



Media release

9 May 2023

IRU response to the 2023-24 Federal Budget

Supporting students with an eye to the future

As work continues towards a new Australian Universities Accord, the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) welcomes the government's commitment through the Budget to cost of living assistance and investment in the future.

The major review of the higher education system currently underway provides a critical opportunity to set the foundations for the decades ahead through the Universities Accord. Reform to deliver a more equitable and innovative university system will drive productivity and inclusive growth for all Australians into the future.

IRU Chair Professor Paddy Nixon (Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Canberra) said that supporting student success must remain a focus.

"The commitment in the Budget to provide cost of living support to students through increases to Austudy, Abstudy and Youth Allowance is an important and welcome step. Increased student income support is essential to continue to expand access and equity in our higher education system."

As the review panel works through its recommendations for the Accord over the coming months, students and universities will need certainty and stability to plan for the 2024 academic year. With existing government funding reaching an important deadline at the end of 2023, interim measures should be put in place for 2024 while the Accord recommendations are finalised and incorporated into the process for the 2024-25 Budget.

IRU Executive Director Paul Harris said that this Budget highlights the vital role of universities in delivering on major national priorities in areas such as defence, nursing, early childhood education and clean energy.

"The universities in the IRU will continue to work closely with government to strengthen key Australian capabilities and our place in the world. In particular, we welcome the funding in the Budget for deepening engagement with the Pacific, as this is a priority in our *IRU Strategy 2022-27*."

--END--

iru.edu.au



IRU contact

Paul Harris, Executive Director

M 0497 439 867 E paul.harris@iru.edu.au

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.