

To the Economics and Industry Standing Committee

In response to the invitation to make a submission regarding the Inquiry into Western Australia's Economic Relationship with India.

StudyPerth makes the following submission, specifically related to these Terms of Reference:

4. Opportunities to strengthen the trading relationship

d) developing existing and new export markets in India in target sectors, including:

- i) international education;
- ii) tourism;

The submission addresses the questions asked within the invitation letter as follows.

How the implementation of the International Education Action Plan 2019-2025 is progressing

In 2019, StudyPerth launched its *International Education Action Plan 2019-2025*, in response to the WA Government strategy entitled: *Where bright futures begin: International Education in Perth, Western Australia 2018-2025*. The Action Plan is the basis for StudyPerth's aspiration to increase the number of international students in Perth to 100,000 by 2025.

Three strategic themes underpin the Action Plan: Live; Learn; and Launch.

Each strategic theme has clearly defined success factors:

- Live
 - Increased international student numbers
 - Improved awareness of Perth in priority markets
 - Increased satisfaction with Perth as a welcoming and friendly destination
 - Increased numbers of friends and family visiting students in Perth
 - Improved reputation of Perth as a world-class international City
- Learn
 - Increased satisfaction in learning experiences
 - Increased satisfaction that a Perth education represents "value for money"
- Launch
 - Increased international alumni registration and engagement
 - Improved employment opportunities for students both during and after graduation
 - Improved access for students to meaningful internships or work placement
 - Improved access for students to work-ready and job-seeking training

To achieve success, StudyPerth identified a number of initiatives within each of the strategic themes. A progress update is provided for each of these initiatives as follows:

LIVE 1

Establish an International Student Centre in the CBD, offering support and advice to international students, and facilitating social, cultural and professional programs.

When choosing a destination, a student's future employability is a major factor. They want to have the right skills, the ability to make connections and have appropriate knowledge to advance their career or entrepreneurial aspirations. StudyPerth is addressing this challenge by creating a unique online employability portal and integrating it with a student hub that will provide complementary in-person services. These integrated initiatives will support and enhance the employability and entrepreneurship value proposition that Western Australia seeks to promote.

A feasibility study was conducted in 2019 which clearly identified the need for an International Student Hub in the Perth CBD that provides a culturally appropriate, impartial and unique service to enhance the international student experience. A partnership model for operations was identified as the most appropriate model to ensure expert service delivery for employment services while sharing economic risk.

The International Student Hub will be overseen by the StudyPerth CEO and Board. The partnership model was approved by the StudyPerth Board in March 2020. The proposal is to embed a StudyPerth Student Hub at a leading tech focused coworking community of start-ups and employers. This would be an 18-month arrangement, in the first instance, with the coworking business becoming StudyPerth's Hub Operations Manager and engaging students with their existing employability, entrepreneurship, social and wellbeing program.

StudyPerth intends to appoint an employability partner to deliver a program of specialist international student employability and entrepreneurship services. In addition, StudyPerth will appoint part time providers to deliver a program of specialised in-person services such as legal advice, counselling and wellbeing. StudyPerth will employ a concierge to work with the contracted partners.

A detailed project plan has been developed and could be executed by June 2020, prior to the commencement of Semester 2 intake.

LIVE 2

Deliver a series of events and activities to assist international students in their study journey, participation in community life and search for employment.

StudyPerth established the International Education Event Series (IEES) in July 2019. The IEES consists of 10 planned events across each financial year covering a wide range of topics. As well as assisting international students, these events highlight the safe and welcoming nature of Perth, along with unique educational, sporting and lifestyle offerings. The events allow StudyPerth to showcase Perth venues and local businesses, as well as local produce. They help develop strong community partnerships that promote economic growth in local industry, as well as celebrating diversity and creating a genuine sense of community. They present a valuable opportunity to connect international students with government, businesses and employers, education providers and the community.

Examples of events run and/or scheduled for the remainder of the 2019-2020 program include:

- Enhancing WA's global capabilities
- The art of networking
- Intercultural and diversity training
- Mental health awareness
- Jobs or skills: what's WA lacking?
- The changing nature of work
- Student, business, government, industry and community meet and greet

These events are increasingly well attended, and planning is underway for the 2020-2021 calendar.

LIVE 3

Maintain, and continually promote a sense of community and social support for international students through a series of engagements and communication channels.

In July 2019, an International Student Ambassador Program was established. This program invites international students to apply for one of ten ambassador positions that will be in place for twelve months. Ambassadors share stories about why Perth is the best place to live, learn and launch your career, and help to advocate on behalf of StudyPerth and Perth's international student community. Ambassadors are given access to professional development training, networking events and a host of other incentives.

The inaugural program has been a resounding success, with the ambassadors participating in a wide-range of events, actively promoting Perth in-person and via digital channels and creating significant interest in the next round of appointments. StudyPerth is currently preparing for the next intake of ambassadors with applications opening in May 2020 and new ambassadors to be appointed in July 2020. Due to the popularity and success of the program, StudyPerth is now also working towards implementing an "under 18" program for school students.

LIVE 4

Celebrate and acknowledge international students through regular official events, receptions and awards in conjunction with the WA State Government, industry and City of Perth.

In February 2019, StudyPerth organised its first official welcome event at Government House. Over 1,000 international students attended with the Governor, the Premier of WA and Vice-Chancellors from WA's five universities. The event provided an opportunity to welcome students and help them feel at home and mark the beginning of a lifelong association with Western Australia.

Following the success of the 2019 event, StudyPerth organised a second student welcome event in February 2020 at Elizabeth Quay. Over 2,000 students from all sectors of the international education community, from over 90 different countries were in attendance, making it the largest event of its kind in the country. 262 students from India registered.

StudyPerth intends to continue running official welcome events at least annually, and a second event that would align with Semester 2 intake is under consideration.

LIVE 5

Collaborate with Tourism WA, tourism operators and other stakeholders to develop a joint strategy, promoting Perth globally as a first-choice destination for international students, their visiting friends and relatives.

In addition to the official welcome event in 2020, StudyPerth coordinated a Rottnest Island Student Day in March. This event was attended by over 1,200 people from more than 75 different countries. This was a fantastic opportunity to showcase one of WA's iconic destinations, as well as local arts and culture. StudyPerth intends to make this an annual event. 49 students from India registered.

StudyPerth partnered with the Rottnest Island Authority to secure discounts for students whilst undertaking activities on the island, as well as marketing and promotion for the event. A partnership with SeaLink was also established to offer discounted transport to and from the island. StudyPerth's ProsPER portal was integrated into the day with another partner, Practera, designing a treasure hunt for students to experience. As students arrived, they experienced a smoking ceremony by a local indigenous Elder, along with a Welcome to Country as part of the formalities of the day.

LIVE 6

Establish partnerships to deliver benefits to international students in banking, tourism, telecommunications and professional development.

On arrival at Perth International Airport, international students who visit the Airport Welcome Service are presented with a 'Welcome Pack'. This pack contains useful items, information, discounts and more from a variety of established partnerships.

These partnership arrangements provide an excellent benefit to international students, whilst also showcasing local business and encouraging the uptake of local goods and services.

In September 2019, a monthly student newsletter was launched. The content of the newsletter generally includes:

- Student stories
- Job tips and tricks
- CV writing tips
- Mental health information
- Upcoming StudyPerth events
- Discounts from partners
- Information about local businesses and local events

The newsletter and welcome packs are now considered business as usual.

LIVE 7

Undertake initiatives to increase the reach of the Airport Welcome Desk and provide useful, relevant information, advice and merchandise consistent with the needs of international students.

The Airport Welcome Service (AWS) is a collaborative initiative between Perth Airport, along with the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, the City of Perth, StudyPerth members as well as some commercial sponsors. The Welcome Desk and Welcome Cart are managed by StudyPerth and staffed by volunteer student greeters who welcome and assist international students upon arrival, improving their first impressions of Perth. The AWS helps students find their way when first arriving, as well highlighting the safe and welcoming nature of Perth. The AWS also provides students with a Welcome Pack which includes some useful items, helpful information, discount offers and more.

As part of StudyPerth's Action Plan 2019-2025, StudyPerth committed to the goal of welcoming 75 per cent of new international student arrivals by 2025. To reach this target, in 2020 StudyPerth extended the weeks of operation to 20 weeks and expanded the welcome service into the Perth Airport T3 and T4 terminals. Over 20,000 international students have been welcomed at the AWS since its opening in January 2017 and the number of students welcomed each semester continues to grow.

Partnerships and sponsorships are an important part of the AWS and these continue to be developed and expanded. The AWS continues to grow and evolve to meet the needs of international students.

LEARN 1

Establish a digital marketing campaign "Destination Perth", promoting Perth as a first-choice study destination in priority regions.

In March 2019, StudyPerth launched a pilot campaign in China, with the key message and title *Destination Perth: Beyond Education*. Three themes were identified to support the key message: Better Lifestyle, Better Experience, Better Opportunities (in Mandarin, these themes translate to Abundant Lifestyle, Diverse Experience, Infinite Opportunity).

StudyPerth worked collaboratively with the agency Digital Crew to deliver continuous marketing of dedicated Perth content across seven digital platforms in China: WeChat, Weibo, Youku, Iqiyi, 360, Baidu, and GDT. The use of these channels was based on strategic audience insights and were subject to StudyPerth and the WA Government's business credentials and Chinese media authority approvals.

The digital assets created emphasised the key message and three themes to ultimately leave long-lasting impressions on the audience as to why there are infinite opportunities for Chinese students to live, learn and launch their careers in Perth. A key deliverable of the campaign was to generate leads through the westernaustralia.cn website, and on the lead forms created for social media creative format. Further, it was expected that the campaign would generate additional brand exposure for the universities involved.

This pilot campaign was considered Phase 1 and has now concluded. Phase 2 is underway, with StudyPerth having just appointed its digital partner for an expanded campaign in China. It is anticipated that in coming months StudyPerth will further expand the digital marketing

campaign to priority markets. The StudyPerth board in March 2020 agreed that the priority markets are:

- China
- The Philippines
- Vietnam
- Indonesia
- India
- Japan

LEARN 2

Establish and maintain relationships with education agents in priority regions by creating and maintaining a comprehensive database, publishing a regular agent newsletter.

In October 2018, a bi-monthly Agent Newsletter was launched. Content generally includes:

- Updates on the Airport Welcome Service
- Ongoing programs (i.e. Student Ambassadors)
- ProsPER updates
- Prospel course search updates
- Students' stories
- Annual reports
- Associate Members may publish one article a year

LEARN 3

Establish a Regional Advisory Panel (RAP) for each priority region to plan joint activities, agent events and campaigns such as inbounds, outbounds and digital activities.

In April 2019, a China RAP was established, which has advised StudyPerth on the development and execution of Phase 1 of the *Destination Perth: Beyond Education* campaign.

Further RAPs will be established to reflect StudyPerth's priority markets.

LEARN 4

Keep members and other stakeholders engaged and informed through a regular newsletter identifying activities, events and opportunities.

In August 2018, a monthly Stakeholder Newsletter was launched. Content generally includes:

- Updates on the Airport Welcome Service
- Perth based events (industry and student)
- Ongoing programs (i.e. Student Ambassadors)
- Industry Information
- ProsPER updates
- New members
- Prospel course search updates
- Students' stories
- New content uploaded
- Annual reports

The first of what are to become Quarterly Update events for members and other stakeholders was held in February 2020. These updates will provide insight into how StudyPerth is progressing with the implementation of the Action Plan and its status against the measures of success of the three strategic themes: Live; Learn; and Launch.

LEARN 5

Develop and review the online Resources Area with useful collateral, imagery, videos, research, publications, InfoGrabs and data – for use by member institutions and their agents, as well as WA Trade and Tourism Offices and other stakeholders.

A review of the StudyPerth Resources Area was completed in January 2019, with a complete review and refresh completed in line with the launch of the new website in July 2019.

Updating content available from the Resources Area is now considered business as usual, with new content being made available as it is created.

LEARN 6

Develop and maintain a media strategy to promote international education to the WA community, building a narrative, seeking out positive news stories and emphasising benefits of international education to the WA community and economy.

StudyPerth shares positive stories of international education in Perth, often through our International Student Ambassadors and other students as part of StudyPerth's social media strategy. Media statements are produced, as appropriate.

LAUNCH 1

Establish an integrated portfolio of employability projects that augment and complement the services provided by members and address the specific needs of international students.

In March 2020, StudyPerth soft-launched ProSPER, a free online portal for international students seeking a prosperous future. It equips and empowers international students to develop the skills, experience, networks, confidence and knowledge needed to prosper in their lives. StudyPerth developed ProSPER to provide every international student (irrespective of their level of study, institution, course or location) the opportunity to collect free information and experiences to create a unique portfolio that makes them stand out from other students.

The ProSPER portal is live but is an ongoing initiative which will continue to grow and develop. The intention is to align ProSPER with the International Student Hub and to extend its content to ensure that it adds value at every stage of the student lifecycle. ProSPER is the first initiative of its kind in Australia and is a critical component of the Western Australian value proposition, emphasising employability and enterprise.

LAUNCH 2

Establish a "Passport to Perth" program, engaging international students to undertake a range of extra-curricular activities to familiarise themselves with their new city, foster friendships and improve their English.

The StudyPerth Board agreed to remove this initiative from the Action Plan. Much of its intent has been rolled up into the ProSPER portal as part of the LAUNCH 1 initiative.

LAUNCH 3

Establish a database of "StudyPerth" Alumni locally and overseas that StudyPerth can mobilise for mentoring, internships and marketing opportunities.

By June 2020, a database of WA Alumni and a WA Alumni Engagement Strategy will be established and maintained. The strategy, once developed, will define how StudyPerth will continue to implement this initiative.

Western Australia Enrolments and Commencements Data

The StudyPerth *International Education Action Plan 2019-2025* was released in 2019. Comparing the calendar year data for 2018 and 2019, these are some relevant statistics:

- Enrolments in WA increased 3.77% overall. The Higher Education Sector saw a 12.83% increase.
- Enrolments from India in WA were ranked highest with a 12.65% increase. India replaced China in ranking during the year which had held the highest rank.
- WA is the only state or territory with India as its number one source market
- WA has a 6.21% market share for India enrolments as at December 2019, down from 7.38% in December 2018.
- Commencements in WA increased 6.13% overall. The Higher Education Sector saw a 19.45% increase.
- Commencements from India in WA were ranked highest with a 11.09% increase.
- WA has a 6.26% market share for India commencements as at December 2019, down from 7.52% in December 2018.

What initiatives are or will be pursued to achieve the State Government objective to double the number of international students in WA to 100,000 by 2025

The StudyPerth *International Education Action Plan 2019-2025*, outlines the fifteen initiatives being pursued to achieve this target. As described above, each of these initiatives is underway at varying stages of completion and/or being transferred to business as usual activities for the organisation.

What initiatives specifically relate to India

None of the initiatives are designed to single out or specifically target only one country, with the exception of Phase 1 of the *Destination Perth; Beyond Education* campaign.

However, India has been identified as a priority market by the StudyPerth Board. This means that some of the initiatives in the Action Plan will have an India focus, particularly in relation to destination marketing.

What StudyPerth is doing to build the profile of Western Australia's international education sector in both WA and India

In collaboration with governments, educational institutions and stakeholders, StudyPerth provides a leadership role in building the profile of international education in WA and overseas. It is often the first point of contact for anyone interested in obtaining information on studying and living in Perth. The StudyPerth *International Education Action Plan 2019-2025* is the documented strategy for achieving this. Each of the initiatives contained in the Action Plan aim to build the profile of WA's international education sector, in WA and overseas.

As highlighted above, India has been identified as a priority market by the StudyPerth Board. This means that some of the initiatives in the Action Plan will have an India focus, particularly in relation to destination marketing.

The Employability Perth Project

Information regarding the Employability Perth Project, now known as ProSPER, is included above under the LAUNCH 1 initiative.

The Destination Perth Project

Information regarding the Destination Perth Project is included above under the LEARN 1 initiative. At this stage, no marketing campaigns have been established for the India market.

The anticipated or actual impacts arising from the November 2019 changes to visa settings

The substantive impacts for international students graduating from a Western Australian university are:

- Access to an additional year in Australia on a post-study work visa from 2021. For students graduating from a campus outside of Perth in regional Western Australia, they may be eligible for two additional years.
- Improved access to migration visas. Perth students who want to work outside of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, may apply for one of the two new skilled regional provisional visas.

- The requirements under the Graduate Stream of the State Nomination Migration Program (SMNP) will be extended to include VET graduates and ELICOS graduates. There is also a reduction in the work experience and job offer requirements from 12 months down to six months.

StudyPerth is promoting these developments with the slogan, “Western Australia is ready, willing and able to welcome increasing numbers of international students”; and the following narrative:

Offering a world-class education in a world-class city, Perth is ready and has the capacity and appetite for growth across all sectors. As the friendliest city in Australia, and one of the most diverse, Perth has always offered a warm welcome and we are looking forward to opening the doors to more international students. A new designation means that Perth can now offer additional attractions to international students and additional opportunities for them to prosper after they complete their studies.

These opportunities are expected to appeal to students from all source markets, but especially to prospective students from South Asia, who may have a migration aspiration following their studies.