Framework of Support for the Associate Deans Networks

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1. Preamble

In July 2009, under the then Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funded Discipline Support Strategy, the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) established the Associate Deans Learning and Teaching Network (ADLTN). The DASSH AD Network was expanded in September 2011 with the establishment of a Network for Associate Deans Research (ADR) and in August 2016 with the establishment of a Network for Associate Deans International (ADI). The three AD networks complement the work of DASSH and its members. Each network ensures the provision of critical updates on national higher education policies, sector developments and university strategies relevant to learning and teaching, research, and international matters in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (ASSH). The networks also provide professional development opportunities to support Associate Deans in the ASSH disciplines who aspire to positions of academic leadership, such as Deans. The establishment of AD networks lies with the DASSH Board.

2. Membership

Membership of an AD network is confined to current financial members of DASSH. The Executive Officer will provide Convenors with membership lists in August each year following the renewal of DASSH memberships, and will inform Convenors as members join or leave their groups throughout the year.

3. Expectations of the Networks

It is expected that the AD networks will perform the following functions to varying degrees:

1. *A support function.* The networks provide an avenue for ADs to meet their counterparts from other universities to discuss the issues and challenges faced in the sector and to share approaches on how to deal with these.

2. *An advocacy function.* The networks provide the opportunity to work with the DASSH Board to advocate for the ASSH in the form of submissions to the government and relevant policy makers. This could take the form of assisting in the writing of submissions, bringing relevant advocacy opportunities to the attention of the DASSH office, and representing DASSH and its interests at events, panels, discussions, etc.

3. *An information-giving function.* Networks help facilitate the flow of relevant information, ideas and practices relevant to members especially through use of the email address list and to provide an avenue for disseminating information compiled by the network, for example, from the national conference.

4. *A professional development and problem-solving function.* The AD networks work together to gain an awareness of the issues faced by ADs within their universities and to seek to address problems within that context. They provide a platform for learning and skill development; a forum for professional learning of ADs; and a forum for critical discussion about university issues relevant to their portfolio. They can also help with the induction of new ADs into their roles.

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5. *A collaborative function.* The AD Networks provide an opportunity to identify ways of working together. This could be with respect to collaborating on projects for developing new learning and teaching and research initiatives.

4. Obligations and Support

The AD networks have the following obligations to DASSH:

- To meet bi-annually, once during the DASSH conference in September and at another time throughout the year, that is to be determined by the Network where members focus on current issues of importance in their portfolio. It is expected that the networks will take responsibility for organising events for the AD meeting at the national conference as well as for the satellite event, in consultation with DASSH, and align the events so that they are relevant to the DASSH strategic plan.

- AD members in each network will elect a Network Convenor for a two-year term commencing from the end of the DASSH Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which the announcement of the Convenor is made, until the corresponding time two years hence.

- A member will normally hold the position of Network Convenor for one term. The DASSH President will call for expressions of interest for the position from AD members at least 30 days before the DASSH conference. The DASSH President, or delegate, will discuss the role with all interested members as well as with their relevant DASSH member. If there are multiple nominees, an online election will be held. Nominees will be circulated to the AD members at least 14 days before the DASSH conference.

- AD networks will be expected to contribute to the DASSH communications strategy. Each network is responsible for providing the content for their dedicated web space on the DASSH website. The Convenor is to send content to the DASSH. Each network is to assist the DASSH Board Member responsible for Network Liaison in the monthly reporting of network news for the DASSH e-news.

DASSH will provide the following support to the AD networks:

- Financial support towards holding a meeting/event over the course of the year in addition to the pre-conference event at the DASSH annual conference in September. In order to obtain funding support, the Network Convenor needs to supply the following:

  o A brief outline of the event: title, purpose, who is speaking/presenting, expected attendance numbers, budget breakdown

  o DASSH branding to be clearly visible on invitations to the event, advertising for the event, and at the actual event

  o At the conclusion of the event, a brief report outlining any plans for action, along with account for monies received submitted to the DASSH Office for uploading on the DASSH website and for inclusion in the DASSH e-news within a month of the event. Any slides, presentations or papers should also be made available (with permission) to the DASSH Office for these purposes.

- The DASSH Office will provide assistance in promoting the event via DASSH official channels, and assist with the dissemination of results and information arising from the event through the DASSH website and monthly e-news.

- The DASSH Office will provide web space on the DASSH website for each network to share reports, articles, projects, and information relevant to each network. A section in the DASSH e-news each month for the dissemination and sharing of network news.

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5. Review

The AD network Framework of Support will be reviewed on a regular basis.

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