

Friday 21 July 2006

MEDIA RELEASE

**ALP POLICY RELEASE A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR
DEBATE - ATN**

The Australian Technology Network said today's release of the Australian Labor Party's white paper on higher education, research and innovation is a positive starting point for further discussion about the future of Australia's university sector.

**Curtin University
of Technology**

ATN Director Vicki Thomson said whilst the ATN was yet to fully consider the policy in detail, it did address key issues such as access, research, diversity and funding.

**University of
South Australia**

"We do however still need to see the detail of many of the policies announced including the funding models attached to the proposals. How for example will the ALP make up the possible funding shortfall which could be created by reducing HECS and reducing Band 2 HECS rates to Band 1 rates in particular areas?"

RMIT University

Ms Thomson said the ALP document correctly states that universities can help 'advance Australia as a modern economy and a vibrant democracy' however for too long higher education has been treated as a cost rather than as an investment in our shared future.

**University of
Technology
Sydney**

"Governments – state and federal, Labor and Liberal – have been shifting the costs of education to the individual for more than 20 years. The user pays, and those who can afford it buy a better education. This has serious consequences for all Australians. The first is growing inequality in access to quality education and the second is the decline, since 1997, in public outlays on our universities.

**Queensland
University
of Technology**

"The five universities of the ATN enrol 19% of the nation's students, 19% of low SES students, 14% of disabled students and 17% of indigenous students. We have a strong commitment to ensuring that higher education remains accessible and affordable. Each of the ATN members have special admission schemes for disadvantaged students, most of the network is active on the temporary protection visa refugee issue, all maintain programs for women's career development, and most have undertaken substantial work in curriculum reform around Indigenous perspectives.

Chancellery
GPO Box 2471
Adelaide
SA 5001

Tel +61 8 8302 9132
Fax +61 8 8302 0943

www.atn.edu.au

"We look forward to engaging further with the ALP on the details of their policy to ensure that Higher Education remains at the forefront of our nation's economic and social development."

Further information: Vicki Thomson 0417 808 472

**BUILDING
PARTNERSHIPS
FINDING
SOLUTIONS**

