

Flinders University to host 2008 Fulbright Symposium

30 January 2008

Governments will be challenged to consider how best to invest the wealth generated by Australia's current economic prosperity in the future health of the country when Flinders University hosts the Fulbright Symposium in July 2008.

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission has announced that Flinders and the Co-operative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health have been awarded the symposium hosting rights following a nation-wide competition of universities and other institutions.

Entitled Healthy People, Prosperous Country the Fulbright Symposium will be held from 10-11 July at the National Wine Centre in Adelaide.

The symposium will examine how to encourage whole of government action to promote health and well-being locally and nationally and explore ways in which existing inequities in the health status of different groups in the population, can be addressed.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Chris Marlin, said universities have a major role to play in fostering debate on issues of importance to the community.

"Australia is experiencing a period of sustained economic growth and the country must decide how best to invest some of that prosperity in ways that maximise the health outcomes for our community," Professor Marlin said.

"How do you ensure that the investment we make in health infrastructure and services achieves equitable outcomes across the various sectors of society?" he asked.

"The poor health of indigenous people relative to the wider population, for example, must be urgently addressed and the Healthy People, Prosperous Country symposium provides a unique opportunity to examine what is a significant issue for both Australia and the United States.

"Flinders University will be launching an Australian Institute for Health, Society and Equity in the near future and the symposium will enable us to strengthen international research links and policy links relevant to this research topic.

"The Fulbright Symposium will also be one of the first opportunities to review the findings of a major research project by the World Health Organisation's Commission on Social Determinants on Health on which Australia has been represented by Flinders University's Head of Public Health, Professor Fran Baum, since 2005.

The symposium represents another manifestation of the ongoing collaboration between Flinders University and the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health (CRCAH) of which Flinders is a core partner.

Professor Marlin said the symposium will bring together experts from both Australia and the United States and comes at an important time, given the previous Federal Government's intervention program into Aboriginal health.

The symposium will attract participants from a wide range of professional fields.

The Fulbright program is the largest educational scholarship of its kind and was created by United States Senator J. William Fulbright and the U.S. Government in 1946. Aimed at promoting mutual understanding through educational exchange, it currently operates between the US and more than 150 nations.

In Australia, Fulbright Scholarships are administered by the Australian-American Fulbright Commission, based in Canberra, and funded by the Australian and US governments and a select group of sponsors.

Media Contacts

Communication Manager
Australian-American Fulbright Commission
T: 02 6260 4460
E: commsmanager@fulbright.com.au

Peter Gill
Head of News and Media, Flinders University
T: 08 8201 2092 or 0417 784 044
E: peter.gill@flinders.edu.au