

FastTracking the Future Education Program

Educating about local change and the North West Rail Link

Large infrastructure projects planned around transport and urban growth initiate long-term change for the local communities in which they occur. Schools can provide a direct avenue for learning about local change but there are few instances where schools and government agencies have worked together to broker education programs that explore the change dynamic.

Working in partnership with schools and teachers North West Rail Link has developed an innovative education program aimed at exploring the change dynamic, and what it will mean for schools and communities as a new rapid transit system rolls out across Sydney's North West region.

FastTracking the Future is a curriculum resource for primary and secondary teachers. It is based on authentic learning, an instructional approach that allows students to explore, discuss, and meaningfully construct concepts and relationships in contexts that involve real-world problems and projects that are relevant to the learner. It provides teachers with classroom-ready materials to explore commonly asked questions surrounding the North West Rail Link project and its legacy for local communities including: Why is a new rail network necessary for the North West? What has been involved in the planning, and now current construction of the North West Rail Link? What benefits flow from this infrastructure change?

In response to these questions, *FastTracking the Future* surveys the unique historical and geographical identity of the North West as a major urban growth area, examines the reasoning behind the design and construction of the rail line and investigates how this project will transform the region.

The resource consists of printed and online publications of primary and secondary teaching and learning books comprising unit and lesson plans, source materials and worksheets. Books and lessons can be downloaded in PDF format. All units and lessons are linked to Board of Studies NSW Australian Curriculum-based syllabuses in terms of subject area and learning across the curriculum content.

Teachers can access all of the resources from the education section of www.northwestrail.com.au or <http://nwrail.transport.nsw.gov.au/Education>.



For Geography teachers

FastTracking the Future provides lessons and resources for primary HSIE and secondary Geography teachers. The primary materials are structured around core concepts underpinning the HSIE K-6 Syllabus and address issues related to the environment and sustainability. The secondary materials address key topics covered at Stages 4 and 5 concerning community development and change. Both the primary and secondary lessons offer students the opportunity to explore features of planned change in their local area while developing an understanding of what the North West Rail Link will mean for the people and communities of Sydney's North West region. Lessons focus on building geographical literacy skills, engage students with a wide range of sources and scaffold enquiry-based approaches to teaching and learning.

Teachers can access all of the resources from the education section of www.northwestrail.com.au (www.nwrail.transport.nsw.gov.au/Education).

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Get your school involved

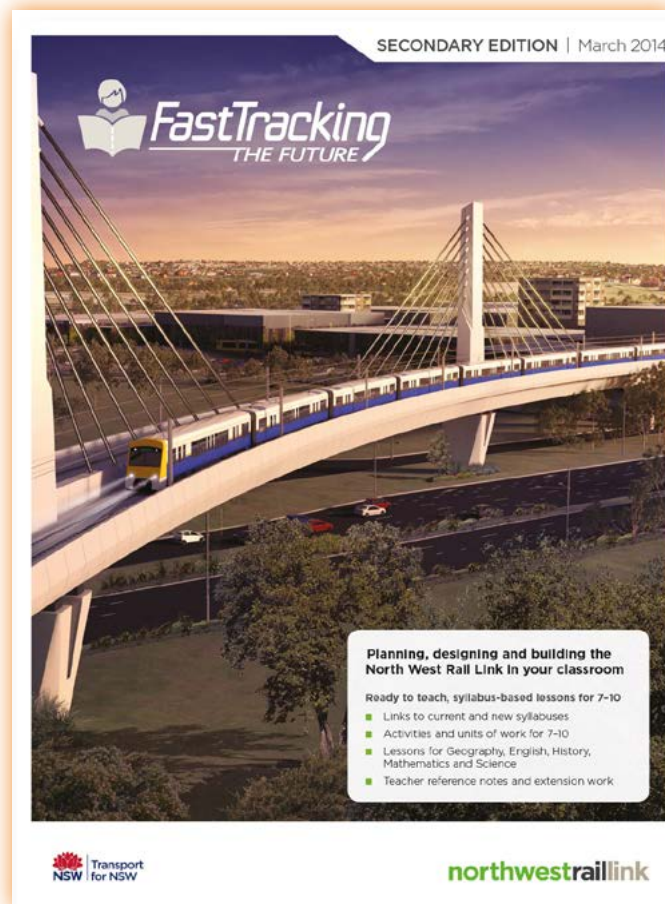
There are a number of ways your school can become involved and participate in *FastTracking the Future* activities.

The Lighthouse Schools Program

The Lighthouse Schools Program is open to schools in Sydney's North West interested in implementing the *FastTracking the Future* resources. It will allow schools to trial the program with support from the North West Rail Link. The aim of the Lighthouse Schools Program is to determine how these resources can be integrated effectively into the school curriculum and identify best practise teaching and learning resources.

Teacher professional development days

It is intended that implementation ideas and approaches gathered from the Lighthouse Schools program will be shared at primary and secondary regional workshops scheduled for Term 4, 2014.



Excursions and incursions

Members of the North West Rail Link project team are available to talk to students at your school about various aspects of the project. We have technical or general speakers who can come and talk to your students about key aspects of the project. We also assist with excursions focusing on the project.

If you are interested in involving your school in any of these activities you can email us at – education@northwesterail.com.au.

