

Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust

TRAINING AND EDUCATION GRANTS 2011

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS 2011

APPLICATION FOR GRANTS 2011

Fifteen applications were received for a 2011 Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust grant by close of applications on 16 September 2011.

The Grants Advisory Committee was pleased with the level of interest demonstrated by the number and diversity of applications. Twelve different organisations/individuals from three states of Australia were represented across the fifteen applications received.

The income available for distribution by the Trustees was \$18,000 for 2011/2012.

A number of criteria, consistent with the Trust Deed, were developed by Grants Advisory Committee to assist in assessing the applications. These included how many optometrists will benefit directly from awarding the grant, whether funding is available elsewhere for the proposed project, the capacity and experience of the applicant to deliver against the grant, the potential for the project to deliver benefit beyond the direct funding period, the novelty, innovation and uniqueness of the project, whether the grant provides for open access/benefit in the profession and geographically where the benefit from the grant will be available.

Additional information developed from this Grant round will be incorporated in the Grant Guidelines document to inform applicants in future years.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS 2011

Three projects have been awarded VOTE grants for 2011.

Audio Visual Recording and DVD Production of CCLSA Educational Meetings

Luke Arundel, **CORNEA AND CONTACT LENS SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA, VICTORIAN DIVISION**
\$4,500

Application for funding to record CCLSA meetings for distribution to rural optometrists and students.

The CCLSA has been providing quality education to Australian Optometrists since its formation in 1962. The Victorian Division has the highest membership (258) of any Australian state but also has a significant proportion of its members living outside the Melbourne metro area (81). Each year the division hosts 5 meetings with local, interstate and occasionally international presenters providing updates in cutting edge research, techniques, ideas and products which optometrists can use to directly benefit patients.

Following the success of the ACO recordings where each meeting is recorded then sent to optometrists who were unable to physically attend the meeting, we propose a project closely modelled on this idea. We will include CPD assessment questions with our educational DVD's so that country members will be able to obtain CPD points to assist with meeting the requirements for national registration.

These DVD's will be able to assist not only regional Victorian optometrists but also country optometrists across Australia who are denied the CPD opportunities of their metropolitan colleagues.

We had been hoping to introduce this service a few years ago but as an independent, non profit association we have not had the funds available after paying speaker and venue costs along with subsidising meetings charges to stay competitive with the host of "free" company launches etc.

We feel this is a cost effective, low risk use of VOTE funding which has the potential to benefit a large number of Victorian

and Australian optometrists and the patients under their care. Along with the benefit to rural optometrists this new initiative improves the existing service of one of Australia's most respected CPD providers.

Finally, as part of the CCLSA's commitment to educating optometrists, we have for many years provided complimentary membership to students at each of Australian universities, who would then also have access to these recordings.

Training for Clinical Educators

Jane Trevaskis, **AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY**

Anthea Cochrane, **DEPARTMENT OF OPTOMETRY AND VISION SCIENCES, THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**

\$9,000

This project is a joint initiative to provide training and on-going support to clinical educators from the Australian College of Optometry and Department of Optometry and Vision Sciences, University of Melbourne.

Clinical training of undergraduate optometry students relies on mentoring from a large number of practicing optometrists from around Victoria. In particular optometrist employed by the Australian College of Optometry (ACO) and employed as sessional optometrists by the Department of Optometry and Vision Sciences (DOVS) provide the bulk of the teaching. The strength of these practitioners is their varied clinical background. However, the weakness is their lack of understanding in educational methods as they are not teacher trained.

This project will produce a face-to-face day training session to be run in February 2012 and a set of training materials in printed form with the aim of supporting participating optometrists to understand the role of a clinical facilitator and the value of feedback and assessment in clinical teaching. This training will enhance a participant's understanding and skill in clinical teaching and critically evaluate their own clinical practice. The training while having generic content will also be adapted to address the specific issues of clinical supervision unique to the optometry clinical training environment.

The day training program would be run jointly by the ACO and DOVS and will target optometrists that are relatively new to clinical teaching. The program would also include some content run by outside facilitators from either CSHE or ACE. The day training program would meet 'non optometry CPD' requirements of the OBA and could have assessment incorporated. Attendance will be via invitation with most attendees coming from ACO or DOVS. A limited number of places would be made available to Deakin University. It is envisaged that approximately 25 educators will attend this program.

The written material produced would be produced jointly by the ACO and DOVS and would be sourced and adapted primarily by Julie Martin Curriculum Development Officer in the DOVS and Jane Trevaskis from ACO with assistance from experienced clinical optometry teachers. The material would be made available to clinical teachers from the ACO and DOVS to utilise as a resource. In 2012, over 60 educators will be given access to this material. Past this point, all new ACO and DOVS educators will be provided with the materials prior to commencing teaching. It is envisaged that the written materials will be reviewed and revised to ensure ongoing applicability and to allow use of the materials for a 5 year period.

Funding this project will meet multiple aims of the VOTE trust. It will support training of optometrists throughout Victoria, provide CPD opportunities for optometrists and in particular should improve clinical training of Victorian optometrists.

ACO CPD Online Assessment System for Optometrists

Mary Wilson, **AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY**

\$4,500

Development and implementation of a continuing professional development (CPD) online assessment

system for ACO CPD.

This project involves the development of an online assessment system for optometrists undertaking ACO CPD, in order to provide a more efficient and valuable service for gaining CPD points for national re-registration.

The ACO has a well established annual CPD program which includes a range of activities – Seminar Series, Courses, Clinical Workshops, Conferences and a remote learning program involving Webinars and DVDs. In 2011, approximately 1,200 participants will access ACO CPD, the majority of whom will be Victorian based. (Note: The Optometry Board of Australia (OBA) recognises the ACO as an approved CPD provider and therefore all ACO CPD is accredited).

The ACO heavily subsidises its CPD program in order to keep registration fees at a reasonable level and to support the optometry profession.

This year, in line with, OBA CPD guidelines, the ACO has introduced free multiple-choice assessments for the majority of CPD events and resources. There has been a large uptake of this initiative and even though it is not a compulsory requirement of participation, it is anticipated 600 assessments will be received this year.

Whilst the majority of assessments provided by the ACO are accessible online, the administration relating to marking assessments, communicating the results and producing a record of the assessment is currently handled manually.

The development of an online assessment system will improve the efficiency and value of this service as optometrists will receive an automatically generated score and certificates. The project involves working with a website and online specialist company to develop this system.

In summary, this project aligns closely with VOTE Trust grant purposes relating to the advancement and fostering of the practice of optometry, principally in Victoria, through education. Specifically, the project will improve the quality of existing CPD programs by supporting a new initiative and adding different expertise.