



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Go8 greeted this year's Federal Budget as a visionary road to university reform. While there are a range of detailed issues still to be worked through in consultation with the Government, the Go8 welcomes the Government's forward looking approach which provides universities with some predictability for their planning and a sustainable basis for funding.

Many of the big issues for which the Go8 has advocated for a number of years were addressed in a positive and comprehensive way.

Some of the most important gains for higher education and research include:

FULL FUNDING OF RESEARCH

The budget includes a serious commitment of an additional \$813 million over five years to move progressively to cover each university's indirect research costs, long advocated by the Go8 as vital to the quality and competitiveness of Australian universities.

"A major priority is to ensure that Australia can perform research at internationally benchmarked standards of quality on a financially sustainable basis. Recognising the full costs of research—the direct costs and the indirect costs of administrative and capital overheads—enables better internal resource allocation, transparency of cross subsidies,

improved asset management and sustainable performance quality."

Go8 submission to the review of the National Innovation System, April 2008

INDEXATION

For over a decade funding for the Higher Education sector has not been adequately indexed, making it difficult for universities to meet increasing salary costs and continue to attract highly qualified staff. The current indexation measure, which has existed since 1995, has never recognised real increases in professional salaries. The Government has committed \$578 million over four years to remedy this situation.

"Without adequate indexation, the capacities of Australia's universities to maintain the quality of their buildings, libraries, laboratories, teaching and

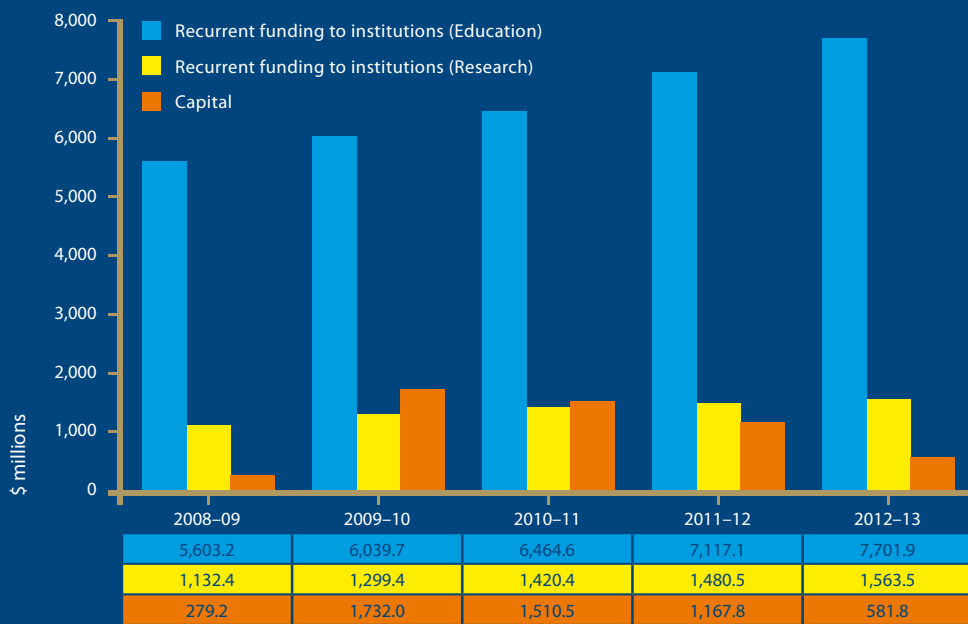
research services are at risk, as are their abilities to remain competitive in an increasing international higher education environment." Go8 position paper on indexation, 2004

INFRASTRUCTURE

The budget includes major investment in higher education, research and VET infrastructure, through the Education Investment Fund totalling \$3 billion.

"It's time for Australia to start dealing with the university infrastructure challenges we face by quantifying the extent of the problem, and addressing it systematically through the EIF and policy reforms including a shift to full cost funding of research." Go8 Chair, Professor Alan Robson, releasing the Go8 infrastructure condition survey in 2008.

UNIVERSITY FUNDING FORWARD ESTIMATES, 2008–09 TO 2012–13



Source: Go8, 2009 Budget Papers

STUDENT INCOME SUPPORT AND EQUITY

The budget includes enhanced student income support measures which target the students most in need, including:

- Raising the parental income threshold for students applying for Youth Allowance, increasing the number of eligible students by 17 per cent;
- Increasing the amount of income a student can earn (from \$236 to \$400 per fortnight) before losing Youth Allowance payments;
- Increasing the stipend for research students in receipt of Australian Postgraduate Awards to \$22,500;
- Exempting equity- and merit-based scholarships from income testing for the purposes of student income support payments.

"While Commonwealth equity-based scholarships are exempt from the student means test, benefits provided by universities and the private sector (whether cash or in-kind) are treated as income. This serves as a major disincentive for their provision."
Go8 submission to the Bradley Review of Higher Education, July 2008

NATIONAL REGULATORY AGENCY

The 2009 budget commits to the establishment of a new tertiary education quality and standards agency (TEQSA) in 2010 at a cost of \$57 million over four years. The agency will accredit providers, evaluate the performance of institutions and simplify current regulatory arrangements.

Importantly the agency has been tasked to collect data and consider performance in areas such as student retention and exit standards.

"To provide a consistent national regulatory framework, with uniform rules for registration as a post-school educational institution, the Group of Eight advocates creation of a new Australian Tertiary Education Commission... jointly supported and led by Commonwealth and State governments, to administer a reformed tertiary education system." Go8 Chair, Glyn Davis, National Press Club Address, June 2007

EXAMPLES OF FAMILY SITUATIONS AND PARENTAL INCOME TEST CUT-OUT POINTS

Family Situation: Number of children on Youth Allowance by Age	Parental income cut-out points	
	Current arrangements	New arrangements
1 Child aged 18 at home	\$58,288	\$74,419
1 Child aged 18 away from home	\$71,532	\$90,974
2 Children aged 16 and 17 at home	\$57,794	\$95,564
2 Children aged 17 and 19 at home	\$59,936	\$100,920
2 Children aged 18 and 20 at home	\$62,080	\$106,279
2 Children aged 17 and 21 away from home	\$71,532	\$139,388
2 Children aged 19 and 23 away from home	\$75,324	\$139,388

Source: Australian Government, Transforming Australia's Higher Education System, Fact Sheet 15 Student Income Support, Parental Income Test, May 2009

MEASUREMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

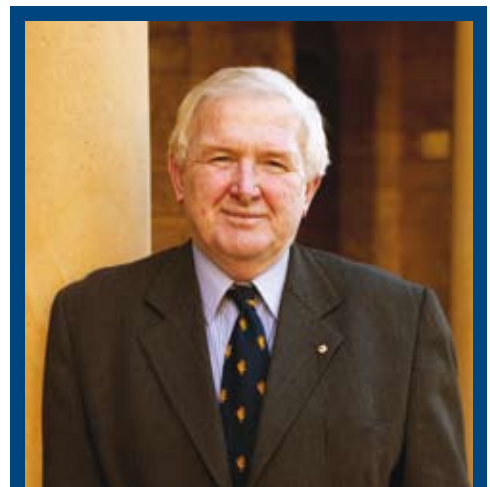
In its formal response to the Bradley Review, also delivered on Budget Day, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations has committed to investigating a more accurate means of measuring socio-economic status (SES), including family and individual circumstances, rather than the current postcode method.

"The SES postcode data used to measure trends in access are widely acknowledged to be fundamentally flawed. The postcode approach needs to be replaced by a mechanism that links data about individual students to data about parental educational attainment and income. Without such a change, the data upon which policy decisions are made, and performance tracked, will continue to count students from affluent families, living in low SES postcode areas." Go8 submission to the Bradley Review of Higher Education, July 2008

Further details including the Government's official responses to the Bradley and Cutler reviews are available from the following websites:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Department/Publications/Pages/Budget2009-10.aspx>

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/General/Corporate/Pages/Budget200910.aspx>



Go8 CONGRATULATES PROFESSOR ALAN ROBSON

The Go8 congratulates its Chairman, Professor Alan Robson AM on being named the 2009 WA Citizen of the Year.

Professor Robson was described as "a tireless worker in building a global reputation for UWA as one of Australia's leading research institutes and best comprehensive universities ... a supportive mentor to UWA students, staff-members and academics ... an energetic advocate on behalf of the university system, which has carved him an international standing in this field, as well as being a passionate supporter for research in Western Australia, especially in the field of medicine."

<http://www.news.uwa.edu.au/>

INAUGURAL MEETING OF DAAD AUSTRALIAN ALUMNI IN BERLIN

Guests from Austrade, CSIRO, the Australian Government Departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Innovation and Research recently attended a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Alumni networking event hosted by the Australian Embassy in Berlin.

The DAAD is Germany's national agency for the support of international academic cooperation. Titled 'From Germany to Australia and together into the future', the event was the DAAD's first attempt at awakening a German network of alumni who have studied in Australia.

Workshops addressing current issues of Australian/German bilateral interest and cooperation were organised and facilitated by the Go8's European Liaison Officer based at the Embassy in Berlin.

The Australian Ambassador to Germany, HE Mr Ian Kemish AM, characterised the Australian/German relationship as open and cooperative. The Ambassador noted the importance of increasing chances of mobility for German/Australian researchers and highlighted the Go8 DAAD Joint Research Cooperation Scheme.

Katharine Campbell, Counsellor for Science, Research and Innovation in Brussels, and Alastair Robertson, Deputy CEO of CSIRO addressed a 'Science' workshop and detailed cooperative research efforts between the two countries. Peter Rasmussen, CEO of Austrade Germany addressed an 'Economics' workshop on Australia's response to the global financial crisis.

The DAAD has indicated it will endeavour to solidify the Alumni network through a future program of events.

APPLICATION DEADLINE REMINDER

Go8 researchers are reminded that the application deadline for the Go8 Germany Joint Research Cooperation Scheme is 30 June. For details see the international section of the [Go8 website](#).



From left to right: Karin Moeller (DAAD), Chester Cunningham (Australian Embassy, Berlin), Ursula Toyka-Fuong (DAAD), Katharine Campbell (DIISR, Brussels), HE Ambassador Ian Kemish AM (Australian Ambassador to Germany).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Go8 DVCs Research meet on 18–19 June in Adelaide
- Go8 Deans of Medicine meet on 14 July in Canberra
- Go8 Deans of Arts meet on 15 July in Canberra
- Go8 International Directors meet on 17 July in Melbourne
- Go8 Vice-Chancellors meet on 23 July in Canberra

Go8–HARVARD–C9 CONFERENCE



The Climate: Science + Humanities Conference on 3–4 March 2010 at Harvard University will bring together 40 graduate students—leaders of the next generation—from Australia, China, and the US to present their global perspectives on climate and climate change from three very different national bases.

This 'emerging leadership dialogue' initiative aims to highlight research work that displays genuine disciplinary crossover. Science students and Humanities/Social Science students will exchange research ideas, crossing disciplines, cultures, and continents.

Sixteen Australian students will be selected and funded—one science student and one humanities student from each Go8 university. Eighteen students from C9 universities (China) and eight or nine Harvard students will also participate.

Applications for Go8 students are now open and will close on 1 July 2009. Eligible students are those enrolled in a research degree at a Go8 university, including international students.

Further information including the application form is available on the [Go8 website](#).