



INNOVATION INNO

Powering Ideas
An Innovation Agenda
for the 21st Century

Joint Research Engagement

Key Points

- This program transforms the Institutional Grants Scheme (IGS) to encourage greater collaboration between universities and the business and non-government research sectors – an area in which Australia performs extremely poorly by international standards.
- The *Joint Research Engagement* initiative involves revising the IGS funding formula to remove competitive research grant income from the calculations used to allocate this research block grant, thereby rewarding universities which diversify their sources of research income.
- This initiative is a companion reform to the *Sustainable Research Excellence in Universities* initiative and the *Collaborative Research Networks* program. Together they form a comprehensive suite of support that will enable universities to build capacity to successfully undertake the basic and industry-driven research that forms the foundation of Australia's innovation system.

Facts and Figures

- Currently the IGS supports the general fabric of higher education institutions' research and research training activities. Institutions have discretion in the way they spend their IGS grant, provided it is used to fund any activity related to research.

- The *Joint Research Engagement* funding will continue to support soft infrastructure as well as the maintenance of capital items (not capital purchases), but will change the way that the level of funding for each university is calculated.
- The current methodology for calculating the funding for each university is based on a formula that includes the amount of funding raised from competitive grants. This tends to create a focus on research that is already being funded through competitive grants, and which receives support for indirect costs through the Research Infrastructure Block Grant Scheme.
- To address this, a revised formula will be developed in consultation with the sector that removes the existing necessity for universities to rely on the receipt of funds from a competitive grants program and instead rewards them for attracting funds from other sources, including industry and community partners and public sector research agencies.
- The new formula will give greater emphasis to end-user research by encouraging and supporting collaborative research activities between universities, industry and end-users, beyond those specifically supported by competitive grants.
- Funding will be allocated on the basis of demonstrated research excellence and ability to attract funding from other sources.
- This initiative is cost neutral as it involves refocusing the existing funding available through the IGS.
- This program is expected to commence in the 2010 academic year, following consultation with the university sector on its implementation.

Senator the Hon Kim Carr
Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research