# Press Release – Investment in Research Training Critical for National Prosperity

The Australian Council of Graduate Research endorses Universities Australia’s call for immediate action to preserve Australia’s research assets.

In this context our nation’s greatest research assets are our researchers themselves, not just in universities but across business, government and the third sector. A strong and active research workforce drives innovation and as The Rapid Research Information Forum warned earlier this year any decline in innovation may limit economic growth by slowing the development of new technology, skills, and efficiency gains in service and production processes.

ACGR is particularly concerned about the future prospects for current graduate research students and early career (postdoctoral) researchers.

 As UA’s Chief Executive Catriona Jackson says:

“The loss of junior researchers from the workforce means that the pipeline of research talent is threatened. Every researcher lost to the system is one person fewer working on Australia’s most important problems and represents the loss of years of human and intellectual capital,”

Professor Alastair McEwan, Convenor of ACGR observes that changes to graduate research education that have occurred over the last five years have laid the groundwork for transforming Australia’s research-industry nexus. Australia’s graduate research training programs are recognised internationally for their quality, outcomes and cost effectiveness but without continued funding there is a risk to this research workforce pipeline. Along with competing pressures on government funding within institutions, loss of international fee income is also reducing support currently available for graduate research training and support for early career researchers.

Aligned with the recommendations from UA, ACGR urges the Treasurer to ensure that the Australian Government continues to provide dedicated funding for research training programs and takes steps to drive increased investment in early career researchers as an essential pillar that underpins national prosperity, competitiveness and security.

22 September 2020

For further information: Fiona Zammit, Executive Officer, ACGR exec@acgr.edu.au Ph 0418995578