

Protegitic Mitigates Risk for \$92.5M TAFE Program

Protegitic's systems integration experience and practical approach to project management has helped Skills Victoria TAFE ICT Directorate produce a vendor contract that will see 13 Victorian TAFEs with a world class student management solution.



About Skills Victoria's TAFE ICT

Skills Victoria manages Victoria's vocational education and training (VET) organisations including the state's 18 TAFE institutions, and private providers, commonly referred to as RTOs (Registered Training Organisations). It is part of the State Government's, Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development. The program directorate, TAFE ICT, is responsible for implementation of ICT strategies that strengthen and support the TAFE sector in its future growth.

Project Overview

The \$92.5 million Student Management Solution (SMS) is a major program for Victorian TAFE Institutes. Student management systems are core business systems within TAFEs, enabling them to perform critical day to day business operations including enrolments, assessments, completions, funding and reporting, and manage staff, students, course, funding and financial information.

The current student management systems have been servicing the sector for over ten years. While technology refreshes have enabled the life span of these systems to be prolonged, a new application is needed to enable institutes to meet student expectations for online services, and deliver a more efficient systems solution in support of core business activity.

The new solution will be rolled out and implemented in all 13 TAFEs by the end 2012.

Key Drivers

The TAFE sector is the backbone of the Victorian economy and has experienced massive growth over the past five years. It now provides approximately 80 per cent of the state's vocation education and training.



Skills Victoria's research shows that training needs are estimated to grow by another 172,000 students over the next four years, with most of this growth expected to be in the TAFE sector.

Wayne Welcome, TAFE ICT's Program Director, said that in order for Victoria's TAFEs to remain world-class leaders in training and skills development, it was vital that they have world class systems in place to handle student, staff, course, funding and financial information and performance measurement and monitoring.

"The obsolete student management system would be replaced with an integrated solution of 34 modules addressing facets of student life cycle from enquiry through to completion and allowing students to track their progress and results with a click of a mouse," Wayne said.

"The SMS would also allow TAFEs to streamline day-to-day business operations such as assessments, funding and reporting through an online portal.

"Once live, more than 300,000 students and staff will use the SMS, which will act as the core business system within TAFEs."

"Competition continues to grow in this sector and it is important to build the back-of-office student management capability for the TAFEs to use to help them make informed decisions."



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How Protegit Helped

The TAFE ICT Directorate had spent 18 months in obtaining government appropriation of funds and managing the procurement and evaluation process, which included expressions of interest from 16 national and international companies, request for tender, RFT evaluation, final evaluations and shortlisting to five then two vendors.

Once a preferred vendor had been selected, TAFE ICT decided not to go to contract immediately as considerable risk surrounded the solution offered, which was originally developed for universities.

It was at this stage that the TAFE ICT Program Director, Wayne Welcome, realised practical professional assistance was required to help bring the contract to fruition expeditiously and without risk.

Protegit was appointed to assist in the execution-stage ramp-up planning and risk mitigation processes, thereby reducing the uncertainty of the solution and minimising the ambiguity that was going to go into the contract.

Protegit was also involved in developing the resource profile of the SMS program and developing an estimation tool, which was vital in ensuring the program execution demands were fully understood.

Additional project control and management processes were put in place by the senior Protegit team who supported the Program Director throughout the process prior to the contract negotiation.

"Within the risk mitigation process, Protegit's high level of systems integration experience supported me in managing the preferred vendor and reducing the risk profile," said Wayne Welcome.

"Protegit helped the preferred vendor understand our requirements and assisted with building up our program management capabilities that would be needed when the contract was signed. This is their forte and it was well executed."

"With some strong capabilities from Protegit into our team, we very quickly identified the key gap areas, which needed to be resolved within the contract.

"Prior to contacting Protegit, I was frustrated that many consultancy service providers couldn't get their head around the extent and complexity of this program. However, senior Protegit staff understood the complexities of the issues I am constantly working with. They were able to put an appropriately skilled team in place, which started to call out the detail within the key issue areas and expand them for me.



Wayne Welcome

"As soon as Protegit had done this, I was able to act and start putting mitigation strategies in place, either via the contract mechanism or via a scoping study, which was the next stage in the process.

"By identifying the key areas of ambiguity and asking the vendor to explain how they were going to resolve them, we have been able to add them as work packages into the contract and can hold the vendor accountable to their delivery.

"I'm impressed by the suite of tools and methodologies used by Protegit to help guide their processes. Their experience and practical approach has contributed enormously to this project.

"Protegit has continued to be responsive and delivered a pragmatic approach to project management that has really benefited the program."

Summary of Results

Protegit provided:

- Senior program leadership to assist in completing the SMS program, preparation of the vendor contract.
- An estimation model and ensured the contract was fully costed.
- Practical assistance and advice in defining the roles and responsibilities of the personnel needed in the project management office for the next phases of the project.
- Management of the negotiation process to help the vendor understand TAFE sector requirements and reduce the program's risk profile.
- A responsive, practical approach to the project.
- A suite of tools and methodologies, including project control and management processes used to help guide the SMS program.
- Director-level support including risk mitigation processes that minimised the ambiguity that went into the contract.
- A high level of systems integration experience that contributed to the skills base of the TAFE ICT team in expeditiously progressing the SMS program.

About Protegit

Protegit provides strategic project management services and has experience in enterprise level projects across various industry sectors including finance, mining and manufacturing, government, defence and retail. It offers full life-cycle project management services from boardroom project strategy facilitation through to implementation; ensuring projects are delivered on time, within budget, at specified quality levels, with ongoing risk assessment and management, and with a business benefits realisation objective. With 35 employees across Asia Pacific, Protegit is headquartered in Adelaide and has offices and representatives across Australia and South East Asia.

