Participants Profile
APEC Women’s Leaders Network

Institutional Background and Overview:

Challenger TAFE is a large metropolitan institute in Perth with 17 delivery sites extending over the south metropolitan area to Mandurah, a regional western Australian centre. The College enrols 26,000 students each year and has 1000 staff. In 2008 the College delivered a total of 6.2 million student hours. Challenger TAFE is a statutory authority and has a diverse range of industry training centres which provide quality training for our industry and community clients.

The industry training centres are closely aligned to the needs of industry and led by industry advisory boards.

The Industry Training Centres are:

- Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training (ACEPT)
- Automotive Technology Skills Centre
- Community Services Training Centre
- Construction Industry Skills Centre
- Information Technology and Business Skills Centre
- Quinlan’s Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre
- Visage Training Centre for Health & Lifestyle
- WA Applied Engineering and Shipbuilding Training Centre
- WA Centre for Leadership, Cultural and Community Development
- WA Horticulture and Environmental Science Skills Centre
- WA Maritime Training Centre - Fremantle
- WA Wool Technology Training Centre

The College also offers specialist training programs through its Access and Participation section, and Adult and Community Education sections. The College has co-located campuses with Murdoch University and Mandurah Senior College and offers programs where students can be jointly enrolled in both school and TAFE programs and also TAFE and university programs.

Challenger TAFE continuously strives to deliver the highest possible service to our customers and staff and as such, is the first TAFE College in Western Australia to achieve the highest award of a Gold rating in the AQTF (2007) Training Excellence accreditation process.

Our mission is to provide the highest quality vocational training, assessment and related services in support of individual career aspirations and workforce development.

At Challenger TAFE we believe that our capacity and capability are built upon the skills, knowledge and attitudes of our people and the resources they have at their disposal. That is why we are continually investing in the learning and development of our staff and teams and growing a learning organisation.
Participant Details:

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Personal Bio

During her 20-year career in the VET and Higher Education fields, Liz Harris has acquired a diverse range of experience, including working in VET internationally, in Japan, Sri Lanka and Fiji, lecturing and researching in the field of adult education and organisational learning and development at Murdoch University, and working as a National Project Director with the former Australian National Training Authority before joining Challenger TAFE, a large Perth metropolitan institute, as Managing Director.

As well as post-graduate qualifications in linguistics and adult and higher education, Liz holds a Masters degree in Education, and her interest and areas of research include the role of workforce learning in organisational development.

As Managing Director of Challenger TAFE she has been keen to develop the important function of workforce development in building and maintaining the College’s role as a high-performing Learning Organisation. In the past twelve months Ms Harris has led the College to achieve Gold status recognition against the AQTF Excellence Criteria which has provided independent validation of the College’s commitment to quality and achievement. Challenger TAFE is the only TAFE institute in Western Australia to achieve this, and one of only six TAFE Colleges across Australia to do so.

Under Liz’s leadership the College has also built on its excellent range of industry and community partnerships and the success of the organisation has been recognised with several recent industry and staff awards.

Desired outcomes:

Challenger TAFE has a number of important international contracts including Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Mauritius, India and Singapore. The College is keen to grow our current educational networks and business relationships within our region. The APEC Women Leaders Meeting and arranged meetings serves this purpose well. The theme of women and sustainable development for the region is very relevant for the work of the College in the region in terms of the numbers of women we are currently working with, particularly in Mauritius. Networking and sharing insights and experiences with women leaders from the region would also be a rare and very valuable privilege in terms of my own professional learning. In addition attendance at the meetings with Australian Education International (Singapore), the program of business and partnership meetings with key institutions (Polytechnics and Institutes of Technical Education, Workforce Development Agency etc) in Singapore will be very valuable in terms of expanding our knowledge of further partnering and business opportunities in Singapore itself.
Similarly participation in event will provide an excellent opportunity to promote the work and value of the national TAFE system as well as the work of Challenger TAFE. The trip will also provide the opportunity for me to spend an extra day visiting existing Challenger TAFE partners in Singapore.