



SVA VENTURE PARTNER

Teach for Australia

This is not a third world country. Yet the least advantaged kids in Australian schools lag two and a half years behind the most privileged. We need to start making education opportunities fairer for all.

Teach For Australia (TFA) is a national movement of committed individuals who can foresee a country where all children have excellent educational opportunities. At the heart TFA's vision is a belief in teaching as leadership, and in the power of exceptional teachers to transform the lives of their students and shape their educational destiny. To this end, TFA is attracting and recruiting some of Australia's most outstanding young individuals – passionate and determined leaders of change who have the qualities inherent to exceptional teachers – and empowering them to pursue teaching in some of our most disadvantaged high schools.

To date, TFA have placed Associates in over 45 schools across Victoria, the ACT and the NT. A large proportion of placement schools are in regions outside of metropolitan areas, across the government and non-government sectors.

Over time, TFA intends to build a lifelong movement of alumni, who will lead from both within the classroom and beyond, and carry on the mission of addressing educational inequity.

The problem

Only 15% of University Students come from the bottom socio-economic quartile compared to 42% of those from privileged backgrounds. 40% of indigenous students fail to meet minimum standards in reading, maths and science. One in five Year 9 students who live in households with no one in paid work fail minimum reading standards.

Overall, Australia has a high performing education system. However, it is one of the least equitable in the OECD. The gap between the top and the bottom is too wide, and it is growing. The tangled relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and poor educational outcomes has become an urgent problem.

The reasons are complex, but essentially, a child's socio economic circumstances – things they cannot choose like where they live; their parents' education level; ethnicity and family income – are having too significant an impact on their own educational outcomes, and by virtue, the choices that become available to them later in life.



www.teachforaustralia.org

FOCUS AREAS

- ✓ Low SES
- ✓ Metro, Regional and Remote
- ✓ Victoria, ACT and NT
- ✓ Secondary Schools

"Through Teach for Australia we are giving some of Australia's brightest and keenest graduates the chance to make a real difference in the lives of students who may be struggling because of their social circumstances."

The Hon. Peter Garrett MP

"Three Associates are teaching Year 12 classes (in their second year), as well as one new Associate – this is very strong evidence that TFA Associates are outstanding educators ... The College routinely uses 'On Demand' testing, and there is strong evidence that the Associates are making a difference"

Trish Horner, Principal of Mill Park Secondary College

Educational disadvantage in Australia is real. It's happening here, it's happening now and it's preventing too many Australian children living the lives they could and should. It limits the choices they can make, the jobs they can get and the income they can earn. It weakens the families they are a part of and the communities they live in. It even diminishes the prospects of the children they themselves are yet to have.

We can reject responsibility and leave accidents of demography and geography to plot the future of tens of thousands of Australian children. Or we can believe that change is possible, and that we can be part of that change.

How does it work?

A nation-wide search for the highest performing graduates, from all disciplines (except teaching) commences each year. After a rigorous recruitment process, 50 or so are selected to become Teach For Australia Associates. They commit to a two year program that is summarised as follows:

Beginning the journey: Associates start with an in-residence, six week intensive – the first of many – with TFA's partner, the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education. Once complete, they commence teaching in a classroom.

Schools and placement: TFA partners with educationally disadvantaged secondary schools. Before placing an Associate, TFA works closely with schools to ensure they fit our disadvantage criteria, provide an environment that will enable Associates to make an impact, and that demonstrate they have the capacity to support Associates adequately over two years.

Teaching: Associates teach in secondary schools and so may teach students from Years 7–12. Although TFA Associates have the same level of responsibility as other beginning teachers, schools have a wide variety of approaches to learning. They may find themselves in a school where 'team teaching' is standard, or they may be in a more traditional setting with sole responsibility for their own classroom and classes. They have unprecedented support – with a mentor, usually a senior teacher appointed by the school, a Clinical Specialist, from the University of Melbourne and a Training and Leadership Advisor, from Teach For Australia.

Impact

In just three years, TFA Associates have already made a real and meaningful impact in the school communities they are working in. Here are some examples.

Developing school leaders

60% of our Associates have been rewarded with additional

responsibilities or have taken on positions of leadership within their schools after only their first year. These include:

- Studies of Societies and Environment (SOSE) Key Learning coordinator across three campuses (Western Metropolitan Melbourne)
- Head of Humanities (Hume region, VIC)
- Head of English (Grampians Region, VIC)
- Year 8 Teaching and Learning Coordinator (Hume Region, VIC)
- Select Entry Accelerated Learning (SEAL) program coordinator (Northern Metropolitan Melbourne)

Improving academic outcomes

- 100% pass rate for Year 11 Physics with some students having extremely low literacy (Metropolitan Melbourne)
- An Associate's Year 7 class in both 2010 and 2011 improved significantly making two years of progress in one year (Metropolitan Melbourne)
- 2011 VCE semester 1 accounting exam average score of 65 compared with state average of 52 (Grampians Region VIC)
- In 2010 an Associate's History Revolutions VCE class had three study scores in the 40s (Grampians Region VIC), compared to a wider school average of 28.

Implementing key learning initiatives

Initiatives undertaken by TFA Associates include:

- Coordinating the inaugural entry of a regional Victorian school into "Tournament of the Minds", with the school winning the regional final (Hume Region, VIC)
- Establishing a School Debating Team, reaching the Debaters Associate of Victoria finals (Northern Metropolitan Melbourne)
- Setting up an international volunteering trip for 29 Year 10 students to Cambodia (Hume Region, VIC)
- Running a Smith Family Reading program (Northern Metropolitan Melbourne).

SVA support

- Provide advice on TFA's advocacy strategy and support implementation of this strategy
- Provide support for the development of TFA's non-government funding strategy and plans
- Ongoing relationship management including strategic advice to CEO as required
- Develop an SVA fundraising plan and assist with attracting new funders to TFA.

Interested in finding out more or being involved? Please contact:

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