

Media Statement

28 September 2022

IRU welcomes review of national science and research priorities

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) welcomes the announcement by the Minister for Industry and Science, the Hon Ed Husic MP, of a review of national science and research priorities.

We look forward to working closely with Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Cathy Foley, on the review and believe this will set Australia up for a more innovative future.

Across the country, the universities in the IRU combine cutting-edge science and research with a commitment to equity and inclusion. This is the combination that is needed to maximise Australia's innovative capacity and economic dynamism, and to ensure that research contributes to a more equitable, cohesive, sustainable and healthy society.

We welcome the initial focus on First Nations knowledge, climate change and emerging critical technologies, and the opportunity to consider the contribution of science and research to the goals of the government's National Reconstruction Fund.

IRU Executive Director Paul Harris said that universities play a critical role in the nation's research and innovation system:

"From their founding, the universities in the IRU have developed innovative, multi-disciplinary approaches in key areas of national priority and need, such as environmental sustainability and engagement with the Asia-Pacific. We look forward to bringing this experience to bear in the renewal of national science and research priorities for the years ahead."

"By bringing together all research disciplines – including the sciences and humanities – and by including as many people as possible, we can maximise our capacity to innovate. This is what will drive future economic and social prosperity."

The IRU also welcomes the Review's focus on international partners and perspectives, and on alignment with other government processes such as the review of the Australian Research Council and the Universities Accord. Taken together, these processes provide an important opportunity for policies and priorities that will set Australia up for the decades ahead.

The IRU is committed to constructive engagement with government and we look forward to being involved in these processes.

About the IRU

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

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