

## Editorial

### ***Acknowledging Dr James Athanasou***

***This issue of the journal marks the transition of editorship from Dr James Athanasou to myself. I should like to take this opportunity to acknowledge his contribution to the journal over a period of nine years as editor. This is the journal's 18<sup>th</sup> year, so it is appropriate to recognise Dr Athanasou's place in the journal's history.***

Authors who have submitted manuscripts to the journal—whether accepted or rejected—would have experienced Dr Athanasou's generosity in providing encouragement and support to bring their manuscripts to a higher level of scholarship. The breadth of papers which have been published under his editorship is testament to his commitment to the journal being a multi-disciplinary publication sustained by vigorous diversity in theory, practices, research methods and scholarship. His collegiality and fairness in judgement as editor have opened the journal to authors of all backgrounds, both beginner and advanced.

During Dr Athanasou's term as editor the journal experienced a number of changes, all contributing to its place as Australia's leading specialised peer-reviewed journal devoted to the field of career development. Some changes were visually striking, such as the new cover and layout; whereas other changes were subtle, yet no less important in marking the journal as one of quality: take as an example the introduction of the requirement for effect-sizes in papers reporting statistical analyses. To maintain the dynamic balance between theory and practice, Dr Athanasou introduced the special *Theory and Practice* sub-section appended to case studies, articles, and brief research reports. It was this type of innovation which enabled the journal to evolve over the years so as to ensure its relevance to a diverse readership. Of course, the journal will continue to evolve, yet not without due regard for those features which have made it so successful; and it is to this challenge that I am now put as the new editor.

Before closing my acknowledgement of the outgoing editor, I should likewise offer thanks to members of the editorial board who have given generously of their time and expertise during his term. Furthermore, I have the very pleasant duty of introducing and welcoming new board members who are counted among of Australia's leading scholars in the field of career development: Dr Mary McMahon (The University of Queensland) and Professor Peter Creed (Griffith University). In addition, I have retained Dr James Athanasou, who I am sure you will agree needs no introduction here; instead, he deserves our hearty acclamation.

### ***Career Development and the Social Inclusion Agenda***

Toward the close of 2008 the "world economic crisis" brought into sharp focus matters pertaining to career development: employment, unemployment, sustainable lifelong employability, work and non-work balance, and entrepreneurship, just to name a few. Amidst this confluence are people who are uninformed, disconnected, and marginalised, and unable to join or structurally prevented from joining the competitive fray that is the Australian workforce and to share in its economic bounty. The expertise of career development practitioners and scholars may be called upon for guidance in assisting individuals to adjust to their worlds-of-work as they continue to evolve apace. Some individuals may reconsider their current skills and qualifications in light of the need to become more employable, whereas others may contemplate how to best exploit the turn of events which has played into their realm of work or business. Beyond the concerns of individuals

seeking guidance, institutions such as schools, universities, business enterprises, and governments may likewise call upon career development practitioners and scholars to make a contribution to strategies for education and training, employment and deployment, and public policy, all of which aim to develop the capacity of the workforce. But, what will happen to those individuals, groups, and communities unable to participate in the recovery process?

The Australian Government has put *social inclusion* (Hayes, Gray, & Edwards, 2008) and its ostensible opposite, *social exclusion*, on its agenda for reform through its establishment of: the Ministry for Social Inclusion, a position held by the Deputy Prime Minister, who is additionally the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; a Social Inclusion Unit within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; and the Australian Social Inclusion Board, which is to advise the Government on how best to achieve goals of social inclusion for the most disadvantaged Australians. The positioning of social inclusion within the offices of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister give some indication of its importance to the current Government. The Government's fundamental platform is that social inclusion is characterised by Australians having the opportunity to "secure a job; access services; connect with family, friends, work, personal interests and local community; deal with personal crisis; and have their voices heard" (Australian Government, 2008).

There are myriad policy questions levelled at career development, notably with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) taking a particular interest (OECD, 2004). Indeed, to what extent, one may critically ask, is career development for the public and private good? How can career development contribute to the sustainable development of private and public wealth and security? What contribution can career development make as an instrument for a democratic and open society? Who are true beneficiaries of career development? What scope does the field of career development have to contribute to social inclusion? Should career development be addressed to the problems of social exclusion and the concomitant solutions of social inclusion? These questions go to the core of career development's place in our society, and not just in times of crisis. It is to these questions that multi-disciplinary answers must be addressed, especially in terms of inclusion—social and economic.

## **Call for Papers**

If the field of career development cannot demonstrate its relevance again and again to its various individual and institutional stakeholders in relation to the seemingly endless and chaotic evolution of the worlds-of-work, then its value as a profession and discipline should rightly be brought into question. It is therefore timely for the field of career development to again demonstrate its relevance to society, and to the Government, by answering questions of how it can contribute to advancing social inclusion and ameliorating social exclusion. It is to this objective of demonstrating relevance that I announce a call for papers for a special issue of the journal which will be devoted to career development and social inclusion.

Submissions to the special issue may be conceptual, research, or applied practice-based papers written in the form of *case studies*, *articles*, or *brief research reports* for blind peer-review. Shorter argumentative or speculative commentaries may be submitted to the *Forum* section, but authors should note that forum manuscripts will not be peer-reviewed. International authors are welcome to submit their work should it deal with universal topics of social inclusion which are suited to a broad readership, or if it corresponds to Australia and the Asia-Pacific region from international perspective. In their correspondence authors should clearly notate their manuscript as a submission for the special issue on social inclusion. Manuscripts deemed publishable within

the journal, but not selected for the special issue, may be retained for publication in a subsequent issue. Authors may choose to contemplate their potential contribution in light of the Australian Government's policies and background documents on the social inclusion (see [www.socialinclusion.gov.au](http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au)) and, where possible, draw implications of their work in relation to the Australian Government's position. The closing date for submissions is 1 September 2009.

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#### References

- Australian Government. (2008). Social inclusion. Retrieved 1 December, 2008, from <http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au>
- Hayes, A., Gray, M., & Edwards, B. (2008). *Social inclusion: Origins, concepts and key themes*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2004). *Career guidance: A handbook for policy makers*. Paris: Author.