

8 March 2022

Dear Mr Raine,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Committee Secretary for the Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee and with regards to the Australian Research Council Amendment (Ensuring Research Independence) Bill 2018 – specifically the public hearing scheduled for 9 March 2022.

As the national voice for the humanities in Australia, the Academy has been actively engaged on the issue of independence of the ARC grants process. This has involved issuing several public statements, including a joint statement with the other Learned Academies in Australia, and a submission to this current Inquiry.

This has been a key priority for the Academy because all six projects vetoed by the Acting Minister for Education and Youth, the Hon. Stuart Robert MP, in December 2021 were in the humanities disciplines.

We were therefore disappointed not to receive an invitation to appear before the Committee, alongside the other Learned Academies who made submissions, having expressly noted our willingness in doing so. We appreciate that there were many organisations and individuals who made submissions to the Inquiry, but given our particular role and mandate, and in light of the disciplinary profile of the projects subject to veto, we would welcome a chance to understand the process that was adopted for selecting witnesses.

We once again offer our assistance to the Committee as they consider the issues raised by the introduction of this Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Emeritus Professor Lesley Head
President

cc. Senator the Hon Kim Carr