

MEDIA RELEASE

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Social Inclusion Research: Extending Opportunity

Innovative Research Universities (IRU) Australia has just released a new national resource publication, *Extending Opportunity: Social inclusion research informing policy and practice*, featuring the universities network's key specialist research centres and programs undertaking research across a diversity of social inclusion issues.

"Despite Australia's high ranking on the United Nations Human Development Index, which measures education, life expectancy and standard of living, the evidence indicates that many Australians and communities are locked into a cycle of social and economic disadvantage – a cycle preventing them from accessing the full range of opportunities and outcomes enjoyed by the majority in our society," IRU Australia Chair, Professor John Yovich said today.

"To achieve prosperity for all Australians, sustain future economic growth and achieve a high standard of social harmony and wellbeing, we need to develop effective interventions and evidence-based solutions for responding to the diversity of factors associated with all forms of disadvantage.

"Since their establishment in the 1960s and 70s, the member universities of IRU Australia – James Cook, Griffith, Newcastle, La Trobe, Flinders and Murdoch – have delivered high standards of academic research focusing on informing policy and practice in community settings, government, industry and business.

"This includes a strong track record in undertaking social inclusion research in partnership with stakeholders," Professor Yovich said.

"IRU Australia produced *Extending Opportunity* as a resource for government, community agencies, peak bodies and industry and business to assist them in locating and accessing social inclusion research capability within our member universities.

"We're committed to applying our research expertise to ensure that Australia's high performance in the UN Human Development rankings has relevance and meaning for all Australians," Professor Yovich said.

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The *Extending Opportunity* publication is available in PDF format at:

http://www.irua.edu.au/group_act.html.