

IMPOSSIBLE OR INEVITABLE?

ATN TO HOST NUCLEAR ENERGY CONFERENCE

The Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN) is to host a national nuclear energy conference in Canberra in September.

The conference –“Nuclear; Impossible or Inevitable” – has been authorised by the University Vice Chancellors to place a group of the country’s major Universities at the core of Australia’s most important and controversial debate in decades.

ATN universities teach more than 20 per cent of Australia’s total higher education load and have a strong focus on relevant and applied research. They each have strong student representation in the fields of engineering, architecture and building and business.

“We are mindful of the traditional place of Universities in such debates of national significance,” said ATN Chair and University of South Australia Vice Chancellor, Professor Denise Bradley. “We are also mindful of the responsibility of universities to engage in public policy debate in a nonpartisan manner.

“The nuclear debate, and we stress debate, must be conducted at all levels in the community with openness and strong and worthy contributions from all stakeholders and it must consider the range of alternative energy sources.”

Professor Bradley said the ATN considered this debate to be so critical across all levels of community, research, and skills training, that it should be harnessed independently of the political process in a format that allowed for full and fearless constructive debate.

“There are myths to be dispelled and concerns to be expressed, there are investment and market opportunities to be explored, and we need also to learn from the experiences of those who already live with nuclear. We are enthused to moving this debate on from polarising politics to free dialogue and learning,” she said.

“Learning all there is to know about a subject before making an informed decision is what Universities are about. We intend that this conference be the first step of the ATN’s involvement in assisting Australia reach a conclusion – either for or against.”

Further Information: Vicki Thomson 0417 808 472

For further information about the ATN visit www.atn.edu.au

**Curtin University
of Technology**

**University of
South Australia**

RMIT University

**University of
Technology
Sydney**

**Queensland
University
of Technology**

Chancellery
GPO Box 2471
Adelaide
SA 5001

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

www.atn.edu.au

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