

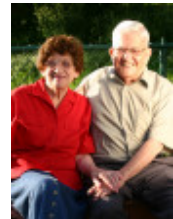


Research Directions

Office of Research Services

New Work for Grey Nomads

Associate Professor Rosemary Leonard, Social Justice and Social Change research centre, is involved in an ARC Linkage project led by Professor Jenny Onyx, University of Technology, Sydney, in partnership with Volunteering Australia. The project aims to build mutually beneficial relationships between 'grey nomads' and the isolated rural communities they visit through volunteer programs.



'Older retired Australians undertaking extensive independent travel – grey nomads – have the potential to bring economic, human and social capital to areas of extreme isolation and disadvantage by becoming involved in volunteer programs of short to medium duration' said Professor Leonard. 'Such volunteering would enable the sharing of information and skills among visitors and locals and would enhance the experience of being a grey nomad as well as contribute to the development of local facilities and services in outback Australia'.

The interests of the grey nomads will be identified through a survey. Volunteering Australia will use their networks of existing volunteer programs in rural towns and provide details about grey nomad's movements and interests. Researchers will then organise a town meeting in each area to find out what are each town's concerns and priorities, as well as interviewing stakeholder groups such as caravan park owners, motor vehicle repairers and tourist attraction operators. A working party will be formed to create each town's volunteer program.

Researchers will re-visit the towns after 12 months to assess the positive and negative affects of the volunteer programs and to determine if there have been any changes to the economic, human and social capital in the towns.

The research will create an opportunity for rural development and second, provide an avenue to encourage productive ageing in the grey nomad population. A booklet designed to promote volunteering to these travellers will also be produced.

Project Title: *New Partnerships: Promoting development in outback towns through voluntary programs for Grey Nomads.*

Funding allocated to UWS has been set at: \$25,000.

July 2006.

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<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org>