

# English Australia MEDIA RELEASE



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## ENGLISH AUSTRALIA LAUNCHES NEW *STUDENTCONNECT* PROGRAM

English Australia used the opportunity presented by the 2012 ATEC Backpacker & Youth Industry Conference, held on the Sunshine Coast this week, to launch its new *StudentConnect* Program.

This new program signals an important step forward in bringing together Australia's two largest services export industries – education and tourism – both of which are confronting the challenges to exports posed by a strong Aus\$.

English Australia's Executive Director, Sue Blundell, is a member of ATEC's Backpacker Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, filling the inaugural education representative position created on the panel in 2010.

Ms Blundell says "Young international visitors to Australia come wanting to experience a diverse range of study, travel and work opportunities. The English language sector wants our students to be able to experience all that Australia has to offer and have a truly exciting experience while they are here. The tourism industry needs to be able to introduce their activities and services to this important international market. English Australia designed this new program to bring the two industries together."

The program is designed to allow suppliers of services and products of interest to international students, such as tourism operators, to bring these services to the attention of students via English Australia's network of member colleges. Over 80% of the 134,000 international students learning English in Australia in 2011 chose to study with an English Australia member college representing a significant market for tourism operators.

Ms Blundell says "The experience of international students is not limited to the classroom. We want them to tell their friends what an amazing place Australia is to visit for a variety of reasons, not only the quality of the education but the opportunity they had to get out and see Australia."

Suppliers can apply to list their services in a dedicated Directory on the English Australia website and contribute to a monthly update of special offers and activities that is circulate to colleges.

The tourism industry has responded positively to this development with the first application received within minutes of the program being launched.

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*English Australia represents over 100 member colleges throughout Australia that provide quality English language programs to students and professionals from around the world. Over 80% of international students learning English in Australia choose to study with an English Australia member college.*

*Information about the StudentConnect Program is available on the English Australia website at:*

[www.englishaustralia.com.au/page.php?id=189](http://www.englishaustralia.com.au/page.php?id=189)

For further information:

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*The Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) is the peak industry body representing Australia's tourism export sector. ATEC established its Backpacker Youth Tourism Advisory Panel (BYTAP) to facilitate an industry platform for the development and growth of the backpacker tourism segment by elevating the policy agenda and providing a unified voice on backpacker issues.*

[www.atec.net.au/193.html](http://www.atec.net.au/193.html)