

Response to Question on Notice

As at 6 March 2025, UNSW has 7349 individual researchers – 3030 teaching and research or research only academic staff and 4319 Higher Degree Research students.

Of these, a significant majority of academic staff are supported from UNSW operating funds. Most UNSW HDR students are supported via funds allocated through the Research Training Scheme or from UNSW operating funds. Approximately 3% of HDR students are supported by industry partners.

Research at UNSW is funded in a variety of ways. UNSW receives direct funding for specific research grants and contracts, which sits upon a broader university investment in staff, infrastructure and support services.

Since 2015, direct funding to UNSW research grants and contracts have been provided from the following sources:

Source	Non Defence related	Defence related
Government (Federal, State and Local)	68.96%	31.58%
Industry	6.41%	18.09%
International Government	1.80%	23.37%
Not for profit	1.04%	0.47%
Philanthropy	0.68%	0.00%
University	17.77%	16.07%
International not for profit	1.71%	0.39%
International Industry	1.48%	10.04%
International Philanthropy (n.b. this excludes philanthropic donations)	0.16%	0.00%

Approximately 3.5% of UNSW funding over this period can be identified as Defence related research.

The university contributions identified above are associated with direct financial contributions to specific research grants and contracts, and do not incorporate the indirect costs associated with the infrastructure and operational functions required to undertake this research (which includes functions such as HR, Accounting, Research Ethics and Compliance activities, etc).

Mr ZAPPIA: I think you mentioned you had 7,600 researchers working. Mr Neely: Approximately. Mr ZAPPIA: Approximately. What proportion of the funding for those researchers comes from industry—or is it all paid for by the university? Mr Neely: Those researchers are a mix of people like me who are salaried, continuing employees—we are dual use because of course we spend

a lot of our time teaching and too much of our time doing admin—and a significant proportion of those researchers who are contract researchers. Where does that money come from? It comes from government programs like, for example, the Australian Research Council, AEA and others, and through programs like CRCs and the Trailblazers— Mr ZAPPIA: I'm aware there's a whole range of programs— Mr Neely: Well, it comes from industry. Industry is co-investing in some of them. Some comes from the DOD in Australia. Significant amounts come from the DOD in the US, for example. The challenge is that, to maintain that ecosystem, we have this sort of sine wave with peaks and troughs. You build capability in a research group and in people, and you're struggling to keep them going year to year because the research funding comes and goes. That's the importance of— Mr ZAPPIA: I'm trying to work out how much industry is contributing to it. Mr Neely: Not enough. CHAIR: It's an important question from Mr Zappia. Can you take that on notice and provide to us— Mr Neely: The proportions? CHAIR: Yes, if you can. You've got till 7 March for all questions on notice.