

# **Australian Council of the Deans of Science**

## ***Policy Framework***

The purpose of the Policy Framework is to express the core principles that underpin the Australian Council of Deans of Science and so allow the President of the ACDS to speak out on behalf of all Deans of Science.

*The Deans of Science of Australian Universities see that their particular role is to:*

1. Be advocates for the development of the current and next generation of scientists

why

1. To sustain a leading source of the nation's research innovation and creativity.
2. To provide the impetus for the generation and exploitation of intellectual property for economic advancement in Australia.
3. To redress the current declining interest in the enabling sciences, particularly mathematics, physics and chemistry, and the shortage of science teachers.
4. To provide the enabling basis for engineering, medicine, agriculture, information technology and applied science generally.

How

5. Continue to commission projects and surveys on a regular basis to provide relevant data.
6. promote science at every appropriate occasion.
7. Influence Government policy on science education, research, research training, science education and scientific literacy in the community.
8. Have input into the training of new science teachers and involvement in professional development of practising science teachers.

2. Support programs that develop lifelong scientific literacy

Why

1. Progress and sustainability will be enhanced where the community is scientifically literate.
2. Community participation in the debate will be informed by an evidence-based approach to making decisions.
3. The community will become informed consumers of science, such as, for example, in managing their health.
4. A scientifically literate community will encourage an interest in science among young people.

How

5. Benchmark Australian scientific literacy internationally.

6. Help science communicators to increase their interaction and influence with the media.
  7. Encourage the development of programs of scientific literacy aimed at the primary, secondary, university and community levels.
  8. Influence state education authorities to adopt scientific literacy goals.
  9. Tap into the public interest in personal health and modern technology as a motivator to develop scientific literacy.
3. Influence the development of policy relevant to research, research training, science education and scientific literacy

#### Why

1. To ensure a balanced outcome in policy that accommodates all areas of science, its development and application.
2. To ensure adequate public and private funding for the scientific endeavour.
3. To promote recognition that support for fundamental research is essential for Australia's future.
4. To raise the profile of science in the Government's agenda.

#### How

5. Lobby Governments for science and science education either as ACDS or, where appropriate, collaboratively with FASTS, and other relevant groups.
  6. Obtain agreement on a set of potential statements that could be endorsed by ACDS and used as a basis for media releases.
  7. Evaluate ACDS achievements to improve future strategic plans for enhanced outcomes.
  8. Recognise the political cycle, and the importance of gaining public support for science.
4. Establish links to further collaboration with cognate international science bodies

#### Why

1. To facilitate all of the above activities
2. Discover best practice and policy and for objective benchmarking of Australian Science.

#### How

3. Develop current links and explore potential other links (beyond NZ).
4. Interact with international partners to achieve common goals and share expertise.

5. Influence the development of Policy to enhance and protect careers in scientific research

#### Why

1. To address the issue of many of our best researchers having to live on short term contracts for many years.
2. To avoid losing permanently our best researchers to overseas where they are more highly valued and rewarded.

#### How

3. Work with Universities to enable continuing employment in research-only positions analogous to academic appointments.
4. Influence Governments to provide a sustainable funding base for research agencies and institutions.

The Australian Council of Deans of Science holds the view that:

1. There is a need for greater investment in and development of science teachers in high schools, particularly in physics, mathematics and chemistry.
2. All primary teachers should have a minimum level of science literacy and in-service training should be directed to this end.
3. Mathematics is a fundamental requirement for understanding and practising science and it should be supported at all levels of education.
4. Governments at State level should not only be active in funding science education at primary and secondary level, but also at tertiary levels.
5. The Federal Government should develop incentives for students to study science, particularly science education programs.
6. The award of research higher degrees is the responsibility of Universities.
7. Universities already have a major role in community outreach in science and science-related activities, and should be funded to enable this to continue.
8. The President should speak on behalf of the Deans of Science in discrediting pseudo-scientific activities and products.
9. Every individual and every community has the right to be educated and involved in scientifically-related issues that affect them.
10. Universities must receive adequate funding for both staff and infrastructure to ensure the delivery of quality education to the next generation of scientists.
11. Provision of adequate support for fundamental research is essential for the future of Australia.