

## IRU STATEMENT 01/2015

### Support reform bill, now without funding cut

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) call on the Senate to pass the *Higher Education and Research Reform Bill 2014* following the Government's decision to focus on the important reforms to university funding and student charges it has proposed, without the initial upfront reduction in Government funding.

We need the new approach the Bill offers.

At heart, the role of universities is to educate and to develop knowledge. To do this well universities need more resources.

Numerous reviews have shown the gap now between the resources required and the income from Government and students. Governments of both sides have made clear they will not commit the additional funds needed.

The Government has rightly listened to the argument against the base funding cut, leaving it to be considered subsequently. IRU opposes the cut and will continue to do so.

The Government's package will significantly change how universities are resourced but not alter their commitment to education, which has lasted many decades under many different funding systems. More significant is that, since 2012, universities are open to all who wish to attend who have the required learning. All students, wherever they live, will have HELP to cover the fee they agree to, which they will repay based on their future income.

The Government has also removed for a further year the threat to major research facilities. The challenge remains, as it has since 2012, to commit to an ongoing program for national research infrastructure to ensure we both can use the resources developed to date and can develop those needed in the future.

**END**

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