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IRU – Innovation in Action Series 3/4

Innovative Research Universities (IRU) recommends an additional assessment to provide an effective measure of the value of research for end users to support the new innovation agenda. The new measure would complement the existing Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) to create a comprehensive Australian research assessment measure.

The incentives for individual researchers are critical to stimulating a change in the balance of researcher focus. A significant factor holding back universities' capacity to extend research activity to improve support for industry driven research is the emphasis on income from national competitive grants, publication output and citations and the way in which they underpin the ERA and most international ranking systems.

ERA's reinforcement of traditional assessments of standing has been major. To balance its impact a parallel exercise focused on a considered assessment of the real impact of a university's research will help change the importance given by universities to collaboration with industry. We need to not contrast "research excellence" with "industry engagement". We should measure the excellence of industry driven research to go in parallel with the excellence of fundamental research.

The IRU proposal [Measuring Research Value for End Users](#) (download [here](#)), published July 2015, has three main elements:

- Panel based judgements of the value of university research in support of external users
- Judgements based on data sets agreed to be of relevance
- Use of the ARC's resources supporting ERA for a rolling cycle of both exercises.

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) revamped Research Engagement Assessment acknowledges the value for expert panels to assess the data from its indicators, a significant step ahead to bring the two concepts into greater alignment.

Examples of IRU Innovation in Action:

Orthopaedic Surgery Device – Flinders University – Austofix

The Ezy-Aim Electronic Digital Targeting System developed by Adelaide-based orthopaedic company, Austofix and Flinders University's Medical Device Partnering Program (MDPP), provides surgeons with an effective device to assist them during the insertion of nails and screws when fixing bone fractures, removing the need for multiple x-rays when fixing bone fractures. The device acts as a pair of eyes, allowing the surgeon to accurately judge the location of the implant inside the bone. The system was completed after Austofix approached the MDPP to evaluate one of its proof of concept prototypes. Austofix received State Government funding through the Medical Device Commercialisation Program to further develop the prototype. The MDPP supported Austofix to develop the new targeting device, which has improved the surgical fixation technique for orthopaedic surgeons in Australia and world-wide.

Franchise Ready - Griffith University – Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

Since 2007 Griffith University's Asia-Pacific Centre for Franchising Excellence (APCFE) has worked with a number of agencies including the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and the Commonwealth Treasury to research and provide regular reports to industry. The centre drives the

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franchise sector best practice through practical, independent research and education. APCFE's has made a huge contribution to the professional development to franchisors and franchisees through programs such as 'Buying a Franchise' course. More than 7000 people have taken the course since its inception.

END

For comment contact

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