

'From Fremantle Collaboration to Assistive Technology Collaboration'

Documented by Natasha Layton

In November 2006 the Fremantle Collaboration was successful in obtaining a \$17,419 University of Western Sydney (UWS) Research Partnerships Program Grant to investigate the economic framework for people with a disability and the provision of specialist equipment for their needs. The Research Partnership Project is entitled *Assistive Technology in Australia: Economic Analyses from a user standpoint – methodological implications*. Independent Living Centres Australia; National Council on Rehabilitation Engineering and Novita Tech are grant industry partners.

Members of the Fremantle Collaboration presented papers at two state-wide, at four national and at nine international conferences. Other outputs include publication of a book chapter, a number of refereed abstracts and a refereed journal article (in press). Key external links were established with Renzo Andrich of Don Gnocchi Foundation, Italy.

Overview of Activities 2006 - 2008

- Inaugural meeting with international members:
17-20 October 2006: Fremantle WA
- Independent Living Centres Australia Meeting:
28 – 29 March 2006: ILC Melbourne
- Research Partnerships Workshop 1:
23 – 25 May 2007: ILC NSW
- Research Partnerships Workshop 2:
(with Renzo Andrich):
28 August –1 September 2007 at UWS
- Independent Living Centres Australia Meeting (with Renzo Andrich):
5 September 2007
- Research Partnerships Workshop 3:
5 – 7 February 2008 at UWS

At its third research workshop the Fremantle Collaboration decided to change its name to Assistive Technology Collaboration and to establish a public website at www.at.org.au



Renzo Andrich working with Fremantle Collaboration in Sydney, September 2007

Fremantle Collaboration Update March 2008



September 2007 Sydney workshop with Lloyd Walker (foreground) then left to right: Renzo Andrich, Natasha Layton, Desleigh de Jonge, Ingrid Schraner, Jane Bringolf, Agata Molenda

In the context of the Collaboration several PhD projects have developed:

Jane Bringolf commenced her PhD on 1 February 2008 at the UWS Urban Research Centre under the supervision of Peter Phibbs, Ingrid Schraner and Ed Steinfeld with the working title: *Universal Design: Why don't we have more of it?*

Natasha Layton is preparing to undertake a PhD in connection with her work with the Aids & Equipment Action Alliance in Victoria.

As the UWS Research Partnership Project is coming to an end, the Collaboration has identified two directions of further work:

1. The further development of cost-effectiveness analyses of AT based on the *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health ICF*, as outlined in the upcoming article in the journal *Disability and Rehabilitation* (details below). This includes the evaluation of questionnaire software to use ICF's Activities and Participation in larger studies that also include the relevant Environmental Factors, as well as the investigation of graphical representations of Activities and Participations in present and optimal situations and of the overall costs of the relevant Environmental Factors.
2. The further development of our first attempts at identifying the economic actors involved in the process of making AT available to users. Following the experiences with the first exploratory account based on Gerard Goggin and Christopher Newell's book *Disability in Australia: exposing a social apartheid* (Sydney, 2005), we intend to use some of the cases used in the book *Assistive Technology in the Workplace* by Desleigh de Jonge, Marcia Scherer and Sylvia Rodger to identify further sets of economic actors and to investigate in more depth the incentive structures that operate for these actors.

Book Chapters

Schraner I, Molenda A, Layton N & Walker L (2007) Assistive Technology in Australia: Economic Analyses from a user Standpoint – Methodological Implications. In *Challenges for Assistive Technology - AAATE 07*. Assistive Technology Research Series Volume 20. Edited by Gorka Eizmendi, José Miguel Azkoitia, Gerald Craddock. Amsterdam: IOS Press

Refereed Journal Articles

Schraner I, De Jonge D, Layton N, Bringolf J & Molenda A (in press) Using the ICF in Economic Analyses of Assistive Technology Systems: Methodological Implications of a User Standpoint. *Disability and Rehabilitation*

Fully Refereed and Published Conference Papers

Schraner I (2006) Economic Evaluation Of Assistive Technology: Challenges For The Discipline, Resources From Feminist Economics. In *Proceedings of the Fifth Australian Society of Heterodox Economists Conference*. 11-12 December, 2006, Sydney, Australia

Bringolf J (2007) My Home, My Life: Easy Living for Everyone. *International Conference of Technology and Aging at Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology* 16 – 19 June, Toronto, Canada

Bringolf J (2007) Environment of Change: From Policy to Reality. *Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology* 16 – 19 June, Toronto, Canada

Schraner I (2007) Using feminist standpoint economics to develop cost-effectiveness analyses of 'Assistive Technology': Unexpected Support from the WHO. In *Proceedings of the Sixth Australian Society of Heterodox Economists Conference*. 10 -11 December, Sydney, Australia

Conference Papers

Bringolf J & Schraner I (2008) Universal Design: Why isn't it happening? *International Conference on Aging, Disability and Independence* St Petersburg, Florida US 21-23 February

de Jonge D & Schraner I (2008) Economics of inclusiveness: can we as a society afford not to provide assistive technology and use universal design? *International Conference on Aging, Disability and Independence* St Petersburg, Florida US 21-23 February

Walker L, Layton N, Hobbs D, Bringolf J, & Schraner I (2007) Evaluating the economics of assistive technology provision in Australia *40th National Conference of the Australian Association of Gerontology* Adelaide 21 – 23 November 2007 (full abstract published in *Australasian Journal on Ageing* 26, Supplement A41)

Fremantle Collaboration Publications to March 2008

- Schraner I, Molenda A, Layton N & Walker L (2007) Assistive Technology in Australia: Economic analyses from a user standpoint – methodological implications. *9th European Conference for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe – Challenges for Assistive Technology*. 3 - 5 October 2007, San Sebastian, Spain
- Schraner I, de Jonge D, Molenda A & Bringolf J (2007) Economics of Inclusiveness: Can we as a society afford not to use Universal Design? *Australasian Conference on Security, Peace Economics, and Peace Science* 17-18 August, Sydney, Australia
- Layton N, Schraner I, Bringolf J & Molenda A (2007) Extending the boundaries: linking allied health and economics. *7th National Allied Health Conference – No Discipline is an Island*. 18 - 20 July 2007, Wrest Point Conference Centre, Tasmania
- Walker L, Hobbs D, Schraner I & Layton N 2007. Toward an Evaluation of the Economics of AT. Symposium Contribution at the *Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology* 16 – 19 June 2007. Toronto, Canada
- Schraner I, Layton N & Bringolf J 2007. Methodological Issues When Using the ICF in Economic Analyses of Assistive Technology. *13th Annual North American Collaborating Centre Conference on ICF Sharing Knowledge Through the ICF*. 5 – 7 June 2007, Niagara Falls, New York
- Layton N (2007) Assistive technology: a vital tool to promote health, enable occupational engagement and engender well-being *Victorian Occupational Therapy State Conference* 18-19 May Melbourne, Victoria
- Walker L, Layton N & Hobbs D (2007) Assistive Technology – a part of the rehabilitation solution (poster) *Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine 15th Annual Scientific Meeting* 22-25 May Sydney
- Schraner I (2006) Assistive Technology – Or how to make Health Economics more relevant *UWS College of Business Research Colloquium* 7 – 8 November, Sydney, Australia

Reports and Other Publications

- Layton N (2006) Fremantle Collaboration Agreement (3 page overview)
- Molenda A (2006) Equipped for Living: A Literature Review *Independent Living* 22 (3)
- UWS Research Directions Fact Sheets (March 2007) Assistive Technology in Australia
<http://www.uws.edu.au/about/adminorg/devint/ors/activitystrengths/success#2>
- Fremantle Collaboration (July 2007) 1 page briefing for industry partners
- Assistive Technology (November 2007) 1 page briefing for industry partners
- Novita Children's Services (2007) Project Summary Assistive technology in Australia: economic analyses from a user standpoint – methodological implications. In: *Novita Children's Services Research Report 2004-2007*, Adelaide: pages 74 – 75
- Williams C (2007) The Future for Assistive Technology, in *Independent Living* 23 (3) p27