



## AUSTRALIAN 2020 SUMMIT SUBMISSION FORM

Nominations must be received **by 5.00pm Wednesday 9 April 2008** to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet at:

*Australia 2020* Summit Secretariat  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
1 National Circuit  
BARTON ACT 2600

**SUMMIT TOPICS FOR SUBMISSIONS #**

(please limit comments to 500 words per topic)

***Future Directions for the Australian Economy - Education, skills, training, innovation and productivity***

The *Australia 2020* Summit will examine:

- a. After a long period of sustained economic growth and with the added benefits of the global mining boom, how do we best invest the proceeds of this prosperity to lay the foundations for future economic growth
- b. How we best prepare for a global economy that will increasingly be based upon advanced skills, advanced technology, low carbon energy sources and integration with global supply chains
- c. How we take advantage of Australia's proximity to the fast growing economies in the world
- d. How Australia attracts and retains the most talented, creative and highly skilled people, including researchers and scientists, entrepreneurs, and professional and skilled workers
- e. How we ensure that our children have the highest quality teachers, whether in early childhood, school, TAFE or university, including dealing with the crisis in maths and science related disciplines across the education system
- f. How we foster innovation in the workplace; encouraging the transfer of ideas across businesses and economies.

We need new ways for business to engage with the higher education sector and with government for mutual growth and development at individual, community, regional, state and national levels. The business drivers are the need for: "fit for purpose" graduates; career changes and upskilling of older citizens; linkage with vocational education and training; research and development and innovation and creativity collaboration; and for collaboration in solving many economic, environmental and societal issues. Current collaboration models are inadequate especially at the strategic level. The Business and Industry Higher Education Consultative Committee (BIHECC) has not been an effective mechanism. To have collaboration which produces results, there are a number of aspects which need to be canvassed.

How to expand the range of ways business and higher education and training engage each other to enhance capacity.

The need to develop new strategic partnerships and forms of involvement including more effective knowledge exchange.

Support for universities in their "third role" of community engagement and leadership in a region's social, economic, and cultural development.

The possible need for other forms of university governance.

Staff and students within universities need to be encouraged in their efforts to engage with industry, and an increased acceptance and rewarding of such efforts.

Establish more large-scale research centres through research partnerships (US- private funding; Irish and Finnish- targeted state funding).

Better commercialisation.

Enhanced R&D allowances for university/business linkages.

Dialogue to ensure the right number of graduates and with an education which means they are "fit for purpose" for industry, and for broader economic, social and environmental goals. The current shortages, both in numbers and capabilities, of engineers and scientists, and of doctors is a demonstration that the current model is not working. In the long term, 457 visas and attracting skilled people from other less developed and more needy societies, is not the answer.

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There is enormous potential for industry and business to derive increased value from links with universities, and for universities similarly to benefit from increased clarity on the needs and motivations of its relevant stakeholders. It is often difficult to get industry to engage and the right mechanisms and operating models are required. Elevating the importance of this collaboration at the political level is an indispensable component.

The current review of the National Innovation System and the recently announced Higher Education review are opportunities to remove some of the barriers which inhibit innovation and at the same time recognise industry challenges and changes needed to increase productivity and improve competitiveness.