

## Topics of current interest

*Presented to the ACDS Executive Meeting on 17 November 2025  
Covering the period August-November 2025.*

The following are recent articles and reports that may be of interest to Deans of Science. This list is not meant to indicate a particular point of view from the ACDS. We encourage you to follow the links to the original articles.

### 1. SERD – Strategic Examination of Research and Development

<https://www.industry.gov.au/science-technology-and-innovation/strategic-examination-research-and-development>

Department of Industry, Science and Resources, October 2025

- Six discussion papers were released in August-September. Along with our submissions, there was strong media coverage of the responses from STA ('R&D review missing the mark', <https://scienceandtechnologyaustralia.org.au/serd-missing-the-mark/>) and the AAS ('No D without R', <https://www.science.org.au/news-and-events/news-and-media-releases/australias-fundamental-research-funding-crisis-is-being-ignored>). According to the SERD website, the next step is for the expert panel to deliver the action plan of recommendations to government.

### 2. The 2026 NRI Roadmap Issues Paper

<https://www.education.gov.au/national-research-infrastructure/resources/2026-nri-roadmap-issues-paper>

Department of Education, October 2025

- This issues paper seeks input on a specific set of topics. We discussed this as part of our ACDS roundtable in November.

### 3. From fragmented to future-ready

<https://universitiesaustralia.edu.au/policy-submissions/research-innovations/research-funding-2/>

Universities Australia, July/August 2025.

- As noted last time, this is a series of four very brief reports. The final two have now been published: 'Partnering for innovation' and 'On the world stage'. They want to make it easier for SMEs and other industries to collaborate with research organisations and for them to access national research infrastructures. They also called for a 'clear commitment to Horizon Europe' – see the government response below!

### 4. Enacting assessment reform in a time of artificial intelligence

<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/corporate-publications/enacting-assessment-reform-time-artificial-intelligence>

TEQSA, September 2025

- This brief resource delivers practical examples to help institutions develop approaches to gen AI and assessment.

### 5. Statement on the Pathway to Diversity in STEM Review

<https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/statement-pathway-diversity-stem-review>

Department of Industry, Science and Resources, November 2025

- This is the government's response to the recommendations from the diversity in STEM review reported in 2024. The statement is wide-ranging across all forms of education, workplaces and career paths, and a whole-of-life approach. In terms of universities, the statement singles out the importance of cultural safety and inclusiveness, the CSIRO Indigenous STEM scholarships, and the ATSE Elevate: Boosting diversity in STEM university scholarships.  
Although STA welcomed the statement, the authors of the original review have said that the government's response does not go far enough to address systemic issues.

## **6. Made in Australia: Our AI opportunity**

<https://www.atse.org.au/what-we-do/strategic-advice/made-in-australia-our-ai-opportunity/>

Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, August 2025

- This action statement from ATSE advocates for targeted investment in AI capability in Australia (workforce, research, infrastructure) to ensure that Australia has the autonomy to be productive and secure.

## **7. Australian Science, Australia's Future**

<https://www.science.org.au/news-and-events/news-and-media-releases/new-report-provides-roadmap-to-plug-national-science-capability-gaps>

Australian Academy of Science, September 2025

- This report highlights the gaps in capabilities in Australia's science system.

## **8. National Health and Medical Research Strategy**

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/draft-national-health-and-medical-research-strategy>

NHMRC, August/September 2025

- This draft strategy aims to guide and transform health and medical research over a 10-year period. There is quite a lot of detail about how the strategy could be implemented.

## **9. Possible association to Horizon Europe: request for information**

<https://consult.industry.gov.au/association-to-horizon-europe>

Department of Industry, Science and Resources, September 2025

- The department is feeling its way to try and understand the benefits and costs of Australia being part of Horizon Europe. They are looking for case studies to demonstrate benefit. Submissions are still open.

## **10. Higher Education enrolment trends**

<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/student-data/selected-higher-education-statistics-2024-student-data/key-findings-2024-higher-education-student-statistics>

Department of Education, September 2025

- Higher education statistics based on 2024 student data have recently been published. There is a wealth of information here and the 'key findings' web page is a useful summary.

## **11. University governance final report from expert council**

<https://www.education.gov.au/australian-universities-accord/resources/expert-council-university-governance-final-report-and-principles>

Department of Education, October 2025

- “This report includes principles, recommendations, key findings and commentary that will provide a strong basis for strengthening and improving university governance across Australia’s public universities.”

**Some books for the ACDS book club: 😊**

- CSIRO “The CSIRO Book 2025-2026”  
<https://www.csiro.au/en/about/corporate-governance/csiro-book>  
All about how the CSIRO is focusing on the global challenges confronting Australia and the region. Available for free download as a pdf.
- Marcia Langton, Ross Jones & James Waghorne, 2025, “Dhoombak Goobgoowana Vol 2”, which ‘examines the University of Melbourne’s troubled and complex historical relationship with Indigenous people’. Available for free download as a pdf:  
<https://www.mup.com.au/series/dhoombak-goobgoowana>
- Karl Kruszelnicki, 2025, “A Periodic Tale: My Sciencey Memoir”

Professor Brian Yates

ACDS Director of Strategic Communications and Engagement

Monday 17 November 2025