

2020 NCSEHE EQUITY FELLOW

National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education



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PROJECT INFORMATION

‘You going to uni?’: Exploring how regional people navigate into and through higher education

“The focus of my NCSEHE Equity Fellowship will be on the higher than average attrition of regional students from university.

I am interested in finding out from regional students themselves what their perspectives are on future goals and what they perceive, or have already experienced, as barriers to completing a university degree. There really is no better way to understand how to provide relevant support than listening to what regional students are experiencing and then developing support that reflects the particular nuances of their world (Newman, 2019).

This project will involve students from regional areas who are already at university as well as senior school students contemplating their futures beyond school. Perspectives from staff who support regional students in various roles will also be sought. By focusing on regional students Australia-wide, this Fellowship will build on initial findings from a 2018 NCSEHE-funded study, which indicated that coming to university for those from regional areas is rarely a simple decision, but has highly personal and complex repercussions.

Through interviews and surveys, using reflective open questioning about future goals, conceptions of selves in the future (such as, ‘me as a physio’, or ‘me *not* as labourer’ etc.), I hope to develop a deeper understanding of how motivation and decision-making reflect aspects of becoming their imagined selves. It is also important to consider barriers and enablers that may be influential in hindering or assisting efforts towards future goals. As self-reflection is key to changing outcomes, behaviours and attitudes, I will develop a reflective tool that will help elicit deeper or more meaningful self-reflection on aspects of self (now, in the future), on motivations and actions involved, and in making barriers and enablers more visible.”

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