The National Networking Initiative (NNI) is a 2-year ALTC-funded legacy project led by Professor Mike Keppell (Charles Sturt University) and Associate Professor Gordon Suddaby (Massey University). The collaborative project includes Australasian Council on Open and Distance Education (ACODE) and Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ascilite) as lead organisations; Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) and Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA) as partner organisations and Australia’s Academic and Research Network (AARnet), Netspot and Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) as enabling partners. ACODE and ascilite as peak bodies in the Australasian Higher Education sector have representation in Universities in the domain of technology-enhanced learning and teaching and have a Memorandum of Understanding supporting their collaborative partnership and the NNI.

The NNI was developed in response to the disbanding of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) and seeks to continue the work of the ALTC in its critical roles of sharing best practice, promoting collaboration and collegiality and engaging academic staff in the scholarship of learning and teaching. The overarching vision for the National Networking Initiative (NNI) is to facilitate a sustainable collaborative network between established higher education associations with the intent of fostering best practice in networks to engage members more strongly with Australasian higher education learning and teaching. A key part of this vision is the promotion, dissemination and enhancement of the outcomes of Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funded projects.
The seven key objectives of the NNI are to develop a sustainable learning and teaching network to:

1) Improve the effectiveness of communication and engagement with NNI members at large
2) Enable and support network leaders of collaborative partners to encourage collaboration and increase membership engagement
3) Review the utilisation of technologies to support best practice in network engagement
4) Foster, encourage and support further network-based collaborative initiatives
5) Promote, disseminate and enhance the outcomes of Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC), OLT and selected Good Practice Reports.
6) Conduct research into the NNI
7) Manage the project in an effective and efficient way.

These objectives contribute to the overarching mission of the NNI to improve engagement and practice through network leadership. The NNI is focused on improving engagement of Australasian academic staff in the scholarship of learning and teaching, fostering, encouraging and supporting collaborative initiatives; and sharing of best practice across the Australian higher education community in general. The NNI will also seek to establish collaborative relationships with other networks and like-minded groups including the state-based Promoting Excellence Networks (PEN’s) and Discipline Networks to support and enhance higher education learning and teaching in Australasia.

The NNI is underpinned by a set of principles for partner participation in the project. These NNI principles provide collaborative and enabling partners with guiding principles as they engage in the project and the wider academic community. The principles comprise:

- **Collaborative Advantage**: Partners create/co-design new value together as opposed to mere exchange through their involvement in the NNI project. In addition, partners engage with each other through their complementary assets and skills and contribute some in-kind support for the NNI.

- **Strategic Alignment & Communication**: There is alignment between the NNI vision, mission and objectives with the activities of the collaborative and enabling partners. In addition, partners share ideas in the spirit of collaboration through open, constructive, and critical dialogue in relation to higher education learning and teaching.

- **Integrity**: Partners work with each other in the spirit of mutual trust and respect which includes having a clear understanding of the management, decision-making and financial allocation of the project.

- **Sustainability**: The NNI will contribute to integrated, generative and future-focused strategies to maintain and sustain effective leadership and best practice in higher education learning and teaching.

Contact: nni@csu.edu.au