

# BUSINESS GROWTH INTO ASIA











## Asia Literacy: Education and Cultural Networks

There can be no economic diplomacy without cross-cultural understanding. Economic decisions are influenced by a range of political and cultural factors, ranging from media reporting of political events to the experiences of tourists, migrants and business travellers.

Australia is a popular destination for students from across Asia, and the Western Australian education market has huge growth potential. A world-wide demand for international education is growing and forecasts an extra three million students globally by 2020. This highlights an opportunity for WA to diversify the economy and create job opportunities for Western Australians.

International students are worth \$17 billion to the Australian economy. However, Western Australia attracts only 7.8 per cent of the Australian student visa market, a net worth of \$1.3 billion to the WA economy.<sup>1</sup>

International education is a new emerging economy that brings net benefits to the State in terms of jobs, local tourism, hospitality, retail and research and development.

- ***A McGowan Labor Government will establish the mechanisms through which Western Australia becomes a leading provider of international education in the Asian region, creating more jobs for Western Australians.***

Language is also fundamental to both understanding target markets and developing confidence in seeking Asian opportunities. Unfortunately, the depth of Asian languages within Western Australian society is currently lacking.

A McGowan Labor Government will introduce a program to provide assistance for students who complete an ATAR course in selected Asian Languages to undertake a one month “in country” placement. This will create networking opportunities for our youth

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We need to foster a deep understanding of our Asian neighbours, so that our political and business leaders can draw upon a broad range of Asian experience and skills. Cultural activities will support the objectives of the Asian Business Strategy by providing opportunities for cross-cultural awareness, business investment and job creation.

- ***A McGowan Labor Government will investigate hosting an annual Asian Arts Festival to run concurrently with the ASEAN Dialogue.***

As part of WA Labor’s Plan for Jobs, we will work with industry to develop a media exchange program, to promote a deeper understanding of the different cultures of Asia and the diverse economic opportunities in Western Australia beyond the mining industry. Similar exchange programs could be explored for leading arts and music companies.

**Note:**

*This strategy will complement and not duplicate the objectives of federal agencies. Cooperation between the state and federal agencies is encouraged through the Charter of Economic Diplomacy, which seeks to integrate the State objectives with the significant resources deployed globally through standing international diplomatic representation.*

<sup>1</sup>studyperth.com.au, Fact Sheets, August 2015