

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Developing Critical Practice

Dr Michael Houlbrook from School of Social Sciences, Ms Peri O'Shea and Associate Professor Michael Darcy from the Social Justice Social Change Research Centre, together with Family Worker Training and Development Programme Inc., Western Sydney Community Forum and Community Resource Network (CRN) Inc., have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership Program grant to investigate results based accountability.

'In partnership with a group involving three Western Sydney community organisations, this research investigates the development and application of critically reflective practice in Results Based Accountability (RBA). Recently the NSW State Government has made RBA a requirement for funding from its Community Services Grants Program, which has led to questions about the practices of community development workers', says Dr Houlbrook. 'This research aims to refine and assess a critically reflexive model of community development practice. One of the concerns addressed by this research is the need to give a critical perspective to RBA - allowing participants to examine the interests of stakeholders, as well as develop a means by which interests can be practically and ethically met'.

The research will involve 15-20 semi-structured group interviews. These interviews will focus on the specific experiences of putting critical reflection into practice with RBA. It incorporates an interpretive framework aimed at developing structured background information and the way in which we get from idea to outcome. These analyses will increase the depth of understanding of the role of critical reflection in the workplace and its relation to accountability.



The project will provide insights that strengthen the capacity of workers and communities to develop accountabilities meeting their interests as well as those of the funding bodies.

Project Title: Developing Critical Practice in Results Based Accountability

Funding has been set at: \$12,364

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http://www.uws.edu.au/research/ors/funding_opportunities/internal_research_grants