



## Media statement

1 December 2023

### IRU welcomes changes to Australian Research Council Act

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) welcomes the introduction of legislation by Minister Jason Clare to strengthen the governance and mission of the Australian Research Council (ARC). The ARC has a vital and unique role in Australia's innovation system, as the only agency supporting basic and applied research across all fields.

IRU Executive Director Paul Harris thanked the members of the Independent ARC Review Panel and the government for agreeing to all ten recommendations from the Review.

"These reforms to the ARC Act will strengthen its ability to support university research that delivers the broadest benefits to the Australian community and economy," he said.

"The legislation introduced to Parliament adopts many of the recommendations made by the IRU in our [submission to the ARC Review](#), including clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Minister, Board and CEO; codifying the central role of peer review in identifying excellent research; and limiting Ministerial veto of research projects to specific areas of national security concern, with appropriate transparency and reporting to Parliament.

"These changes will increase the quality and integrity of Australian research, and set the ARC up for even greater success in the future."

Other IRU recommendations adopted in the revised legislation include increasing the prominence of Indigenous-led research and clarifying the key roles of the ARC in the Act, including its national role in evaluating research quality and impact.

The revised legislation clearly states that ARC-funded research in universities delivers broad economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for Australia. The IRU will continue working with the ARC and government – through the Universities Accord process – to improve the ways in which academics are supported to maximise the impact of their research.

### 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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