



Media Statement

22 May 2022

IRU ready for constructive collaboration with new Labor government

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) congratulates Labor on the election result and looks forward to close and constructive engagement with the new government.

Our universities stand ready to support the next phase of Australia's economic and social development post-COVID – through higher education that supports the potential of all students and trains the workforce of the future, innovative research that delivers impact for our communities, and strategic partnerships with key countries in our region.

The IRU welcomes Labor's commitment to additional university places and the focus on creating opportunity for disadvantaged students. We believe that there is unfinished business in addressing equity in higher education and that expanding access will help the nation in addressing its critical skills needs. Already 50% of our students are the first in their family to attend university. We are committed to engaging constructively with the review of the Job Ready Graduates package to ensure a fair and sustainable system into the future.

Labor's Australian Universities Accord will support coherent long-term policy for higher education and research and we look forward to being involved. The Accord process also provides an important opportunity to review regulatory duplication in existing policy settings, to free up as much room as possible for innovation with new models of education.

Since their founding, IRU universities have had a strong commitment to building engagement with, and understanding of, the Indo-Pacific region. The IRU also looks forward to working closely with the new government to realise the opportunities of stronger partnerships through education and research with key countries in our region, including Pacific Island Nations, India and Japan.

Quotes attributable:

Professor Carolyn Evans, Chair

"We are excited about the opportunities to work in partnership with the new government on the next phase of Australia's post-COVID recovery.

"Our universities play a vital role in expanding the number of high-skilled graduates to meet future workforce needs, in applying research for industry and community benefit, and in strengthening strategic partnerships in our region."

iru.edu.au

Mr Paul Harris, Executive Director

“The IRU has a strong commitment to research translation, including commercialisation, that delivers impact for the community. Our collaboration with industry has grown by more than 260% over the last decade.

“We welcome Labor’s commitment to a new National Reconstruction Fund that will support industry innovation in key sectors including advanced manufacturing, renewable energy and defence. In cities right across Australia, IRU universities are driving Australian innovation.”

About the IRU

The IRU is a network of eight comprehensive universities across Australia committed to inclusive education and research with impact that advances our communities. Its members are Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Griffith University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University, University of Canberra, and Western Sydney University.

IRU contact

Bethany Keats, Marketing and Media Advisor

M 0481 092 635 **E** bethany.keats@iru.edu.au