



Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)

The ARC is responsible for administering the *Excellence in Research for Australia* (ERA) initiative, which aims to identify and promote excellence across the full spectrum of research activity in Australia's higher education institutions.

ERA assesses research quality within Australia's 41 higher education providers using a combination of indicators and expert review by committees comprising experienced, internationally-recognised experts.

The objectives of ERA are to:

- establish an evaluation framework that gives government, industry, business and the wider community assurance of the excellence of research conducted in Australia's institutions;
- provide a national stocktake of discipline-level areas of research strength and areas where there is opportunity for development in Australia's higher education institutions;
- identify excellence across the full spectrum of research performance;
- identify emerging research areas and opportunities for further development; and
- allow for comparisons of Australia's research nationally and internationally for all discipline areas.

The Australian Government is providing \$35.8 million over four years from 2009–10 for the *Excellence in Research for Australia* initiative.

The ERA 2010 process evaluated disciplines across eight clusters including:

- Cluster One—Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences
- Cluster Two—Humanities and Creative Arts
- Cluster Three—Engineering and Environmental Sciences
- Cluster Four—Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences
- Cluster Five—Mathematical, Information and Computing Sciences
- Cluster Six—Biological and Biotechnological Sciences
- Cluster Seven—Biomedical and Clinical Health Sciences
- Cluster Eight—Public and Allied Health Sciences



The ERA initiative is a key element of the Government's agenda for the reform of Australia's higher education system, articulated in *Transforming Australia's Higher Education System* (2009), and its innovation agenda, expressed in *Powering Ideas: An Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century* (2009).

ERA outcomes will inform the allocation of funding to support the indirect costs of research through the Government's Sustainable Research Excellence (SRE) program, and will be included as a key measure of research performance in the Government's compacts with universities.

ERA also informs the development of the Government's Research Workforce Strategy and other Government initiatives related to research and research training.

The Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, the Hon Senator Kim Carr, announced on 25 October 2010 that a further round of ERA is scheduled for 2012.

For more information visit www.arc.gov.au/era, email era@arc.gov.au or phone +61 2 6287 6675.