomaterials & Tissue Morphology Group. Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation. QUT

All the things we discussed, regarding me trying to get some more resources and writing my first lead-CI ARC grant came to fruition for me this year, and I really owe a lot of this success to the encouragement and motivation I received at the Ethos Forum leadership course.

Professor Michele Clark

Acting Assistant Dean (Research)

Faculty of Health, Queensland University of Technology

I found that the sessions allowed some 'head-space' to think about where are departments/schools/faculties are going strategically and enhance my role in this. I really enjoyed every part of the sessions including the visiting speakers and the case studies as well as the theory parts. Knowing how to 'sell' our centres/research was also very useful and I have been able to use this. I found that each time I would learn something that I could apply.

I also like the work preferences - sort of re-affirmed what I intuitively knew, but the real bonus of this was how to work better with this and to surround myself with people with different traits. The peer learning worked really well for me. As a facilitator you are very adaptable and would allow issues to emerge and you could always tie this to relevant theory or insights. It was not a cook-book approach, but rather tailored to our needs, as they emerged. - Fantastic.

Everyone was heard and you as the facilitator could draw out the quieter members. I thought the group really worked well and attending these sessions was something that I always looked forward to and to hearing about how people were progressing with issues. There was a lot of trust in the group.

Fantastic -- would highly recommend it. Well done Mark.

Testimonials from 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (cont)

Professor Kerry Carrington
Head of School of Justice
Faculty of Law, QUT

One of the distinguishing aspects of this program is that the sessions are organised over a year long period, rather than a short intensive. This mode of offering allowed for meaningful relationships to develop between the participants, the opportunity to try out new ideas and come back to the group and reflect on research leadership issues in your own workplace in a safe supportive environment.

Mark was an excellent facilitator with a good sense of balance and judgment and offered really good practical feedback to participants about leadership issue, style and approach.

While the forum was theoretically based on the latest developments in organisational psychology and leadership, the learning was embedded in the process, the case studies, and the materials.

The organisation of the day went really smoothly - with a mix of listening to an outstanding research leader, a case study based on one of the participants combined with learning tasks around work preference or leadership theory.

On the whole I found this to be an inspiring, innovative and valuable experience and would recommend it to other aspiring research leaders across the university sector. As a Head of School I can see that the program would be exceptionally good value for staff in key leadership positions, such as research leader or research director positions within a school.

Mark's facilitation of the program was outstanding. The level of interaction between the participants was also a stand out feature of the program.

I would unreservedly recommend this research leadership program to anyone in the university sector with research leadership aspirations.

Testimonials from 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (cont.)

Prof Suzanne Carrington

**Head of School School of Learning & Professional Studies Faculty of Education
Queensland University of Technology**

The opportunity to meet over a period of time with a fantastic group of academics along with the input from Mark in the sessions was fantastic. Each meeting provided me with new ideas and strategies to put into practice. I looked forward to our sessions and taking time out of my busy schedule to focus on my own leadership development.

I learnt an enormous amount from the variety of backgrounds and experience.

Mark's excellent facilitation skills ensure the participants feel valued and respected. Everyone is encouraged to contribute.

I would recommend this program to my colleagues.