



Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.

PO Box 48 Nedlands WA 6009

www.afgw.org.au

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The Hon Bill Shorten MP
Leader of the Opposition
PO Box 6022
Australian Parliament House
Canberra
ACT 2600

I write for the many women graduates of AFGW Inc to commend you and Senator Kim Carr on your initiative to attempt to establish a wide-reaching Senate enquiry to focus on innovation, future jobs and industries.

As you know AFGW is the national voice of graduate women working, since 1922, through initiatives in Education for the advancement and wellbeing of women and girls. AFGW aims to unite graduate women in Australia to work together and with the International Federation of University Women's network of sister graduates worldwide to:

- Promote equitable educational opportunities and lifelong learning.
- Improve the status and well being of women and girls.

I was delighted to see in your address to the Scientists in Parliament that you had personally taken responsibility for the Science portfolio. We have been concerned since the announcement of the Abbott ministry that he did not see the strategic significance for the future of Australia in creating a Ministry of Science.

We were particularly concerned when Prime Minister Abbott announced cuts to CSIRO and other science research and asked him before the National Commission of Audit to ensure that science funding was maintained. A copy of that letter is attached.

Our chief concerns have been in advocacy for education particularly for women and girls and I was pleased to see that in expanding on your plan to seek a Senate inquiry you especially singled out the importance of science teaching. Our President is currently part of the IFUW delegation to the United Nation Commission for the Status of Women and our written statement there especially stresses the need for women and girls to have access to education and employment in the STEM areas. A pamphlet we are distributing at the UN is enclosed.

We wish you well in this endeavour and look forward to news of the launch of the enquiry,

'Tricia Blombery
Convener Standing Committee for Education
for
Dr Madeleine Laming
President AFGW

ABN 93656 106 863

ARBN 135 684 990

'Tricia Blombery email stuart_tricia@bigpond.com

11 Park Rd Marrickville 2204