

Maintaining a community of practice

Speaker 1: Morwenna Kirwan

We initially had our first meeting with ENRICH last year and got a sense from who attended what they want out of this community of practice and let them sort of shape the vision and that gave us a good sense about some of the topics they might want covered in different workshops, what networking looks like for them - and we went with that. And then at the start of this year, we put out a survey. So, we've got about 75 members now, and that doesn't mean they attend things, but they signed up to be part of the mailing list. So, we took that as a win. Then we did a survey with them about what topics, what type of things and it has taken us in different directions.

Speaker 2: Aron Downie

One thing that we did at the start of ours is put out a survey asking what would they like to learn - list their top five and in order of priority, what are the challenges they want to explore and are there any successes (in teaching the 1000 level units), are there any successes that they'd like to share in a future community of practice. And then we're building this year or rebuilding our schedule around that, along with invited speakers.

Speaker 3: Kate Lloyd

One of the things the WIL CoP contributes is a sense of community that is really difficult to create for WIL. Often, it's quite isolating for people teaching a work integrated learning unit because in your department you might be the only one, or maybe one of two. So what it does is enable connection across faculties, and as Jen said, between academic and professional staff. I think what engages people is that there's nothing else like it that exists. And so it fills a void and enables people to get to know each other and problem solve. And then, this has already been mentioned, making sure that we're responding to the needs. We did a survey and identified what it is that people want because we have people who have been teaching WIL for over 10 or 15 years and then those who have just started a WIL unit. So there's a huge range of different needs. But there's also a huge range of experience. So it's often a bit of mentoring, getting people together so they can support others, maybe outside of the actual meetings and just responding to the needs. So I think being really attentive, to the extent that you can, to try and meet the needs of the group.