



**THE HON CHRISTOPHER PYNE MP
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE
LEADER OF THE HOUSE
MEMBER FOR STURT**

26 NOV 2015

Ms Tricia Blombery
Convener Standing Committee on Education
Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.
PO Box 90
NEDLANDS WA 6009

MC15-004920

Dear Ms Blombery

Thank you to the Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc. for the message of congratulations as I move into the new portfolio of Industry, Innovation and Science.

It was my honour to serve as Minister for Education and Training. Over the last two years, the Coalition has worked hard to deliver on its key commitments.

In higher education, research, and international education our achievements include:

- the development of a higher education reform package backed by all eight higher education peak bodies and all bar one Vice-Chancellor;
- policies that have helped secure an increase in over \$2 billion in Australia's earnings from international education, on which over 130,000 jobs around Australia depend;
- policies to encourage greater linkage between industry and university research, to improve the impact of Australia's large and high-quality research effort;
- ensuring funding of major research programmes, for research infrastructure and mid-career fellowships, which were left unfunded by the previous Government; and
- reducing regulation and reporting requirements in higher education, cutting red tape and including a much-needed overhaul of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency.

I am proud of the achievements we have made and look forward to the next step in my parliamentary career. I of course offer my sincere congratulations to my good friend and colleague Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham who is the new Minister for Education and Training.

As the Prime Minister has said, I will be at the centre of one of the Government's most important agendas. 'If we want to remain a prosperous, first world economy with a generous social welfare safety net, we must be more competitive, we must be more productive. Above all we must be more innovative. We have to work more agilely, more innovatively, we have to be more nimble in the way we seize the enormous opportunities that are presented to us. We're not seeking to proof ourselves against the future. We are seeking to embrace it. And this is a Government and a Ministry that has that as its focus. Christopher's department, the Ministry for Industry, Innovation and Science, will drive the Government's focus on investing in science; promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematic education; supporting start-ups and bringing together innovation initiatives right across Government'.

And that is precisely what I plan on doing: combining the sensibilities of industry with the rigour of science and the spirit of innovation. This is the only way we can successfully position Australia to be agile and innovative in our future.

I am delighted to have such a prestigious and well respected agency as the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) as part of my portfolio. Over the next four years CSIRO will receive more than \$3 billion from the Budget. CSIRO also generates external revenue by undertaking research for other Government agencies, growing partnerships with businesses, and commercial returns from research projects. CSIRO is in a very strong position and the new Chief Executive, Dr Larry Marshall has expressed his confidence the agency has the resourcing needed to pursue future scientific advances.

The Australian Government will continue to explore practical options to improve Australia's performance when it comes to STEM. As you are aware, the Government recently consulted on its *Vision for a Science Nation: Responding to STEM: Australia's Future*. The feedback from these consultations is informing the work on an innovation and science agenda, which I am pleased to be leading.

Once again, thank you very much for your kind words.

I look forward to these challenges and will work rigorously to achieve the outcomes Australia needs for its future.

Yours sincerely



Christopher Pyne MP