



The University of Melbourne

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# Asialink Annual Report 2011

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## ASIALINK ANNUAL REPORT 2011

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## CHAPTER 1: SNAPSHOT

Asialink is Australia's leading centre for the promotion of public understanding of Asia and of Australia's role in the Asian region, with an annual program of initiatives across the arts, education, business, health and community sectors.

Throughout 2011, Asialink has strengthened its engagement with key international alliances, governments, educators and cultural organisations in the Asian region.

### **Charter**

Asialink increases understanding between Australia and Asia by building partnerships, networks and programs that enhance prosperity, security, cultural engagement and mutual respect.

### **Reach**

Asialink delivers high-level forums, international collaborations, education and cultural programs in Australia and Asia. Our work engages the business, philanthropic, media, arts, education, health and community sectors.

### **Vision**

Asialink's vision is an Australia fully engaged in the dynamism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Asian region.

## **Programs**

### ***Corporate and Public Programs***

These programs provide a range of forums and print and online publications to educate and skill the business, government, academic and broader communities for more effective Australia-Asia engagement. Asialink's second track diplomacy initiatives bring together influential participants from ASEAN and from Australia to help solve issues of common concern and contribute to building closer ASEAN-Australia relationships.

### ***School Education***

Asialink's education arm, the **Asia Education Foundation (AEF)**, is a joint activity of Asialink and Education Services Australia. The AEF aims to support and promote Asia literacy in primary and secondary schools throughout Australia.

### ***Arts***

Asialink Arts aims to promote cultural understanding, information exchange and artistic endeavour between Australia and Asian countries.

### ***Health and Community***

The organisation's community health program, **Asia-Australia Mental Health (AAMH)**, is a consortium of St Vincent's Health, the Department of Psychiatry at The University of Melbourne and Asialink. AAMH partners with academic, government, health sector community and peak bodies in Asia and Australia to improve community mental health services and outcomes in the Asia Pacific region.

## CHAPTER 2: ASIALINK TRIUMPHS

Major highlights in 2011 for the organisation included:

- Hosting the **Prime Minister's keynote address on 'Australia's Place in Asia'**, in which she announced the development of a **White Paper on Australia in the Asian Century**.
- Delivering the pilot **Asialink Commission** in Kuala Lumpur from 12-15 April, addressing the theme of "**Strengthening Australia-ASEAN relations**".
- Establishing a high-level **Taskforce** to drive development of the **Asia Capable Workplace Strategy**.
- Successful **syndication of Asialink video to ABC News 24 and SkyNews**.
- Delivering **40 artist residencies in 14 Asian countries** (in Visual Arts, Arts Management, Performing Arts and Writing), including reciprocal residency between Artspace, Sydney and The National Art Studio, Korea.
- Seeing Australia-Asia School BRIDGE Program included in **shortlist of 20 for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group Award for Intercultural Innovation**; 400 applications from 70 nations were received.
- Successfully engaging **100 schools across Australia, China, Indonesia and South Korea in Australia-Asia School BRIDGE partnerships** operated in partnership with AusAID, The Myer Foundation, Australia Indonesia Institute, Australia Korea Foundation, Federal Government, Education Queensland and Ministries of Education in Indonesia, China and Republic of Korea.
- Delivering the inaugural **ICT Forum** in Melbourne, with **420 participants** and national and international speakers, including the Minister for Communications.
- Graduating **40 professionals** from Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra through the Asialink Leaders program, including participation in a week-long retreat in Canberra.
- Allocating **\$5.78 million to 381 schools** nationally to enable the enhancement of school Asia literacy programs through the NALSSP Becoming Asia Literate Grants to Schools Program. Twenty percent of Australian schools have applied for grants under this initiative, indicating the high level of demand for resources to support Asia literacy programs.
- Delivering **6 visual arts touring exhibitions to 9 venues in 6 countries, exhibiting the works of 65 artists** to new regional audiences.
- Successfully delivering new Writing Touring Program model in the form of a three-stage Australia-Korea writing exchange, featuring **70 writers in English and Korean**, and events at the Seoul and Melbourne Writers Festivals.

- Holding the annual Asia Education Foundation National Summit in Sydney, with 140 leading educators from across Australia.
- Signing an MOU between the Directorate General of Health and Family Welfare India and The University of Melbourne to cooperate on improving India's community mental health system and launching the Indian mental health program in Delhi, hosted by the Australian High Commission.
- Raising **\$377,000** from the Asialink/Asia Society joint membership package.
- Delivering **over 54 public events and business briefings** with audience numbers in excess of 5,300 in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra.
- Presenting **10 detailed responses** to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on the Australian Curriculum for English, History, Maths, Science, the Arts, Geography and Languages.
- Securing **\$6.25 million for projects** to advance Asia literacy in schools from government, philanthropic, NGO and professional association partners.
- Sending **283 school educators on 14 study tours to 7 Asian countries**, bringing the total number to approximately **3,000 educators since 1993**.
- Had the ***National Statement on Asia Literacy in Australian Schools 2011-2012*** noted by the Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee (AEEYSOC).
- Signed up **170 volunteers** from business and the community to partner with **204 schools** as part of the Asia Literacy Ambassadors project, bringing the total number of Ambassadors and schools involved to **283** and **287** respectively.
- Co-hosting an international conference and workshop for representatives from **17 countries in the Asia Pacific Community Mental Health Development Network** in Delhi in February and Melbourne in November.
- Seeing the Australia-Asia BRIDGE Program ranked in the **Top 20** for the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations and BMW Group **Award for Intercultural Innovation** from a field of **400 submissions from 70 nations**.

## CHAPTER 3: PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES

Asialink exceeded most of the objectives set out in the beginning of 2011 in the Strategic and Operational Plan.

Building on twenty years of successful programming and high level relationship building, Asialink in 2011 established itself as the peak body for Asia-Australia relationships. The Prime Minister's Asialink keynote address on 'Australia's Place in Asia' and the establishment of a high level Asia Capable Taskforce and a number of meetings with the Ken Henry taskforce in 2011 have provided further evidence of this positioning

Finally, in 2011 Asialink continued to focus on strengthening internal processes and structures.

### ***Build Asia knowledge and networks***

#### **School Education**

In 2011, the Asia Education Foundation secured an additional \$6.25 million to expand its current work in hosting study tours, linking schools using ICT, professional learning for principals and teachers, managing Asia literacy grants to schools and contributing to the development of the new Australian Curriculum.

Key initiatives included:

- Launched the *National Statement on Asia Literacy in Australian Schools 2011-2012* identifying the broad knowledge, skills and understandings required by all students to achieve Asia literacy in the context of the new Australian Curriculum.
- Sent 283 school educators on 14 study tours to 7 Asian countries, bringing the total number to approximately 2,000 educators since 1993
- Recruited 170 Asia Literacy Ambassadors to work with 204 schools to increase school community demand for Asia literacy
- Sent 180 Year 9-11 students on pilot work placements and engaged over 1,220 students in 8 'Opening a Door into Asia' events held in partnership with universities in each state/territory.
- Trained 176 principals and school leaders through the *Leading 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools: Engage with Asia* program across Australia.
- Provided expert input to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority to support the development of the Australian Curriculum cross-curriculum priority of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, and the general student capability of intercultural understanding.

- Developed the online resource *Travelbugs* for primary students go on journeys to specific countries in Asia to complete various tasks and interact with students from those countries.
- Established an Asia Schools Alliance with 20 school stories of good practice uploaded on the AEF web portal and 150 more to be added.
- Held the AEF National Summit in partnership with national agencies ACARA, AITSL and ESA on May 16-17 in Sydney.
- Received \$25,000 from the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to scope how Asia literacy fits into the new Teacher and School Leader Professional Standards.
- Received \$493,000 in Round 3 of the NALSSP Collaborative Partnerships Grants to develop and deliver a national teacher professional learning program to support implementation of the English and History national curriculum.
- Issued 23 editions of AEF E-News to over 8,000 subscribers, presented at six national and state conferences, and published 15 articles and news items in national and state education media and national and international mass media.
- Launched Australia-China BRIDGE and established partnerships with Beijing District and Shandong Province, facilitating 24 teachers to participate in the inaugural Australia-China BRIDGE Project in August with a three-week program in Australia aimed at supporting Chinese language and studies programs through online collaboration.

## **Corporate and Public Programs**

In 2011, CPP delivered new forums and programs, provided China cultural intelligence training to members of the business community and further strengthened the Asialink Leaders and alumni programs.

Key initiatives included:

- Graduated 40 professionals from Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra through the annual Asialink Leaders program.

Program content included:

- April Leaders Dinner focusing on the role of the media in shaping perceptions of our region, involving senior journalists from Australia and Asia.
- Two-day cultural intelligence workshops in Melbourne and Sydney, facilitated by UGM consulting.
- July Leaders dinner focusing on Australia-India relations.
- Week-long Canberra retreat in September facilitated by Professor Tony Milner that concentrated on developing an Australia 'Asia plan'. Highlights

included a workshop and lunch involving all ASEAN ambassadors and meetings with the opposition foreign spokesperson and the Minister for Trade.

Other initiatives included:

- Recruited 50 new participants for 2012 program including 5 participants from Brisbane
  - New partnership formed with Freehills Brisbane to deliver two Leaders program dinners in Brisbane in 2012
  - Alumni involved in every aspect of program delivery from recruitment of new participants to program evaluation. Alumni enews posted monthly with fast growing activity and discussion through LinkedIn groups.
- Delivered over 74 events to audiences in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra, including both public events and business briefings.

Public event highlights included:

- *New South Wales: Its Rightful Place In Asia*, lunch with Barry O'Farrell, Leader, NSW Liberals
- *Australia's Role in a Global Environment: Broadband and the Digital Economy*, national ICT half-day forum with Senator Stephen Conroy and David Thodey, CEO, Telstra
- *Australia's Place in the World*, luncheon with the Hon. Julia Gillard MP, Prime Minister of Australia
- *China Update*, luncheon with HE Geoff Raby, Australian Ambassador to China
- *Crisis in Japan: Public Responses, Private Responses*, public lecture with Asia Institute Director Prof Pookong Kee and Japan specialists
- *Is Hong Kong still the safest and best vantage entry point for business with China?*, luncheon with Sir Donald Tsang, Chief Executive, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
- *Choosing Sides: Shaping our Relationships in the Asian Century*, public lecture with Professor Hugh White
- *The China Story*, Asialink Next Generation leadership public lecture series with Bernard Salt
- *Dancing with Warriors: A Diplomatic Memoir*, book launch with Phillip Flood and Barry Jones
- *China and Australia Overseas Aid: Whose business? Whose interest?*, public lecture with panel chaired by ABC's Jim Middleton

Business briefing highlights included:

- *Australia and ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting)*, with H.E. Dr Brendan Nelson, Australian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union
- *Vietnam Update*, with H.E. Mr Allaster Cox, Australian Ambassador to Vietnam
- *Turning a Pan Asian Strategy into Profitability – The Success of an Australian Brand in Asia*, with Bruce Buchanan, Group CEO, Jetstar Airways Pty Limited



- *Boardroom Briefing*, with Mr Tarek A. Robbiati, Group Managing Director, Telstra International Group
  - *India Update*, with Professor Amitabh Mattoo and Consul General Dasgupta
  - *Boardroom Briefing*, with Paul Ramadge, Editor in Chief, The Age
  - *Japan Update*, with Mr Murray McLean AO, Former Australian Ambassador to Japan
  - *Australia-Japan Relations in the Context of an Emerging China*, Boardroom Breakfast Briefing with Sir Rod Eddington
- Offered a new intercultural learning program, *Inside the Chinese Mind: A Master Class for Senior Executives Engaging with China*, in partnership with UGM Consulting

## Arts

In 2011, the Arts program streamlined its core programs of artist residencies, touring exhibitions and writing exchanges as well as delivering a major Utopia project, four projects in South Korea, researching new programs for India and China, and having a new four year strategic plan and funding for 2012-2015 approved by the Australia Council for the Arts.

Key initiatives included:

- Supported 40 artist residencies in 14 Asian countries (in Visual Arts, Arts Management, Performing Arts and Writing).
- Delivered 6 visual arts touring exhibitions in 6 Asian countries, namely:
  - *Erased: Contemporary Australian Drawing* in Sydney, Australia
  - *Face to Face: Portraiture in a Digital Age* in Manila, Philippines and Seoul, South Korea
  - *The Abandoned Boudoir* in Beijing and Taipei
  - *Invisible Structures: Australian Artist Collectives* in Tokyo, Japan and Yogyakarta, Indonesia
  - *Selectively Revealed* in Seoul, South Korea
  - *Soundtracks: Dylan Martorell* in Jakarta as part of the Jakarta Biennale
- Successfully delivered a new Writing Touring Program model, whereby author tours are embedded in long-term collaborative projects. This was a three-stage Australia-Korea writing exchange, featuring new work from 70 writers in English and Korean; a three-stage online publication and translation program in partnership with leading poetry journal *Cordite*; and a reciprocal tour of nine writers featuring at the Seoul and Melbourne Writers' Festivals.
- Publication and national distribution of new book '*Strange Flowers: Australia-China encounters in writing and art*', in partnership with Wakefield Press. The book features new work from nine leading Australian and Chinese creatives working between the two countries and cultures.

- Partnered with the Melbourne International Arts Festival to deliver a major project for Utopia on the theme of 'Intimate Publics', comprising a public forum of 150 people, a video program co-curated with Utopia Asian partners and a special 'Utopia' edition of Contemporary Broadsheet Magazine.
- Delivered four projects to celebrate the 'Year of Friendship' with Korea including two exhibitions, 'Face-to-Face', opened by the Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard MP and 'Selectively Revealed', two special artist residency projects in Seoul and Melbourne and poetry exchange projects.
- Received funding from both the Australia India Institute and Arts Victoria to undertake an industry delegation to India in January 2011 to develop visual and performing arts, writing and Utopia projects for Year of Friendship with India in 2012.
- Initiated a curatorial delegation to Beijing and Shanghai to develop new projects for touring exhibitions and residencies.
- Hosted a key roundtable on the 'The Asian Century' at a major international conference on cultural policy in Melbourne.

## **Health and Community**

In 2011, Asia Australia Mental Health secured \$942,267.60 to strengthen and broaden its network of Australian and Asia-Pacific partners, including new partnerships with Pacific Islands, and new funding for India and Qatar. Professor Kwong Lee Dow has taken up the chair of AAMH.

Key initiatives included:

- Continued building Australian clinicians' Asia expertise and linkages through the development and delivery of a range of jointly run training programs across China, including Hong Kong, for clinicians, mental health leaders and the corporate sector and through the hosting of study tours, clinical training placements and workshops in Australia.
- Wrote and delivered a pilot Mental Health Promotion training program for China for 50 emerging national mental health leaders.
- Elevated AAMH's profile with the Australian government through accompanying the Australian Minister of Health and Aging to the Bilateral China-Australia Health Policy Meeting in Beijing on Monday 18th April to represent mental health. This is the first time mental health had been included in this bilateral ministerial meeting. Following from this meeting, AAMH's China partnership with the National Institute of Mental Health selected as one of four programs to be funded in the final round of funding through AusAID China.

- Co-hosted an international conference and workshop with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India for representatives from 14 countries in the Asia Pacific Community Mental Health Development Network in Delhi. HE Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, India, and Australia's High Commissioner to India, HE Peter Varghese, launched the conference.
- Brokered an MOU between the Directorate General of Health and Family Welfare India and The University of Melbourne to cooperate on improving the community mental health system in India and secured funding from AusAID to undertake the work beginning with four pilot sites across India and managed by an India-Australia Advisory Committee; confirmed partnership with the prestigious Indian National Institute of Health and Family Welfare to manage the project.
- Secured major contract with Qatar Government to assist with implementing their National Mental Health Strategy.
- Commenced new partnership with the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs and the Indonesian Mental Health Association.
- Published *Partnerships in Community Mental Health*, a text co-written by AAMH high-level government and peak body partners in 18 countries of the region launched by the Hon. Jeff Kennett at AAMH's International Mental Health Conference in Melbourne. Delegates from 18 countries as well as Australian high-level stakeholders attended the three-day conference.
- Commenced new project *Asia Pacific Art and Mental Health* in conjunction with the Dax Centre at the University of Melbourne and involving 10 Asia-Pacific countries.
- Secured AusAID funding for 2.5 year project building community mental health services in Fiji and Solomon Islands.
- Secured 6 AusAID Australian Leadership Awards Fellowships (ALAF) for mental health leaders from China, Cambodia, India, Mongolia and Vietnam to build their community mental health knowledge and skills in Australia.
- A/Prof Chee Ng and AAMH Board member Prof Ruth Vine, Chief Psychiatrist of Victoria, presented at an international conference in Taiwan, *Building Collaborative Research Capacity for Community Mental Health in Developing Countries*.

## ***Strengthen Australia's relationships with the Asian region***

In the wake of the Asialink Asia Society National Forum held in 2010, Asialink has continued to expand its policy footprint in the business, education and diplomacy sectors. The signature policy event in Asialink's 2011 calendar was the hosting of the Prime Minister's announcement in September that a national review of 'Australia in the Asian Century' would take place, leading to the publication of a white paper in 2012. That the Hon. Julia Gillard MP chose Asialink as the venue for this critical policy announcement attests to the importance of Asialink to the national Asia-Australia engagement conversation.

Asialink's advocacy efforts in business, education and diplomacy in 2011 continued to be founded on the principles identified at the 2010 National Forum as being critical in Australia's future engagement with the Asian region:

- That advancing Australia's increasingly complex relationships with the countries of the Asian region requires more qualified Australians – and that Governments and all sectors must invest long-term in equipping Australians with skills and understandings for the Asian Century.
- That we must act collegiately in our Asia relationships in order to solve common problems and to achieve successful outcomes. This requires greater resourcing and development of people-to-people links and an emphasis on "networks of mutuality".
- That the wider Australian public still needs to be brought into a national "conversation" about the imperative of Australia-Asia engagement.

### **Business**

In 2011, Asialink expanded its advocacy work in the business community through key publications, the Asia Literacy Ambassadors – Partnering Businesses and Schools project, and concrete steps toward the realisation of a national Asia Capable Workplace Strategy.

Key initiatives included:

- The Asia Education Foundation continued to expand the Asia Literacy Ambassadors project, recruiting 170 Ambassadors from the business community and 204 schools across Australia to participate in a variety of school-business partnerships.
- Published the fourth PwC Melbourne Institute Asialink Index, an annual index analysing Australia's engagement with 25 economies in Asia across the key indicators of trade, investment, research and business development, migration, tourism and humanitarian assistance.
- Established a high-level taskforce, led by Mike Smith, CEO, ANZ Bank, to advocate for and drive development of an Asia Capable Workplace Strategy; the Asia capabilities issue was raised in an Asialink consultation with Dr Ken Henry shortly after he was announced as lead author of the forthcoming 'Australia in the Asian Century' white paper.

- Released the joint Asialink and Australian Industry Group survey research report, *Engaging Asia: Getting it Right for Australian Business*.

## Education

The Education stream of the Asialink National Forum stressed that Australians need Asia skills and understandings in order to leverage opportunities, minimise risk and resolve global issues in the Asian Century.

In 2011, the Asialink Asia Education Foundation focussed on the development of Australia's first national curriculum and assisting schools to implement the Australian curriculum *Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia* cross-curriculum priority and intercultural understanding general capability. The AEF continued to foster strong relationships with key organisations in the national education architecture.

Key initiatives included:

- 5-year AusAID contract valued at \$3.7m to support the Australia-Indonesia BRIDGE Program signed in April. AEF hosted 25 Indonesian teachers in Australia in March. Eight Queensland teachers participated in the Australia-Korea BRIDGE Program in April funded by the Australia Korea Foundation and Department of Education and Training, Queensland. AEF Established partnerships with Beijing District and Shandong Province, China facilitating 24 teachers to participate in the inaugural Australia-China BRIDGE Project in August with a three-week program in Australia aimed at supporting Chinese language and studies programs through online collaboration.
- Collaborated with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in the development and release of the *National Statement on Asia Literacy in Australian Schools 2011-2012* outlining key action areas. The Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee noted the statement.
- Delivered the eighth annual Asia Education Foundation National Summit in Sydney, with 140 leading educators from across Australia.
- Worked with Cisco, Gates Foundation, McKinsey's, Harvard Business School and The UK Innovation Unit to deliver the Global Education Leaders Program in China, India and Korea.
- Presented 10 detailed responses to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on the Australian Curriculum for History, English, Maths, Science, the Arts and Languages curricula.

- Forged seven new national and international partnerships including Grattan Institute, Ministry of Education Singapore, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Korean Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation.
- Developed collaboration platform to support students to collaborate across cultures, using web 2.0 technologies.

## Diplomacy

In 2011, Asialink focused its Track II efforts on facilitating a two-way exchange of perspectives through dialogue and publications, and worked collaboratively with colleagues throughout the Asian region to strengthen Asia-Australia relations.

Key initiatives included:

- Published a 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of Asialink Essays on critical issues in Asia-Australia engagement, drawing on some of Australia's leading minds.  
Topics included:
  1. *Wikileaks [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]* by John McCarthy AO
  2. *A Critical Decision* by Maurice Newman AC
  3. *The Power of Yuan: China, Australia and the RMB* by Michael Smith OBE
  4. *Australia Retreats from Asia* by Alexander Downer
  5. *Australia and the Real Battle for Indonesian Islam* by Tim Lindsey
  6. *India and Australia: Maritime Partners in the Indo-Pacific* by C. Raja Mohan
  7. *The Indian Market Entry Strategy: "Build a Local Business with Skin in the Game"* by Tejpavan Gandhok
- Delivered the fourth ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Dialogue in Kuala Lumpur in December. Over two days, 50 delegates from Australia and New Zealand – and from across the ASEAN region – gathered to discuss economic competitiveness, major power relations and defence cooperation in the region, as well as issues like nuclear energy, the future of the East Asia Summit and the progress of reforms in Myanmar. The Dialogue attracted a prestigious Australian cohort drawn from the Office of National Assessments, AIIA, DFAT, ANU, Griffith and Macquarie Universities, and the Parliament of Australia.
- Delivered a pilot Asialink Commission in Kuala Lumpur from 12-15 April, addressing the theme of "Strengthening Australia-ASEAN relations". 24 delegates from Australia and ASEAN nations convened for three days to discuss the issues.

## ***Grow a sustainable and integrated organisation***

2011 was a year of strategic consolidation for Asialink as the Executive prepared the organisation for another 20 years of successful and dynamic Australia-Asia engagement. The highlight of this strategic process was an Executive retreat in September, the outcomes of which are provided below.

Asialink will continue to focus on strengthening the core functions of the organisation as it continues to grow programs and reach new audiences.

### **Strategic Planning**

Over the past 21 years, Asialink's individual business units have been highly successful in attracting and leveraging program funding from numerous sources. The organisation has experienced significant growth as a result. In 2011, the Asialink Executive held a special two-day retreat on 6-7 September. The purpose of the Executive retreat was to affirm Asialink's vision and develop a strategy for achieving that vision. The retreat began with a presentation of recommendations from a staff workshop held prior to the retreat, and staff suggestions formed the basis for discussion over the next two days. Some key strategic decisions from the retreat are listed below:

- Asialink's core mission is: Driving Successful Asia Australia Engagement.
- Asialink prioritises working with, listening to and learning from our Asian counterparts. Asialink's vision is for regional relationships based on mutual respect, equality and opportunity.
- All of Asialink's programs are informed by a model of change, which starts with supporting the leadership of change, piloting innovative programs, and scaling up.
- Asialink maintains efforts focused on the next generation of Australians, and will continue to tailor programs to reach this cohort.
- Asialink is a peak body organisation that focuses on thought leadership, advocacy, projects, research and policy to bring about large-scale change.
- As a peak body, Asialink stays small and smart, incubates and innovates, and then partners with others to scale up. Asialink provides thought leadership, research and advocacy and ensures that others are equipped to enable large-scale change.
- Asialink wants to become a portal for information, expertise and analysis on the Asian region. To do this, websites and online communications channels that connect Asialink's audience to the region will be developed.
- Asialink is highly dependent on funding from a few sources – mainly government, the University and the Myer Foundation. The long-term goal is to raise core funds

sufficient to support the secretariat on an ongoing basis. This will enable a core staff to secure more funding from diverse sources.

- Asialink wants to consolidate current programs, ensuring that each aligns with the organisation's vision and better realises synergies.

As part of the strategic planning process, in 2011 Asialink also further developed a Compelling Case for ongoing government funding to sustain the organisation's core activities. The Compelling Case will continue to be used as an engagement tool with key government, business and philanthropic stakeholders in gathering funding support for Asialink.

Strategic plans were also developed by all Asialink business units.

## **Systems and Processes**

In line with the Executive's focus on strategic consolidation and visioning, in 2011 Asialink focused significant resources on updating internal systems and processes to improve organisational efficiency and reduce duplication. Major work began on a migration of Asialink's extensive database of contacts to a new customer relationship management tool. Recommendations arising from the comprehensive review of business processes completed in mid-2010 also continued to be implemented.

Key individual initiatives included:

- Continued implementation of an organisation-wide process review. Undertook actions in the ten areas identified for improvement.  
Key areas of improvement included:
  - Business planning and decision making
  - Communications management
  - Financial management
  - HR management
  - IP/copyright management
  - IT/document management
  - Project management
  - Stakeholder engagement/CRM
  - General process improvement.
- Continued work on a major database migration to a new customer relationship management tool.
- Conducted a review of the AEF portal with users indicating high level of satisfaction. The AEF portal now houses increased resources and services for educators to support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. In 2011, the AEF portal was visited 131,121 times by 85,840 visitors, and 10,744 educators were subscribed to the AEF's electronic services.



## Marketing and Communications

Reflecting the increasing prevalence of social and professional networking sites acting as deliverers of news, Asialink increased its content delivery on a range of more 'shareable' platforms. Among these is the organisation's first iPad app. These channels allowed more targeted communication and facilitated a greater level of feedback and conversation with the organisation's stakeholders.

In 2011 the communications team expanded its reach to include media liaison, with stand-out achievements including the organisation's first live video stream to Australia's two 24-hour news channels. Developments in ICT capabilities meant Asialink's message could be promoted to mass audiences without the presence of media representatives at events and policy announcements.

Key achievements included:

- Further developed the **Asialink website**, including through the addition of live event streaming and other features
- Asialink's **monthly e-newsletter** reached a new total of 20,600 subscribers in November 2011. **Website traffic** increased dramatically in the wake of the Prime Minister's September announcement and **Facebook and Twitter audiences** topped 750 followers.
- Conducted a **survey of newsletter subscribers**, with 98% positive feedback
- Launched an **Asialink Essays iPad app** in late 2011, a first for the organisation.
- Received **live news coverage** of the Prime Minister's announcement on ABC News 24 and Sky News.
- Secured an annual **Google grant** to increase the visibility of the website online.

## Membership

2011 marked the second year of Asialink and the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre's (ASAC) joint membership package for corporate sponsors.

This collaboration was highly successful, generating membership income of \$377,000 for Asialink and ASAC for the year 2011.