The McCusker Centre for Citizenship at The University of Western Australia is the first of its kind in Australia.

The Centre was established in October 2015 with a generous endowment from the McCusker Charitable Foundation.

Since its award-winning internship program was launched, the Centre has forged partnerships with more than 250 not-for-profit, community and government organisations, including the public sector.

The Centre's contribution to the community reaches beyond greater metropolitan Perth to regional, national, and international communities.

**OUR VISION**
To foster caring, connected and socially-engaged citizens who actively contribute to the wellbeing of their communities.

**OUR PURPOSE**
To create and foster community-minded thinkers and leaders.

To inspire students and the UWA community, and the broader Western Australian community to become active, life-long contributors to our local, regional and global communities – and in the process, encourage and support others to do likewise.

To promote awareness about challenging social issues in our communities - and the contribution citizens can make in addressing them.
During her internship, UWA Masters of International Development student Rebecca Hicks completed a review of the City of Gosnells' libraries' programs and services for young people.

Her final research report recommended practical ways that the library could engage with and support youth – particularly those who might be at a greater risk and vulnerable in the community.

"The internship widened my professional interest in working for local government as a way to benefit the community," she said.

Library and Heritage Services Acting Manager Maxine Ahrens, who supervised Rebecca, said she highlighted gaps in current service provision, identified the service young people wanted to receive and suggested a range of new services.

"The McCusker Centre for Citizenship made it easy to engage an intern and the quality of intern provided was excellent and a great match for our organisation."

REBECCA HICKS
City of Gosnells

"This experience has made me more passionate about diversionary strategies for youth justice and in particular early intervention and prevention."

RANDI BECK
City of Gosnells

Student intern Randi Beck continued the next stage of Rebecca Hicks’ project. The UWA Law and Society Major completed a research report on programs and services that the Thornlie Library could implement to connect and engage more effectively with young people in the local community.

Randi suggested changes that could be made at the library including new programs and activities that could be introduced to attract young people to visit the library and have a positive experience.

“I hope that my report leads to a positive change to tackle this issue and that recognises the factors that lead to antisocial behaviour.”

Youth Librarian and intern supervisor Leanne Fitzgerald said Randi’s report would be used to make budget requests to improve the library’s facilities and services.

“Randi’s research into youth behaviour will help staff and visitors better understand the teens who visit our libraries. We hope this will lead to better sharing of the community space,” Ms Fitzgerald said.
Regional Early Education and Development (REED) works closely with local councils, shires and community organisations to ensure the best quality early childhood education and care services are provided for Wheatbelt children, families and communities.

MADELENE BOOTH  
Regional Early Education and Development

Madelene Booth completed a number of research projects and grant applications for the Wheatbelt region during her internship.

The UWA Biomedical Science student researched the Child Care Subsidy and prepared a document outlining the barriers that Indigenous and farming families faced in applying for the subsidy through Centrelink.

Madelene researched and drafted a grant application for a mobile service to assist Wheatbelt families with their Centrelink applications. She also drafted an arts grant application, with the idea of commissioning Indigenous artists to paint murals and lead art classes at five community centres throughout the Wheatbelt region.

Madelene then contacted agricultural suppliers to request they donate farm machinery toys to the centres.

“When you can see the impact you can make, it opens your eyes that you are actually very important to society and you can make a real change,” she said.

“Madelene identified challenges and barriers Aboriginal and rural families encounter in accessing government systems and her solutions have potential to contribute to real change.”

REED General Manager Kylie Helgesen

FRANKLIN POWERS  
Shire of Gingin

At the Shire of Gingin, intern Franklin Powers wrote a research report that identified new business management models for local community group and club facilities.

The UWA Bachelor of Commerce student researched three local organisations as case studies to complete the report.

Shire of Gingin Community Development & Services Coordinator Jodie Mortadza said the report provided examples of business management models that may support the organisations’ “sustainability in the current economic environment”.

“As a very small shire with significant resourcing constraints and lots of areas of need, this internship has meant that we have been able to undertake a project that we knew was important but did not have the capacity to complete,” Ms Mortadza said.

The report may be of interest to other WA local governments and their community organisations.
UWA Bachelor of Commerce student Joel Offeroins worked alongside the Marketing and Communications Officer at Local Government Professionals WA to strengthen the experience of its members.

Joel undertook a review of the existing website and identified key gaps and changes required.

He also worked on enhancing its social media platforms to ensure members received up-to-date information.

“As a small not-for-profit organisation, the work that Joel did meant that we are able to proactively look at better ways to service our members who are all hardworking professionals servicing their communities in their local governments,” Local Government Professionals CEO Candy Choo said.

Jasmine wrote a series of reports that documented the City of Stirling’s current community engagement services and outlined best-practice models to improve refugee employment opportunities.

"The most rewarding aspect of my internship was to be contributing directly to society, and seeing the effects in action."

“Jasmine set a high precedent with her professional but flexible attitude, hard work and very high skill in performing many various tasks,” Welcome Hubs Project Lead Samira Husic said.

Internships are offered four times a year; summer and winter as an intensive, and in semesters 1 and 2. Please contact our Internships Team to discuss.

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