

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2009-2010**

**Outcome 4 - Employment & Participation Policy**

**DEEWR Question No.EW0877\_10**

**Senator Back provided in writing.**

**Question**

**GOLDEN GURUS FUNDING**

Were other programs considered that connected mature age people with mentoring opportunities before funding was allocated? If not, I have raised in this forum another successful mentorship programme that is well-established in WA and has the former Governor General Michael Jefferies as its Patron. The Department should be aware of it as it was funded through the Howard Government's "Mentoring Marketplace" but hasn't been able to successfully identify an alternative programme / funding since the programme was discontinued. In fact, it has found it extremely difficult to locate appropriate funding? Has the Department provided advice to SVP on alternative funding programmes to continue its important work? Did this advice include NEIS? Can you tell me whether other programs, like SVP were considered before funding was allocated to the Golden Gurus? Can you provide details on whether funding would be available to SVP under the NEIS or other funding programmes under DEEWR?

**Answer**

*Were other programs considered that connected mature age people with mentoring opportunities before funding was allocated?*

The Golden Gurus program does not provide funding to individual organisations. Rather, organisations are accepted into the program and operate in accordance with the Golden Gurus Quality Guidelines. The \$400 000 over three years funding for Golden Gurus is for development and implementation of the program including: a new national trademark, provision of material to allow organisations to recognise the contribution of their Golden Gurus, provision of material to allow organisations to promote their services, provision of training for Golden Gurus, provision of online networking, and national promotion.

*Has the Department provided advice to SVP on alternative funding programmes to continue its important work?*

The School Volunteer Program (SVP) is a student mentoring program in Western Australia. Under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions the Australian Government and states and territories streamlined existing programs to remove duplication and overlap programs to make services easier to access for all young people.

The Australian Government consolidated Mentor Marketplace and several other programs into one new program, Youth Connections. Mentor Marketplace ceased on 31 December 2009. An open tender process was undertaken to select providers to deliver Youth Connections. At the commencement of the tender process, potential tenders were actively encouraged by the Department to collaborate and form partnerships. The department engaged KPMG to facilitate meetings for potential Youth Connection tenderers including existing providers, such as SVP, to explore opportunities and processes for forming partnerships to apply for the tender.

All Mentor Marketplace providers were advised of the public information sessions.

*Did this advice include NEIS? Can you tell me whether other programs, like SVP were considered before funding was allocated to the Golden Gurus? Can you provide details on whether funding would be available to SVP under the NEIS or other funding programmes under DEEWR?*

NEIS funding is only available to individual job seekers with financially viable business ideas. Given that SVP still operates as a volunteer mentoring program, it is not eligible for NEIS funding.

The funding grants announced through the Productive Ageing Package on 1 February 2010 are intended to allow up to 50 organisations delivering the Golden Gurus program to pay for training to prepare Golden Gurus for voluntary mentoring roles with host employers/training organisations, and to support the organisation with the delivery of their program.

The funding grants will be allocated through a competitive grants process. Criteria for the funding grants are being developed. Organisations will be able to apply to deliver the Golden Gurus program at the same time that they apply for grant funding.