Innovative Research Universities
Senior Staff Forum
University of Newcastle
7 July 2011

Professor Margaret Sheil
CEO, Australian Research Council
Outline

• The research policy context
• Research workforce – the challenges
• Changes to NCGP
• ERA and research funding
• The Research Landscape 2020
Government Investment in Research

2011-12

Business & Innovation: 24%
Other Government: 11%
Investigator Driven: 4.5%
Universities: 21%
NHMRC: 8%
ARC: 9%
CSIRO: 8%
Other Science: 4%
Energy and the Environment: 5%
Rural Health: 2%
Other Health: 6%
CRCs: 2%
Research Workforce Strategy

Review of research priorities

Powering Ideas

Mission based Compacts and block funding

Fostering research excellence, capacity building

Health of Australian Science Project

TEQSA
ARC Strategic Objectives

- To support excellence in research
- To build Australia’s research capacity
- To provide informed high quality policy advice to government
- To enhance research outcomes through effective evaluation
- To raise the profile of Australia’s research effort and be an effective advocate for its benefits
The ARC

National Competitive Grants Program
$810M in 11-12

Discovery & Fellowships
$502 M

Linkage & Centres
$308 M

Evaluation and Policy

Excellence in Research for Australia

- Support research excellence
- Funding for facilities and equipment that researchers need to be internationally competitive
- Support training and develop skills for future researchers
- Provide incentives for partnerships and collaboration nationally and internationally
The ARC does not:

• Employ researchers directly

• Aim to provide a complete externally funded career structure

• Fund all the excellent research proposals it receives
The ARC aims to:

- Provide opportunities for researchers at every career stage
- Foster a range of different cohorts

Researchers in industry

Women

Teaching and research

Research-only

Indigenous
Research Workforce – the challenges

Ageing workforce

Teaching and Research

Which disciplines?

The balance

Attracting/supporting women and indigenous Australians

Students in industry

Competing internationally

Retaining our best

Promoting collaboration
NCGP – the latest developments

- Evaluation of Linkage Projects
- Improvements to Peer Review (first stage)
- Changes to Discovery Projects and Discovery Indigenous
- New schemes (DECRA and RITA)
- Two additional Laureate Fellowships
- Simplified NCGP Funding Rules
- Removing Duplication

NCGP
What problem were we trying to solve?

- Demonstrate quality/value of investment in university research to government
- Raise the quality of Australian research effort
Australian academic publishing practices

Year that publications measure was introduced

Quartile 1 highest impact

Quartile 4 below median impact

Source: Butler 2002
ERA Outcomes

- Changes in research culture (focus on excellence)
- Sustainable Research Excellence (from 2012)
- Compacts and Institutional Planning
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency ??
- Research Training Scheme (from 2013)
Whole of Government Issues

- Commitment to budget surplus in 2013
- Natural disasters and other factors impacting on revenue
- Political situation raising expectations and requirements (Stakeholders & Reporting)
- Big ticket items-health, mining tax, carbon price etc.
- Challenges ahead for research infrastructure
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