

11 January 2024

**Re: Australian Research Council Amendment (Review Response) Bill 2023**

Dear Mr McNally,

Australian Catholic University (ACU) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the draft [Australian Research Council Amendment \(Review Response\) Bill 2023](#).

ACU supports the proposed amendments to the ARC Act to establish an independent ARC Board, with the explicit proviso that the Board include diverse representation of the sector. This proviso would ensure that the revised objects of the ARC Act do in fact 'shape and foster the Australian research landscape and community' by enabling a stronger focus on impact and purpose.

As a mission-based, multi-site university, ACU has long advocated for the role of smaller and regional universities. A reshaped ARC Board, if it is to be truly independent, must reflect the diverse needs and interests of the sector to be able to administer funding that will result in economic, social and community outcomes for Australia in collaboration with government and industry partners. ACU's original [submission](#) to the ARC Review called for '*a greater congruence – a substantial joined-up thinking across all areas of government – to influence research translation in universities. This would avoid disparate requirements emerging from various government agencies downstream of fundamental, basic research.*'

The ARC Act should also make explicit the requirement for the Board to appoint members to the College of Experts and other committees consistent with this principle of sector diversity. If this principle is not enshrined in legislation, there is a risk that smaller and regional institutions will be underrepresented in Australia's research landscape and recognition of their impacts on local communities diminished.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Abid Khan  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise