

## Reflecting on RIT

The academic staff who carried out the RIT projects were asked to reflect on the experience. This is a selection of their comments:

- “The RIT project fitted in with our research aspirations at a time of change. Our students have placements in schools as part of their education and training. Through the RIT project we were able to capture some of the ideas concerning the views of our students in schools and their class teachers as the current curriculum in primary schools begins to change. This is a time of transformation when the practices of the last twenty years are challenged and new ideas, organisational modes, values and attitudes to the curriculum take hold. The timing of the RIT opportunity was everything. We could go out and capture the moment.”
- “I am interested in how my motives as an artist and active researcher relate to and impact upon teaching. The project enabled me to establish new knowledge in this area.”
- “To organise and lead a residential field course added to my professional skill set. I gained a deeper insight into the backgrounds of our students and the specific problems many face.”
- “The funding has facilitated and advanced my practical and theoretical research and helped me to become more confident in presenting research outcomes at conferences.”
- “I have seen the benefits of RIT for students throughout my teaching career. Especially practical work done away from campus, in the real world, equips them with skills they need in their future employment. It also opens the separating door between the teacher and the learner as the students become co-workers. In a traditional teaching situation the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and separated - in a research project where students and lecturer work together, at the same task, everybody becomes equal. The benefits for the students become immediately obvious, especially in those who have never experienced anything like this. They start taking responsibility, put more effort into their work and see how it might be relevant to them.”
- “Allowed me to return to a research area which had been put on hold for a period due to other responsibilities.”
- “I have a better understanding of the how and why teaching impacts on research and vice versa.”
- “The RIT project was a really good initiative and I am grateful for the support that was offered. As is the case with most academics I find it difficult to balance the demands of teaching and administration with the time that is needed to develop and write up a possible journal article or other research output.”

“In many ways we construct our own set of values about the research we undertake, and the motivation and will to continue is driven from within. But institutional recognition helps. The timely availability of funding for our project enabled us to reach into a research area that was emerging and changing at the same time. The RIT initiative was the right form of vehicle to enable us to penetrate this arena at the right time. The involvement of students was of central importance.”

“RIT support was excellent and the conference was particularly beneficial in facilitating the sharing of work being conducted in the University.”

“Making small grants available is a good way of encouraging colleagues to make a start [with research].”

“The RIT initiative should be continued as it has fostered debate and encouraged inquiry, which have both led to enrichment of the research and teaching culture at Christ Church.”

“We need to be active in our respective research fields if we are to remain fresh and relevant as teachers. We should not just teach about theoretical views within our research domains, but be creators of these theories too. We need to be part of the fabric of both research and teaching.”

“The project forged a collaborative approach between academic colleagues within which the individual and very different approaches were brought together and appreciated on their own terms. The response to the project gave confidence to all those involved, both staff and students, in the quality of the work produced.”

“I gave a short presentation of my work at a conference – something I never dreamt I could do before!”

“The RIT initiative was an excellent means by which to engage students directly in the research activities of those teaching them. Through the project students gained new insight into their subject and the professional expectations which will be required of them.”

“Opportunity to work with students in an exciting research based context.”

“I just want to say thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to participate in the project. It has helped me a lot in many aspects.”