

Getting The Most From Project Outputs

Background

More than 20 Regional Hub Funding Scheme projects have now been completed and a wide variety of project outputs have been published. This paper draws on the experiences gained in disseminating the results. It provides ways of maximizing the benefits of Regional Hub Funded Projects – for Ako Aotearoa, for your project team, and ultimately for learners, through good presentation and dissemination of information.

On completion of your project, you should provide Ako Aotearoa with two separate (but overlapping) sets of information:

1. Completion of the Final Project Report – Administration template for Ako Aotearoa internal requirements
 - Show you did what you said you would do
 - Provide Ako Aotearoa with feedback on the process – general project management
 - Evidence of impact
 - Evaluation of the success of the project against the goals
 - Approach to dissemination (perhaps more specific than in project application)
2. Externally published outputs should cover
 - What you did and why
 - What you found out
 - What worked/didn't work well
 - Reusable tools/models/learning objects
 - Evidence of impact

You should not use the Final Project Report - Administration template for this. You should use whatever format best suits your particular project. The format will be determined in discussion with the relevant regional hub coordinator/operations manager.

Different types of projects:

In determining the outputs for projects, it may help to think about them in terms of four broad categories:

1 Projects that create 'tools' - eg guides, re-usable content, etc

Outputs for these projects are relatively easy to determine - there should be a very concrete, practical output that should immediately be of use to a wide variety of people.

Key message to disseminate – what the tool is, how it is useful and who it is useful for

Key issue – how to get the message out and ensure the tool is used?

Possible outputs

- The tool itself
- Evidence of peer-review and quality
- Explanation of what the tool is, the audience, etc
- Background material, eg bibliography
- Case studies/examples of use
- Photos
- News article
- A launch

Questions to think about when a) determining the output, and b) output development

- Who would be interested in using it? How can you get the message to them (eg associations, staff developers forums)
- Are the tools well-presented? How would they be best presented on the Ako Aotearoa website?
- How can the tools be further developed? Is there an opportunity to develop stories/case studies about how they are being used?
- Is there a short explanatory statement that explains what the item is and who it's for?
- Would it be useful to start a conversation/community around the use of the tool?

The following completed Tool projects are accessible on the Ako Aotearoa website and may provide ideas for development of your project.

- [Online Discourse ePrimer](#) (66p document)
- [ESOL Taskbook](#) (41 well-presented individual units with a statement about who it's useful for, what it contains, etc)
- [Inter-Institutional, Collaborative Development of a Professional Development Resource \(AKA SignPosts\)](#) (10 well presented, accessible introductions)
- [An Investigation into How to Help Learners Maximise Work Integrated Learning](#) (4 well presented practical guides.)
- [Crafting interactive case studies for tertiary training: ethics scenarios](#) (Scenario-based community developed)

2 Research projects

The purpose of a 'research project' is to further knowledge about a particular issue. Identifying outputs for research projects may be more difficult – they are likely to have less immediate impact than 'tools'.

Key message to disseminate – “what did the project find out that others could benefit from knowing?”

Key issues

- How do you ensure that practitioners will want to read the report?
- How do you know they will result in any impact on practice?

Questions

- Is the report well organized so readers can quickly determine what the issue was, what was learnt, and what the implications are?
- Is the language accessible?

Research projects' report **must have the following:**

- Introduction - covering background, previous work, the need for the project, findings. People should be able to read this as a stand-alone document and only need to read the rest if they want to. This introduction is very useful to put on the website.
- Description of the project methodology
- Results
- Detailed Conclusions including implications/recommendations
- Bibliography/references
- Appendices, eg survey form
- Evidence of peer-review

The following completed Research projects are accessible on the Ako Aotearoa website and may provide ideas for development of your project.

- [The Utility of Learning Packages and Their Suitability for Building Apprentices.](#)
- [Culturally relevant peer support for Māori and Pasifika student engagement, retention and success](#)
- [Developing research supervision skills](#)
- [eTools for collaboration in learning, teaching and research/ eCollaboration in Learning, Teaching and Research - Literature Review](#)

Possible Outputs

- Report
- Bibliography
- Journal articles
- Conference presentations/papers
- Case studies
- News article
- Photos
- What impact did the research have?

Evidence of impact?

- Has the host organization changed practice/or is considering changing practice as a result of the work?
- How will learners be affected?
- What are the wider recommendations for changes of practice?
- What follow-up is planned?

3 Implementation projects

Implementation projects are primarily applied, rather than aiming to extend knowledge.

Key message to disseminate

- “What was the intervention?”
- “Was the intervention successful? And how does the project team know?”
- “What did the project team learn that could be applied elsewhere?”

The following completed Implementation projects are accessible on the Ako Aotearoa website and may provide ideas for development of your project.

- [Delivering Online Courses Through a Collaboration of 6 TANZ Institutions Using Networked Technology](#)
- [myLearn Network of Provision Pilot: Cycles Two and Three](#)
- [Marine Radio Self-Study CD ROM](#)

Possible outputs

Report which should include

- Introduction/executive summary
- What you did and why
- Was it successful? (with evidence)
- What worked, what didn't?
- Lessons learnt
- Methodology, data, etc.

Reusable content, models or user-guides, etc

- Photos
- Bibliography
- Conference presentations/papers
- Journal articles

Evidence of impact

- Number of learners affected
- Feedback
- Evidence of enhanced learning
- Plans for further work

Note:

Projects can be a combination of the above, in which case they should meet the combined requirements. Most implementation projects for example, should be producing material which can be re-used, so thought should be given about how you will share this.

4 Events

Key message to disseminate

- The benefit of the event and what came out of it

Key issue

- It is difficult to show evidence of benefits, other than good feedback
- How will you continue with on-going work after the event? (An Ako Aotearoa Community of Practice may help)

Possible outputs

- Photos
- Presentations/papers
- Video clips of presentations
- News articles/press coverage
- Information about further collaboration that results because of the meeting

The following completed Events projects are accessible on the Ako Aotearoa website and may provide ideas for development of your project.

- [Ako Aotearoa Sponsorship of 2008 Adult Learners Week Awards Ceremony, Tauranga](#)
- [Tertiary Teachers' Teaching Learning Conference: Whakahotahi: Communities of Practice - a whole West Coast approach Conference](#)
- [Colloquium: Spotlight on Teaching in the Southern Region](#)

Evidence of impact

- Number of attendees
- Feedback on changes to practice
- Plans for further work

General Notes

- Project teams must always provide an appropriate summary of the project and its findings.
- Although you submit a dissemination plan as part of your application, your thoughts should develop and become more specific as you do the project.
- Consider dissemination right throughout the project cycle – from approval, during the project, upon completion, and beyond.
- When preparing your outputs and final report, apply the 30 second test. Will you 'grab' someone's interest within 30 seconds of their reading your report and/or the project outcomes?