

The CPSU NSW submission to the Inquiry into the Future Development of the NSW Tertiary Education Sector

In the wake of the COVID-19 and the decline of international student enrolments, the NSW Legislative Council has established an urgent inquiry into the future of tertiary education in New South Wales. You can view the inquiry's terms of reference [HERE](#).

While the Commonwealth Government is principally responsible for universities, the NSW Government has a significant interest in supporting their success.

In our submission to the inquiry we chose to focus on the following terms of reference:

- a) Tertiary education's economic development role, especially university campuses and Country University Centres (CUCs) in regional NSW;
- b) The mission of NSW universities, with a particular focus on the role of universities to serve specific geographic communities;
- c) The post-pandemic return of foreign student numbers and the financial sustainability and risk management strategies of NSW tertiary education institutions;
- d) The current levels of coordination and/or support provided to NSW universities by the NSW Government.

Click [HERE](#) to read a copy of our full submission.

We believe urgent action is required by state and federal governments to protect, support, reposition and grow all our public universities. Without this, critical Australian research, innovation and training will suffer and thousands of direct and indirect jobs will be lost across the economy. In the context of this inquiry we have recommended the NSW Government implement these key initiatives:

- 1. The NSW Regional Growth Fund is increased to have a new funding stream to assist universities build critical regional infrastructure.
- 2. That additional applied research grants are applied to regional Universities to assist the universities develop evidence based approaches for regional industries and regional specialisation of those universities.
- 3. That the Regional Growth Fund be extended to include provisions for universities to assist students of low socio-economic background by supporting university infrastructure that assists students of low socio-economic background attend university including public housing supply.
- 4. Uncap domestic student numbers (restore demand model) and rather than capping international student numbers, place restrictions on the amount universities are allowed to charge on international student fees so that they are no more or less "valuable" to a university than a domestic student.



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5. Diversity of international students – limit the overreliance on any one country and implement measures to minimise over reliance on any one country to ensure stability and sustainability of the University sector.
6. The NSW Government utilise its position of influence at National Cabinet to prioritise delivery of a “secure corridor” to support future international student intake.
7. The NSW Government could utilise its position of influence at National Cabinet to push for the establishment of a national Research and development budget as a percentage of GDP and to have this budget achieved over ten years.
8. The NSW Government utilise its position of influence at National Cabinet to push for an increase in Commonwealth funding for an expansion of domestic university training to prepare our workforce for the future.
9. The NSW Government utilise its position of influence at National Cabinet to remove the cap on demand driven enrolment funding.
10. The NSW Government utilises its influence at National Cabinet to advocate for the federal government to extend the JobKeeper subsidy to the University Sector.

For further information on our submission, contact the CPSU NSW on 1300 772 679.

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