

To whom it may concern,

On the basis of our ARC funded projects over the last six years of research on socio-cultural perspectives on the knowledge economy, globalising the research imagination and research policies designed to encourage the global mobility of researchers in the social sciences and humanities we are well placed to comment on the Review currently being undertaken of Australia's National Innovation Systems. We respectfully submit the following comments below.

The term 'innovation' is ubiquitous in contemporary policy discourse. But in national innovation systems a bureaucratised type of innovation is invariably promoted. This type of innovation means that the innovation process does not necessarily begin with new ideas; rather innovation becomes a prescriptive economic and bureaucratic process governed from above and runs the risk of watering down innovation. We believe it is imperative to acknowledge the social dimensions of innovation: against national systems of innovation we strongly advocate communities of creativity.

New ideas are more likely to be generated in the sort of atmosphere described by Richard Florida (2002; 2005). He talks about creating spaces for creativity within universities according to the '3T's': technology, talent and tolerance. The question is: how does Government policy produce the sorts of circumstances that Florida advocates? It requires mobilising the research imagination. This entails creating a research imagination that:

- questions authoritative knowledge;
- challenges orthodoxies;
- challenges compliant thought;
- uninhibitedly demonstrates critical thought; • adopts unprecedented points of view and engages productively with them.

Nurturing a research imagination also requires building an environment that supports and promotes this. One way to promote innovation and imagination in a global world is to encourage researchers to be mobile across disciplines, institutions and national borders. Australia can no longer stop researchers from leaving (i.e. 'brain drain'), rather it needs to recognise the benefits of international travel with regard to innovation. International travel is particularly beneficial as it:

- enables researchers to consider new perspectives initiated by critical distance; • facilitates a sustained engagement with people around the world who lead ideas in their field; • permits researchers to bring fresh thinking back to their homeland and indigenise it; • allows them to deepen their understanding of a range of different cultures and the implications of these for their research.

In responding to the Terms of Reference (points One and Two), we propose that the Review panel consider the development of:

- Collaborative humanities and social science researcher mobility opportunities for Australians in a global context.

- Strategies for Australian institutions to harness the benefits of humanities and social science researcher mobility ('brain circulation') as a national asset.

The 'Moving Ideas and Research Policies: Australian Intellectuals in the Global Context' conference we are holding in July 2008 will contribute to putting researcher mobility in the humanities and social sciences on Australian institutional, organisational and governmental policy agendas. This conference will:

- bring together key stakeholders and commentators to discuss researcher mobility in the humanities and social sciences from an Australian perspective,
- bring together such people to discuss researcher mobility policy initiatives from around the world,
- publish a set of accessible papers on international issues and trends,
- create a set of suggestions for Australian researcher mobility policy as a result of the discussions at the conference.

This conference is being sponsored by the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements. It is also supported by the Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH) and endorsed by the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA).

The 'Moving Ideas' conference stems directly from a current ARC Discovery project called 'Moving Ideas: Mobile Policies, Researchers and Connections in the Social Sciences and Humanities — Australia in the global context' (2006-2009), which is being conducted by Professor Jane Kenway and Dr Johannah Fahey in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. The study is exploring the globalisation of ideas through the movement around the globe of academics in the social sciences and humanities. Moving Ideas represents a mind-shift of sorts. It involves qualitative analysis of how these academics' global movements and new connections influence their intellectual travels, and national and transnational identifications. It engages with the ways that ideas travel, and how knowledge transforms through travel. It examines the movement of knowledge itself and its implications for academics' identities, their politics and ethics. It also explores implications for academic networks and research policies.

Australia invests a lot in training and developing researchers. Although it cannot stop them leaving, it can more creatively consider how best to benefit from the researchers who leave for good, those who return and those who move back and forth. A major outcome of this project is that it will increase Australia's knowledge base on the benefits of researcher mobility and connectivity. These times are characterised by growing sensitivity to cultural, social and political issues in the region and globe.

Internationally mobile researchers in the social sciences and humanities are centrally involved in projecting Australia's image abroad through their research on economics, society, culture, politics and human behaviour. Crucially, such researchers are also involved in interpreting the rest of the world to Australia.

Researchers' interpretations are mediated through the cross border and cross sector connections they foster. The effects of their mobility on them, on the knowledge they produce and distribute, the connections they sustain, and the ways these connections operate in such places as Singapore, Hong Kong, USA and UK are of interest to a wide range of

communities within Australia and internationally. These interests coalesce in the research policies Australia adopts. This project will provide vital up-to-date analysis of supra/international and national research policy-making around the world. It will help to keep the Australian government well informed about emerging issues and thus help to place it at the forefront of research policy inventiveness in the global context.

Yours sincerely,

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