

MEDIA RELEASE

A BUDGET THAT BEGINS R&D REFORM BUT ADDS TO UNCERTAINTY

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Tonight's Federal Budget takes some welcome steps towards reform of the research and development system in Australia but lacks ambition and creates greater uncertainty.

Science & Technology Australia (STA) CEO Ryan Winn welcomed the establishment of the National Resilience and Science Council, which is essential to implement the [Ambitious Australia report](#).

"Ambitious Australia provided the blueprint for the future of research and development. We now need the whole Government to be part of the implementation," Mr Winn said.

Additional funding for Government agencies is positive, including \$387 million for CSIRO, \$273 million for the National Measurement Institute, \$70 million for AI Accelerator grants and \$21 million for the Space Agency. And the Government has listened to the sector, committing to increase disbursements over time to \$1 billion a year for the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

We also welcome the Government's proposed reforms to the Research and Development Tax Incentive and venture capital tax reform, to incentivise business investment in research.

However, the scrapping of nearly \$1.5 billion funding from Australia's Economic Accelerator and grants from the Industry and Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water portfolios are a concern for non-government agency research funding.

"Tonight's Budget gives with one hand but takes with the other. Additional funding for government science agencies is always welcome, as key foundations for Australian science. And we certainly support increased disbursements from the MRFF. This should have happened long ago."

"But there is an overwhelming sense of uncertainty in the research and development industry as funding for non-medical research grants see a significant reduction. One third of the workforce has told us they are planning to leave the sector. And we have decades-long under-investment in R&D that simply hasn't kept up with the real cost of doing research."

"The Government says it's taking a responsible approach to securing Australia's resilience and intergenerational equity – backing our R&D sector is the only way to do that."

"The Government also wants a Future Made in Australia. But increasingly our workforce doesn't see a future here. Until the Ambitious Australia report recommendations are implemented in full with corresponding new investment, our industry will continue to lack the certainty it needs to deliver on that ambition."

About Science & Technology Australia

Science & Technology Australia is the nation's peak body representing more than 235,000 scientists and technologists. We're the leading policy voice on science and technology. Our flagship programs include [Science Meets Parliament](#), [Science Meets the Economy](#) and [Superstars of STEM](#).

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