

**3 APRIL 2014**

## **RUN GETS BEHIND NEW 'KEEP IT CLEVER' CAMPAIGN**

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) today lent its support to a new national campaign to build public awareness of university education and research to ensure Australia is not left behind in an increasingly competitive global environment.

The innovative campaign uses an imaginative creative concept to deliver a serious message and includes a web film, print, digital, outdoor and national television advertising. It is themed "Keep it Clever", so that Australia is not left behind.

The Chair of RUN, Professor Peter Lee, said the campaign was needed to ensure all Australians were aware of the critical role played by universities in providing education, research and innovation to keep Australia ahead.

"To remain competitive, our workforce will demand more qualified graduates, our economy will rely on the creation of new companies, industries, jobs and opportunities that can only come from a strong university sector," Professor Lee said.

"Highly skilled graduates are what our economy needs to prosper as global competition intensifies.

"Australian universities give back to the country in countless ways. University research and innovation continues to put Australia on the world stage, international education is our biggest export besides resources, universities employ over 110,000 people and directly contribute over \$23 billion to our GDP.

"Regional universities directly employ over 10,000 Australians and are often the biggest employer in their local area. They contribute over \$2 billion to regional economies each year. Close collaborations with regional business and industry are transforming their communities and economies, and regionally focused research continues to have national and international significance and contributes to regional productivity and innovation.

"The campaign is a timely reminder of the importance of public investment in university education and research.

"We know that investing in our universities is investing in Australia's future; yet in recent years investment in universities and students has been cut by billions of dollars," Professor Lee said.

"When we underinvest in universities, we put at risk the national productivity growth, industrial diversity and long-term economic transformation required to ensure Australia

[www.run.edu.au](http://www.run.edu.au)

remains competitive in the future.”

Currently, Australia sits in the bottom 20 per cent of advanced economies for public investment in universities. The latest figures show our public investment in tertiary education as a percentage of GDP is ranked 25th out of 30 advanced economies. You can access the campaign, where you can sign a petition and show your support, at [keepitclever.com.au](http://keepitclever.com.au) or [facebook.com/keepitcleveraus](https://facebook.com/keepitcleveraus).

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