

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017**

**Outcome: Higher Education Research and International**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-001045**

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing

***Copenhagen Consensus Center - research funding***

**Question**

For research funding,

- a. Who were the principal researchers listed on the grant?
- b. What scholarly processes were in place to ensure the work would be of an appropriate standard?
- c. What were the research project's declared objectives and outputs?
- d. Was expert advice sought to inform the decision to award this research grant? If so, from whom?
- e. Was expert advice obtained to inform the decision to award this research grant? If so, from whom?
- f. Please provide all documentation relating to the funding of this research, including any expert advice.
- g. If the project has concluded, please provide all acquittal documentation.
  - (i) When did the project conclude?
  - (ii) Did the project meet its objectives?
  - (iii) Who made this assessment?
- h. If the project is still underway, when is it projected to conclude?

**Answer**

- a) There were no specified personnel listed on the grant. Rather, the project aimed to bring together the contribution of a large number of experts and key economists. A detailed list of research contributors and expert panel members can be found on the Smarter UN Post-2015 Development Goals project website (Refer: [www.copenhagenconsensus.com/post-2015-consensus/participants](http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/post-2015-consensus/participants)).
- b) The project involved economists writing academic research papers (assessment papers) that recommend, based on cost-benefit analysis, the best targets as well as identifying some of the poorer suggestions within their thematic area. Each assessment paper was subject to peer review. An Expert Panel, including two Nobel Laureates, then reviewed the research outcomes, together with the views provided by United Nations agencies, non-government organisations and private sector foundations.
- c) The project's stated objectives were "to identify the key challenges facing Australia and the world to enable the Australian Government to consider potential policy reforms and other interventions that will deliver the smartest, most cost-effective solutions" in relation to global development goals, by "producing research and interacting with stakeholders using the method developed by the Copenhagen Consensus Center".
- d) It was a decision of Government to fund this initiative.
- e) See the response to d), above.
- f) To attempt to provide all relevant documentation would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

- g) A Statement of Activity, provided by the Copenhagen Consensus Center in May 2016 is attached.
  - i. 30 June 2016.
  - ii. Yes. The department is satisfied that the project contributed to international dialogue on the key challenges in relation to global development goals by supporting application of the Copenhagen Consensus Center methodology.
  - iii. The Department of Education and Training.
- h) The project period concluded on 30 June 2016.