

MEDIA RELEASE

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Forum discusses brave new world of NBN for Tasmanian education

Tasmanian educators must work together across sectors and be 'agile' in recognising the possibilities of the National Broadband Network for education purposes, a forum has heard today.

About 30 educators across all Tasmanian education sectors are gathering at The Hutchins School conference centre in Hobart to hear about new research from the University of Tasmania on the implications of the NBN rollout for learning.

The research, conducted by Professor Jane Watson, Professor Joan Abbott-Chapman and Dr Sue Stack from the UTAS Education Faculty, is based on interviews with 20 key leaders of ICT and e-learning in Tasmanian education organisations.

Prof. Watson said the forum is sharing the research and facilitating discussion and collaboration of stakeholders on the opportunities offered by the broadband for all levels and types of education.

"A key understanding that emerged from the research was that this was a 'wicked problem' - characterised by continuing change, uncertainty, complex relationships, diverse ways of framing the issues, and multiple stakeholders, values and policies," she said.

"The way to solve them requires new ways of thinking as well as working together.

Issues covered in the research include:

- How is ICT changing ways of learning, assessing and schooling?
- How does ICT-based learning help student retention?
- Key areas of disadvantage that ICT can address – and the digital divide for rural and regional areas;
- Professional learning for teachers and cultural barriers to change;
- The challenges of providing a clear educational vision so that technology is aligned to educational goals and philosophies.

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