



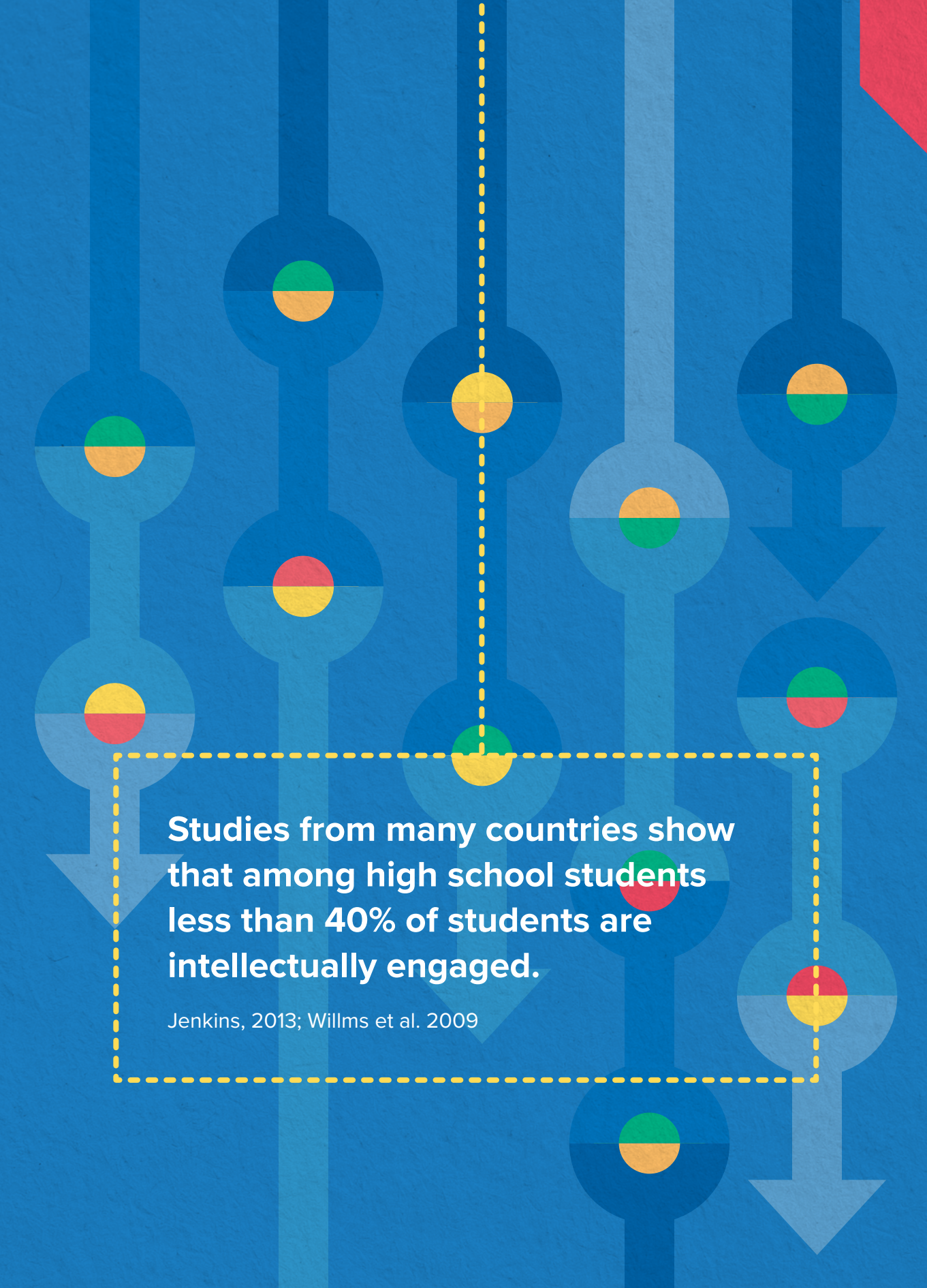
# **AMPLIFY: DESIGNING BRIGHT FUTURES**

**Expression of Interest**

An Association of Independent Schools Western  
Australia and Innovation Unit Australia Partnership





The background is a deep blue with vertical stripes of varying shades. Overlaid on these are several circles, each containing a smaller circle divided horizontally into two colors. The colors used are green, orange, yellow, red, and light blue. Some of these circles are positioned within larger, faint, downward-pointing arrow shapes. A dashed yellow line forms a rectangular frame around the central text.

**Studies from many countries show  
that among high school students  
less than 40% of students are  
intellectually engaged.**

Jenkins, 2013; Willms et al. 2009

# HOW CAN WE GIVE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE THE BEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS IN A CHANGING WORLD?

Across the world, educators, community members, parents and students are asking themselves if our current system of schooling can deliver the kinds of powerful learning opportunities that students will need to meet the challenges in a changing world.


Historically schools were designed for a different purpose—an era where content knowledge reigned supreme and citizens enjoyed relatively stable economies and societies. We are now challenged to think how we can redesign schools to face a new era.

Students in school now will graduate into a rapidly changing world—a world where jobs from both blue and white collar professions quickly disappear as automation increases, and more employees turn to freelancing as a means of coping with the instability of job markets.

Many organisations are making the observation that university graduates, although highly qualified, often lack the right skills to succeed in their organisations—skills like leadership, oral communication, analytical and creative thinking. Another challenge is for schools to be creative in how to focus on these important life skills.

It is vitally important that we help young people to be resilient, creative, and flexibly adaptable to changing circumstances and take advantage of new opportunities presented by this shifting employment landscape.



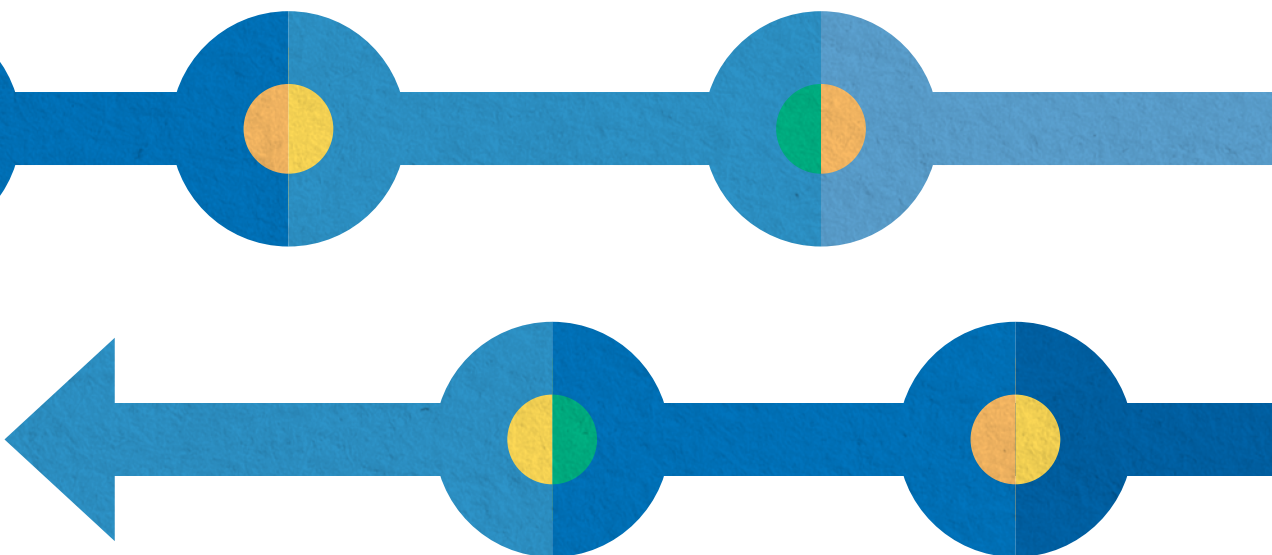


In addition, the world is becoming more diverse as a result of global migration. However there is greater inequality than ever before, as the gap between low and high wages increases each year. The quest for educators is to support young people to become more socially responsible and active citizens in a changing local and global society.

If students are to survive and thrive in a constantly shifting economy and society, our task is to help them develop lifelong learning capabilities. They should emerge from school able to learn, unlearn and relearn; to be self-directed, confident, and articulate and think critically if they are to face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Educators are the greatest asset in developing these lifelong learners: their knowledge and experience directly affects the outcomes of each child, and schools across Western Australia strive each day to make learning more engaging in order to help students achieve success.

Research is revealing more and more that engagement in schooling and learning is a significant predictor of academic achievement and is a pivotal factor that enables students to succeed in life after school.





**Students who are engaged in school and have a stronger self-concept as learners have better career and life outcomes, regardless of their backgrounds.**

**When students are deeply engaged in learning, they:**

Care not just about the outcome, but also the development of their learning.

Take responsibility for their learning.

Bring discretionary energy to their learning activities.

See the value in, and show a desire to, learn beyond the school walls and the school day.

Students will face many challenges when they graduate, and we have an exciting opportunity in front of us right now to design the kinds of powerful learning that will equip young people with the knowledge, skills and experiences to succeed now and into the future.

**We hope you will join us on this journey towards making learning deeper, more relevant and prevalent for our young people.**

# WHAT IS AMPLIFY?

AMPLIFY is an ambitious new initiative from the Association of Independent Schools WA (AISWA) and Innovation Unit Australia.

Our aim is to increase the proportion of Australian students who are deeply engaged in their learning, through the development of teaching, learning and assessment practices that promote engagement.

Over the coming year, and beyond, we will work with interested schools to establish a 'community of practice'. We will provide the professional learning, support and work with the 'community of practice' to develop and implement bold new professional practices that engage students in meaningful learning.

## What is a Community of Practice?

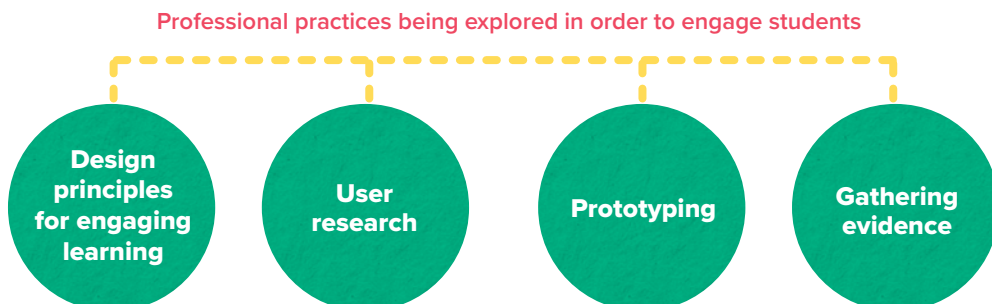
A community of practice is a group of educators with a shared passion, concern, or belief (domain) who will engage in a process of collective learning in order to develop new practices that engage students in powerful learning. Collaboratively they will learn with and from one another in order to generate new insights, practices and evidence.

In this community, the design of new practices becomes richer through the diversity of those involved. Each member brings a wealth of different perspectives, professional knowledge, context and experience to the collective wisdom, challenging participants to test assumptions, immerse themselves in new knowledge and consider ideas and strategies they might not normally have the opportunity to explore.

A community of practice values and builds the shared repertoire, resources, knowledge and experiences of all participants to overcome the barriers and take advantage of opportunities they may encounter along the journey towards designing new practice.

There are many great reasons for schools to engage in this work together. Communities of practice create opportunities for collaboration and partnership across different contexts. They enable schools to:

- share activities and resources (intellectual and physical) that might not otherwise be possible as a single school
- help to accurately calculate and manage risk
- expand opportunities to be creative about common challenges
- develop a more robust evidence base for their work





**Developing a more  
robust evidence base**

**Being creative about  
common challenges**

**Helping to  
manage risk**

**Sharing activities  
and resources**



## **OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**



## HOW WILL AMPLIFY WORK IN PRACTICE?

Schools that apply and are selected to participate will, over the course of the year and beyond, seek to understand more about the experiences of their learners. They will use innovation methods in order to design, test, evaluate and iterate engaging new practices that are responsive to learner needs.

The community of practice will meet face to face three times over the coming year to:

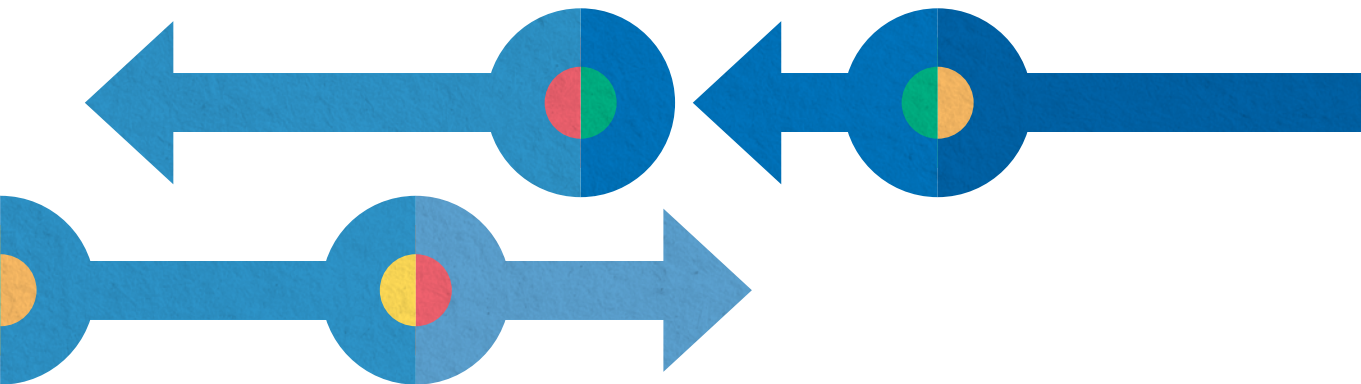
- **Form their community:** begin to understand how they might learn and work together through engaging in user-centred research about the challenges faced by their learners, and developing enquiry questions that will guide their explorations over the following months and beyond.
- **Explore design thinking and rapid prototyping:** discover how innovation methods can support educators to generate and test radical new practices that meet the needs of learners and result in improved outcomes.
- **Understand data and evidence:** design a theory of change and gather compelling evidence from a range of sources to discover out the extent to which practices are having the desired impact on learning.

We know that the needs of employers are shifting towards skills like problem-solving and critical and creative thinking, alongside how to communicate, negotiate and build relationships – the kinds of skills that support success in increasingly collaborative work (and community) environments.

• **Soft skills** are the new **hard skills**. •







Participants will engage in a range of activities within and across schools in order to build and strengthen their community of practice, including:

- coaching conversations that address challenges and opportunities that arise from reimagining teaching practices and school structures;
- mini-enquiries and ethnographic-style research into students and their learning;
- reflective journaling and blogging; and
- school expeditions and connections with national and international innovative learning environments.

### What might we expect to see as a result of participating?

We will know if we have been successful when we can start to observe and measure:

- improved academic achievement of students who have been exposed to new practices by participating teachers;
- increased engagement in learning — cognitive, behavioural and social;
- a greater level of motivation and agency in being responsible for and leading one's own learning;
- improved wellbeing of students, including increased confidence, resilience and perseverance; and
- the collaborative development of new practices that address real teaching and learning problems faced by participating schools.

#### Why is engagement so important?



Research has established  
**that student engagement**  
**is a robust predictor**  
**of student achievement in schools**  
and  
**occupational success many years later,**  
**regardless of socioeconomic status.\***

We have an exciting opportunity in front of us right now to design the kinds of powerful learning that will equip young people with the knowledge, skills and experiences to succeed now and into the future.

For more information, go to  
[ais.wa.edu.au/amplify](https://ais.wa.edu.au/amplify)

\*Finn, 1993; American National Research Council, 2003; Fredericks et al., 20014; Dunleavy et al., 2012).

# THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN APPLYING

## Schools applying should:

- Have a strong belief that there is a case for changing practices to better meet the needs of 21st century learners.
- Be passionate about creating powerful new learning opportunities for students, and for teachers too.
- Be prepared to commit leadership time to exploring the initiative, and time for your core project team to attend events and participate in community activities.
- Have an interest in implementing a disciplined innovation process—perhaps initially in a small team, but with an ambition to scaling successful processes and practices across your school.
- See the value in collaborating within and across schools.
- Be prepared to engage the wider school community through sharing the processes and outcomes of the work being undertaken.
- Be open to challenging often tightly-held processes and structures if necessary to creating improved outcomes for students.

## AMPLIFY will require:

- The release of a nominated team of educators (ideally 3-5) to attend workshops. Release of some or all team members to participate in between workshop activities: these will not be time consuming but may require 1-2 days of release time in order for team members to intellectually engage with the concepts and tasks.
- The collection of data about the extent to which students are engaged, and the extent to which interventions are having the desired impact.

## What is the selection criteria?

### Part A

We are looking for schools to describe current practice and future expectations on the following criteria:

1. Active engagement from the senior leadership team in school initiatives
2. Willingness of staff in the pursuit of an innovation agenda
3. Capacity to implement the project under a shared leadership model
4. Flexibility in timetables and school structures where possible
5. Effective and on-going professional learning culture throughout the school
6. 'Change readiness': Successful and sustained initiatives that benefit learners and the school community

### Part B

A willingness, determination and commitment to:

- Collaborate with other AISWA member schools
- Meet scale of the challenge
- Have an active role in testing, evaluating and documenting new practices: successes and lessons learned
- Attend all professional learning days and meetings by all team members
- Participate in the next phase if not successful in this round



# HOW DO WE APPLY?

## Who is eligible?

All AISWA member schools are eligible to apply.

## What is the cost?

There will be a minimum cost per school to participate in AMPLIFY. Please contact Ron Gorman at AISWA for details.

## Who to contact for questions:

If you have any questions you can contact:

### **Ron Gorman**

**Email** rgorman@ais.wa.edu.au

**Phone** 9441 1620

**Mobile** 0417 996 268

For application process questions contact:

### **Stacey McKenzie**

**Email** smckenzie@ais.wa.edu.au

**Phone** 9441 1603

**Mobile** 0420 482 693

## 1 Online application

Go to the online application and follow the instructions. Include your Statement of Intent and Selection Criteria when prompted.

[surveymonkey.com/r/amplifyapp](https://surveymonkey.com/r/amplifyapp)

## 2 Statement of Intent

Outline why your school wants to join the project; what you would expect to gain and what you would hope to contribute to a community of practice. Maximum 500 words.

## 3 Selection Criteria

**Part A:** Against the 6 Selection Criteria on the previous page, please provide the following:

- 2 dot pointed examples of current practice.
- Dot pointed statement of future aspirations for the school.

**Part B:** A willingness, determination and commitment to:

- Collaborate with other AISWA member schools
- Meet the scale of the challenge
- Take an active role in testing, evaluating and documenting new practices: successes and lessons learned
- Attend all professional learning days and meetings by all team members



