

# AUSTRALIA HELPS NEXT GENERATION OF THAI STUDENTS TO EXCEL

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Countries around the world are looking for ways to help more students excel in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. In Thailand, Australian institutions are helping train the next generation of STEM teachers and instilling greater passion in the fields of study.

It is widely recognised that industries of the future will require different skill-sets to succeed. This includes a new generation of workers with capabilities in STEM subjects. These skills are particularly important for manufacturing and services, areas the Thai Government has a strong commitment to modernising as part of its Thailand 4.0 ambitions.

## Australia sharing its expertise

Fostering greater interest and capabilities in STEM subjects starts in schools, with highly trained and capable teachers, the right curricula and learning programs. To advance its STEM training capabilities, Thailand has benefited from the experience of a number of Australian education institutions, including Curtin University and Chisholm Institute.

As a technical and further education institute, Chisholm specialises in vocational training, helping graduates become 'work-ready' across many fields using curricula and training methods which align closely with industry needs.

In Thailand, Chisholm has contributed to the delivery of the Chevron Enjoy Science Project (CESP). The project was launched in 2015 by Chevron as one of its contributions towards the development of Thailand's education sector. The five-year,



A professional development workshop on robotics for teachers as part of the Chevron Enjoy Science project in Thailand.

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Gavin Slattery, Project Coordinator, International Projects, Chisholm Institute

US\$30 million program aims to provide quality STEM education on a large scale. It involves seven government agencies and 22 Thai universities, as well as support from the private sector.

The CESP comprises a network of 12 newly built STEM development hubs and six technical vocational education and training hubs where middle and high school students are given modern resources for technical education. With over 700 schools, 7,000 teachers and 1 million students participating as of the third quarter of 2018, the program has outperformed its original mandate.



Australian Government

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With its experience educating vocational students overseas, Chisholm was a natural fit to contribute to the successful delivery of the CESP. The institute is contributing resources for educational hubs focused on automotive parts production, microelectronics and other industries – areas that Chisholm has particular strengths.

## Teaching the next generation of workers

Curtin University has also lent its considerable expertise to Thailand's STEM program, through the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST). In 2013, IPST launched a scholarship scheme for teachers called 'Super Premium', to encourage Thai STEM teachers to pursue STEM education overseas.

Austrade supported the Super Premium initiative by linking the institute with Curtin University to provide a one-year Master's degree in STEM education. Upon completion, the scholars return to Thailand with their advanced STEM skills to teach the next generation of Thai workers and support the country's ambition of achieving a digital economy.

Like governments around the world, the Thai Ministry of Education is looking for ways to elevate teaching standards across the country to ensure its students graduate with work-ready and industry-relevant skills.

'Australian education institutions have had a long and successful history of engaging with Thai universities and government agencies to educate its citizens, share expertise and collaborate on major initiatives,' said Gavin Slattery, Project Coordinator, International Projects, Chisholm Institute. 'Institutions like Chisholm Institute and Curtin University are just two examples of how Australia has successfully partnered with Thailand to help the country achieve its education ambitions.'

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