

U3A Sunshine Coast – Strategic Plan Development Group

Position Paper – External Stakeholders or Partners

This position paper reflects the findings and views of the U3A Sunshine Coast (U3A-SC) Strategic Plan Development Group. The Group was established by the Management Committee to develop a draft 5 years Strategic Plan. The paper relates to external stakeholders or partners, hereafter referred to as alliances, that benefit U3A-SC and the targeted alliance.

U3A-SC is a voluntary organization established to “provide members with both the stimulus of mental activity and the satisfaction of a continuing contribution to society”¹ This is achieved by offering members a comprehensive range of courses, programs, lectures and events throughout the Sunshine Coast aimed at providing further knowledge, skills and experiences at very low cost. This low cost is possible because U3A tutorship and administration is conducted by volunteer members. Further, many of the facilities and some resources are provided by existing alliances at either low or no cost. Alliances are vital for U3A-SC to continue to provide the services members have come to enjoy and expect.

The Steering Group brainstormed a list of current and possible future alliances. The Group then identified what mutual benefits might exist for all the listed alliances and prioritised them based on potential mutual value. Members of the Steering Group undertook some brief research into the listed alliances. This analysis was documented on a spread sheet, attached to this position paper.

A number of directional high level positions were agreed upon by Steering Group members. This direction is intended to support relevant strategic objectives.

1. Alliances that add value to U3A-SC and the partner should be maintained (where they already exist) established (where they are targeted and do not exist), nurtured and managed on an ongoing and proactive basis.
2. There needs to be strong and effective ongoing alignment and communication between U3A-SC and the targeted alliance.
3. The alliance function for U3A-SC; that includes establishing a targeted list of partners, providing promotion, communication, public relations, alignment and recognition, requires management by a dedicated volunteer with the necessary relationship management and marketing skills.
4. Before any new alliances are approached U3A-SC needs to have clearly articulated its’ purpose and brand that is current and forward looking. This should be packaged in appropriate soft and hard copy material that has been professionally developed. The material should be targeted for alliances with a mutual ‘value add’ proposition. It may include additional material very specific to the alliance being approached.

¹ Aims as outlined in the U3A Sunshine Coast Strategic Plan, 2005-2010. p7