

International Gold Event IGE 2017 Report

By: Nathan Alterator NSW



It was an incredible honour to be selected as one of three delegates representing Australia at the 2017 IGE event in Prague, Czech Republic. I had heard amazing stories about these events in the past, so to be included in an incredible conglomeration of young people from all corners of the globe was a truly humbling experience. Despite the diverse backgrounds and stories of the people that I met, it was amazing to have something in common with everyone: a desire to provide opportunities and unique experiences to young people.



From left Matthew Burfield IGE2014 representative and International Council Elective 2014-2017, IGE 2017 Australian representatives Nathan Alterator, Hannah Jago and Ben Nedwich

The event itself was an intense experience, a jam-packed program of team building, field visits, presentation preparation and other activities which culminated in the IGE forum. Each group had the opportunity to present their ideas on social change and inclusion to a panel of industry leaders from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as HRH Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex.



Field Visits

Our group travelled north from Prague towards the German border, to a small city called Usti nad Labem. This town has a large Roma population, a group that is on the margins of Czech society. Working at the local community centre, we saw first-hand the community work undertaken by a team of committed volunteers, designed to increase the opportunities and self-confidence of young men and women. We found ourselves preparing for a Halloween party, playing football and working alongside the younger children to create crafts.

The Shark Tank

Upon our return to Prague, our group (made up of delegates from Australia, South Korea, South Africa, Seychelles, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Republic of Ireland and the Czech Republic) spent two days preparing our presentation to the 'Shark Tank', considering how the implementation of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award could lead to improved outcomes for these people. As well as equipping them with new skills, it could help improve community engagement and provide opportunities for the young people to leave their city for an Adventurous Journey. The forum was nerve-racking but a valuable experience nonetheless.

A Common Goal

With such a jam-packed program, the IGE Closing Ceremony was upon us before we knew it, but the memories are something that will stick with me forever. As well as experiencing a new culture, the opportunity to work alongside such a diverse range of people with a common goal is something that is unique. It also demonstrated that the Duke of Edinburgh's Award has so much to offer all young people, regardless of their background and perceived or real limitations.



I would like to thank everyone at the Australian Duke of Edinburgh office for the opportunity to attend this event, and I hope that the acquired skills will be able to benefit others for many years to come. The Award is in a very healthy state worldwide, which includes our very own Asia-Pacific region.



IGE2017 Prague: October 25- October 30, 2017