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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **ALP's New Directions Needs New Investment**

The ALP's 'New Directions Paper' released today by Opposition Leader Mr Kevin Rudd, and Shadow Minister for Education and Training, Mr Stephen Smith outlines the critical linkages which exist between education, innovation and economic growth.

ATN Director Vicki Thomson said it provided a frank assessment of the decline in Government investment in the Higher Education sector.

"This paper very clearly spells out the case for increased investment in the university sector and the clear implication is that the Opposition is committed to adequately funding our universities.

"What is not clear in this document is to what extent this commitment will be and what impact the ALP's 'New Direction' will have on student fees, research funding or university operating grants.

"The ATN, as a network of universities undertakes relevant research with industry, meeting the country's present and future needs for knowledge and innovation. It is critical that whoever is in government recognises the role of universities in the national innovation system. The ATN strongly believes that increased investment is needed for Australia's innovation system to be globally competitive. Building the percentage of the nation's total GDP investment in research and development to a level comparable with our OECD counterparts is clearly required if we are to compete effectively.

"We believe the case has been well put that increased investment is needed for Australia's innovation system to be globally competitive," Ms Thomson said.

"Without a comprehensive national innovation strategy, backed up by levels of investment sufficient to retain and build research capacity, Australia will be unable to even keep up with the accelerating global pace of growth of new knowledge and the benefits so delivered."

The ATN eagerly awaits the ALP's promised 'detailed policies' which will financially underpin their 'education revolution.'