



Office of the Hon Dan Tehan MP
Minister for Education

Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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Our Ref: MC18-006596

30 JAN 2019

Professor Sue Berners-Price
Convenor
Australian Council of Graduate Research Inc
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Dear Professor Berners-Price

Thank you for your letter of 19 December 2018 to the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Education, regarding the recent research funding announcement as part of the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Firstly, I thank the Australian Council of Graduate Research for the collaborative work in implementing recommendations and actions under the Research Training Implementation Plan. Like you, the Minister is strongly committed to ensuring we have an education system that allows all Australians to thrive and succeed.

It is important to note that the Australian Government is not cutting research block grant funding. The university sector will not receive a dollar less in 2019 than they received in 2018. From 2020 both the Research Training Program (RTP) and Research Support Program (RSP) will both increase in line with indexation.

Under current research block grant arrangements, there is a great degree of flexibility provided through the RTP and the RSP in terms of how higher education providers are allowed to expend allocated funds.

The Government strongly supports research in Australia. In 2018–19, the Government will provide around \$9.6 billion for research and development across all Government portfolios. Over the next four years, the Government will invest around \$12 billion through the Education and Training portfolio, including around \$8 billion in research and research training through research block grants and a further \$3 billion in funding provided through the Australian Research Council.

The Government is committed to a viable and world-class research sector on the global stage in the long-term through sustainable research funding. As part of this, the Government has allocated over \$4 billion to 2028–29 through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy Program. This will help ensure that researchers have access to world-class equipment and tools to meet current and emerging priorities. This includes an additional \$1.9 billion announced in the 2018–19 Budget in response to the recommendations and priorities outlines in the 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to the Minister's attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Connoles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

PHIL CONNOLES
Chief of Staff