

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Strategic collaboration fosters excellence - IRU Australia**

Innovative Research Universities (IRU) Australia respects the decision by Macquarie University to adopt a non-aligned position in the higher education sector. The Acting Chair of IRU Australia, Professor Michael Barber, said that its members will continue to develop their existing individual collaborations with Macquarie.

“The six world-class universities in IRU Australia - Flinders, Griffith, James Cook, La Trobe, Murdoch and Newcastle – will also continue to foster excellence through collaboration in research and education. We’re really excited about pursuing the next stage of our development as a group and are in the process of developing a new strategic framework to position us strongly for the future.

“The priority aims of IRU Australia are to provide value-adding advice to government on higher education policy, to pursue best practice and ongoing quality enhancement through benchmarking, and to pool our talent and knowledge resources in selected areas to deliver outstanding outcomes in research and education.

“Our collective goals are underpinned by our members’ shared histories, values and strengths. All six were established during the period of higher education expansion in the 1960s/1970s as comprehensive research-based universities with innovative teaching approaches and an inter-disciplinary focus.

“IRU Australia believes that collaboration among universities and between universities and other organisations is vital to ensuring a vibrant and world class higher education system with global reach. We recognise that collaboration will involve different partners at different times for different purposes.

“In the spirit of ‘open innovation’ systems, we believe that IRU Australia will achieve the best outcomes by encouraging our member universities to maintain multiple networks and collaborations and to pursue their own individual missions. We certainly don’t seek to impose restrictions on our members or to inhibit competition. This openness ensures the free flow of new ideas and a continual challenging of the status quo, both of which are essential drivers of innovation.

“At the same time, we see enormous benefits in continuing to work together as a group to achieve our shared objectives,” Professor Barber said.

**Further information:**

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