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National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund
Consultation Committee
Department of Education, Skills and Employment
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Dear Consultation Committee

RE: National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund

Thank you for the opportunity for The Australian National University (ANU) to provide feedback on the consultation paper for the National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund.

The Role of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

We acknowledge the proposed model contains flexibility to allow universities to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour. However, the ANU would like to see more emphasis on the role of building innovation and entrepreneurial skills as a foundation for future job readiness, independent of the need for specific industry partner engagement.

In the 2017 *Future of Work Report*, the Foundation for Young Australians found that: one in seven young people were entering the workforce into jobs expected to be radically affected by automation; and more than half of university students were being trained for jobs that would be radically affected within 10 years of graduation. The report considered a key policy driver should be to promote entrepreneurship as a viable career option for young Australians, whilst simultaneously supporting the innovation ecosystems.

In 2018, the Group of Eight asked graduates through the GOS-L if, only three years after graduation, they had their own business. In the case of the ANU one out of every seven respondents reported having their own business, with one in three of these businesses already employing other Australians.

The ANU believes the capture of work integrated learning (WIL) data and the available measures would benefit from an emphasis on the development of entrepreneurial skills and participation in innovation activities.

The Role of Volunteering

The ANU would like to caution against the development of any definition of work integrated learning that fails to acknowledge the significant contribution of volunteering in Australia. The University hopes the framework will provide the flexibility to identify innovators, measures and opportunities that integrate the skills developed through, and for, volunteering. In her study on the monetary value of volunteering, Dr Lisel O'Dwyer found that volunteering contributes \$290b annually to the Australian economy with more than six million Australians volunteering their time to the provision of critical community services.

In 2018, the Group of Eight asked graduates through the GOS-L if, whether they were engaged in volunteering. In the case of the ANU one out of every three respondents reported having volunteered in the last 12 months, with one in three of those who had volunteered contributing more than 50 hours of their time. The ANU believes the capture of work integrated learning (WIL) data and the available measures would benefit from inclusion of volunteering activities.

Identification and Coding of WIL

In order to support the development of robust metrics it is critical the capture of work integrated learning (WIL) data is improved. Currently WIL is captured via reporting element E337 which limits reporting to where a study wholly consists of work experience in industry.

This fails to capture work integrated learning experiences such as:

- Work experience units for which no credit is given
- Credited units which include real industry projects in conjunction with industry partners
- Industry partners who provide mentoring and assessment feedback
- Participation in entrepreneurial skills events such as pitching competitions or business proposal competitions
- Participation in applied skills events such as hack-a-thons and code camps
- Volunteering project work

If the desire is to create a set of cross-sector performance measures, then a revision is required of the categorisation of WIL data elements to align to the broader definition captured in the consultation paper.

Distribution Options

The University preference is for the Per-EFTSL rate + base + loading. This provides the best capacity for growth into the future, noting many of the innovators and demonstrators will take longer than 12 months to have outcome affects and some guarantee of continuity of funding is important in order to make ongoing commitments. The Per-EFTSL rate + base + loading also provides the best support for smaller institutions, such as the ANU, who fall into the 0 – 9,999 CSP category.

Number of Indicators and Approach to Reporting

In 2012 the Government commissioned the *Review of Reporting Requirements for Universities*. The report identified the tendency for reporting requirements to accumulate over time as one of the key areas requiring reform. As an outcome from this review the Department of Education sought to eliminate collections including the Institutional Performance Portfolio and the Government set a priority on the development of a single higher education data collection.

In alignment with these recommendations the ANU cautions against making the reporting for the NPILF too complex. An improvement in the departmental submission elements for WIL could lead to a reduction in the number of indicators needing to be nominated by a given institution.

If you would like further information from ANU on any of the points raised in this letter, please contact Ms Belinda Lawton, Government Relations Manager at government@anu.edu.au.

Yours sincerely



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