

Successfully bringing international students and Australians together: Effective strategies of university community work

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On the 13 April, 2005, "East-West", an initiative promoting goodwill and friendship between International Students and Australians was launched at QUT. The event was attended by more than 200 people, 70 of whom were Australian Students, 50 were QUT staff from various units and Faculty departments and more than 80 QUT International Students representing all continents of the world. A few visitors from the community also graced the event.

This paper aims to share the success of the opening function of the said initiative called "East-West". The basis of the initiative that stems from an understanding and the conscious linking of one on one counselling, support groups and university community work will be described. The steps and practical strategies of coordinating the event will be explored. A proposed calendar of activities following the initiative's launch will be provided. The outcome of some of the activities that have already taken place and a summary feedback from the participants will be reviewed. Reflections on major challenges will be exposed and plans to improve various activities and support systems that correspond to the aims of "East-West" initiative outlined.