

Swinburne plans to double budget and influence

Deborah Fewster

Swinburne's Hawthorn campus has grown slowly but surely in size over recent years, gobbling up small residential allotments and replacing old weatherboard Victorians with swank new campus facilities and student accommodation. That was just the beginning.

Now Melbourne's smallest university has unveiled plans to double its budget and grow its influence as part of a seven-year strategy that will see a "massive expansion" in research and infrastructure.

The plan, which coincides with current vice-chancellor, Professor Ian Young, signing on for another five years, has been described by Swinburne as "bold and ambitious".

"It's not about incremental growth, this is about a massive

expansion of Swinburne's budget and research performance," Young said.

"[We] plan to propel ourselves into the top league. It's not so much what we're doing but more the rate and scale of change that is significant."

Young said investing in research infrastructure helped to attract "excellent researchers which in turn attracts the best students" and more funding.

"We plan to boost our investment in research infrastructure which will speed Swinburne along this path and achieve an increase in research performance over the next seven years that is higher than other Australian universities."

Buildings and equipment being considered for the Hawthorn campus include an \$80 million purpose-

built advanced technology building, a \$10 million engineering structures laboratory, \$5 million on neuroscience imaging equipment and a \$4 million upgrade to Swinburne's supercomputer, to make it the fastest in Australia.

According to Swinburne's 2006 Annual Report, the university's research revenue was almost \$16 million – a new record.

The Federal Government has increased Swinburne's 'Research Block Grants' for 2007 by four per cent.

Swinburne University is currently unranked on global ratings tables such as the Shanghai Jiao Tong University's Institute of Higher Education index.




Kicking the footy at Open Day

Rural Indigenous students met up with Carlton footballers Anthony Koutoufides and Ang Christou at RMIT's Open Day on the weekend.

The Indigenous students and their families had been ferried from as far afield as Swan Hill and Morwell via the 'Koori Express'.

The free bus service was organised by RMIT's Ngarara Willim Indigenous Centre to encourage Indigenous students to explore a range of education options

at RMIT including pre-apprenticeships, TAFE programs, and undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs.

"It's not easy for people in regional communities to travel to Melbourne to attend our Open Day," Indigenous education liaison officer, Eric Clarke said. "So we've developed a program to make the trip with no expense and allow people to bring a parent, friend or guardian. 

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