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The Australian Physiological Society (AuPS) joins other scientific organisations, current and past ARC Laureate Fellows, as well as the ARC's own panel of assessors, the College of Experts, in voicing concerns over the political intervention by the acting Minister to veto grants on the grounds that they "do not demonstrate value for taxpayers' money nor contribute to the national interest".

AuPS supports the statements of notable Australians, including Nobel Laureate Professor Brian Schmidt and ANU Chancellor and former Education Minister The Honourable Julie Bishop that "our country needs an apolitical system to allocate research funding and a review of the Australian Research Council."

AuPS endorses the ARC College of Experts in urging the government adopt standards in line with the Haldane Principle, which holds that, while governments need to establish funding guidelines, decisions on individual research proposals are best made through independent peer review, and government ministers should not decide which individual projects should be funded.

AuPS supports the ARC College of Experts in their call to:

1. legislate amendments to the Australian Research Council Act 2001 that will ensure the independence of the ARC and prevent political interference in research grants; and
2. maintain the rigour and integrity of the ARC's grant assessment process by (i) ending the Minister's use of the National Interest Test to make unilateral decisions on individual projects outside of the peer review process, and; (ii) continuing to require senior research expertise of all members admitted to the ARC College of Experts.

Sincerely

Prof Robyn Murphy (President)

and Prof Glenn Wadley (National Secretary)

on behalf of the Australian Physiological Society.