



Pathways to technological innovation

Report tabled today

Improving linkages and collaborations between the public and private sectors, fostering a more entrepreneurial culture in Australia, and better publicising the range of innovation assistance available are some of the issues addressed in a House of Representatives report tabled in Parliament today by the Standing Committee on Science and Innovation.

In tabling its report, the Chair Petro Georgiou MP said: “the Inquiry found that many successful innovators experienced a smooth pathway to developing their product and finding markets”.

“This is as it should be given the magnitude of investment in innovation and commercialisation the Australian Government has delivered in recent years,” Mr Georgiou said.

“However, while many pathways to innovation are well developed and relatively smooth, some pathways are less well formed and can be improved. The Committee has focussed on the consensus issues from those seeking to innovate in Australia.”

Australia performs relatively well internationally across a number of key innovation indicators, with a highly skilled workforce and a large number of foreign affiliates in manufacturing R&D. However Australia falls below the OECD average in our business expenditure on R&D and levels of patenting in the United States.

In recent years the Australian Government has made a substantial investment in supporting innovation through its *Backing Australia's Ability* programs.

“The Committee considers that, although there are many good programs in place and many good news stories about innovation in Australia, there remains room for improvement,” Mr Georgiou said.

“This report tackles impediments and gaps about which concerns were raised in evidence to the Inquiry, and considers how we can enhance the current system and deliver better outcomes for Australia.”

The Report's recommendations highlight a number of concerns for the Government's consideration, such as:

- Promotion of the Government assistance that is available to businesses;
- Better fostering a culture of entrepreneurship in Australia;
- Providing a scheme of matched Government - university funding to support projects at the proof of concept stage; and
- Investigating mechanisms to direct more Government procurement to technological innovation from Small & Medium Enterprises.

The inquiry into Pathways to Technological Innovation received more than 100 submissions and public hearings were held around Australia, in addition to a number of site visits to businesses and research institutes.

Copies of the report can be obtained at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/scin/pathways/> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4150 or emailing scin.reps@aph.gov.au

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