

## Media Statement

4 May 2025

# Innovative Research Universities ready to work with returned Albanese government to put students first

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) congratulates the Albanese government on its re-election and welcomes the opportunity to work constructively on higher education reform for a more equitable and innovative Australia.

The IRU strongly supports the vision of the Australian Universities Accord for increased tertiary participation to meet the nation's future skills needs, with a focus on students from under-represented backgrounds. Right across the country, our universities are focused on opening up access to higher education and ensuring student success.

We welcome the Albanese government's increased investment in public education through the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement, and the commitment to a new funding model for universities that incorporates Needs-Based Funding. Along with other Accord reforms, this will be critical for improving equity and participation.

We support a more managed and balanced tertiary education system and will engage constructively with the new Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC). An urgent priority for ATEC must be reform of the Job-Ready Graduates (JRG) policy, which shifted more of the cost of higher education onto students. The IRU has prepared [evidence-based modelling of options for JRG reform](#) and we are ready to work with government to make sure that the cost of higher education is not turning students away. We are also ready to work with government and the ATEC on simpler pathways for students through the tertiary education and training systems, in partnership with TAFE and the VET sector.

An immediate priority must be collaborative work between government and universities on the finalisation of the strategic framework for international education. We welcome the government's commitment to sustainable growth in international education, and a more balanced and diversified system that prioritises the experience and wellbeing of our students.

We also look forward to continuing our involvement with the Strategic Examination of Research and Development (SERD) process, to make sure that university research across the country is delivering impact for all our communities, and driving future innovation and productivity for Australia.

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[iru.edu.au](http://iru.edu.au)



## About the IRU

The IRU is a network of seven 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.

## IRU contact

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