

11 DEC 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PETITIONS

Senator Chris Evans
Leader of the Government in the Senate
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research

The Hon John Murphy MP
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Murphy *John*

Thank you for your letter of 31 October 2012 concerning the petition requesting that science and research funding be maintained.

The Gillard Government believes that science and research is central to an innovative and smart Australia which is why the government has maintained record investment in science.

Despite difficult fiscal conditions, the Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) report reaffirmed the government's commitment to support high quality research by ensuring no change to the \$880 million allocated to the Australian Research Council (ARC) or the \$771 million National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grants funding. I am also pleased to confirm that Cooperative Research Centres grants will be allocated in full in 2012.

In the university sector alone the government has invested more than \$43.2 billion in core university funding from 2008-2011. This is a 50 per cent increase on the previous four years under the Howard Government. In the four years from 2012-2015 we will invest a further \$58.9 billion in universities.

Science and research has also benefited from historically high levels of government funding. The Gillard Government have invested almost \$9 billion in science, research and innovation in 2012-13, an increase of 35 per cent since 2007.

These investments will provide funding for new research training opportunities, help researchers pursue their careers in Australia, and ensure that vital collaboration between researchers and industry partners can proceed. The Gillard Government's continued investment in the best and brightest researchers will help ensure that Australia remains at the forefront of science and research.

On 19 October 2012 the Minister for Health, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, announced \$652 million in funding for 1,141 new NHMRC grants for ground-breaking medical research across Australia.

On 22 October 2012, the ARC announced the opening of Linkage Projects proposals for funding commencing in 2013. On 5 November 2012, I announced almost \$360 million in funding for new research projects under the ARC's National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP). The research projects will begin in 2013. In addition, I announced \$3.2 million in funding to Queensland University of Technology as the lead organisation for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researchers' Network funded for four years under the NCGP Special Research Initiatives scheme.

I trust the information provided is helpful.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS EVANS

3.12.12