

**22 OCTOBER 2012**

## **RUN WELCOMES PRESERVATION OF INDEXATION BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) has welcomed the announcement by the Federal Government today that indexation to university sector funding would be preserved and that there would be no changes to the demand-driven system

"We acknowledge the difficulties the Government is facing in maintaining a surplus, as reflected in the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook Statement released today," the Chair of RUN, Professor David Battersby, said.

"The Government should be congratulated for keeping the fundamental reforms to the higher education system in place. These are critical to a robust Australian higher education sector.

"The savings announced will not have a major negative impact on regional universities.

"While we are disappointed that the student start-up scholarship, that helps students with the up-front costs of items such as textbooks and specialised equipment, will be frozen at the 2012 level of \$2050 rather than being indexed to 2017, we acknowledge that the broader scholarships have not been impacted," Professor Battersby said.

"We note that there has not yet been an announcement on the regional Education Investment Fund round and the freeze on a number of grant programs. We urge the Government to continue its support for regional higher education when making its decision on these matters.

"RUN welcomes the announcement that research grant rounds will not be cut. Last week, researchers from two of our universities, University of Ballarat and CQUniversity, won National Health and Medical Research Council Grants."

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