



SENATOR THE HON CHRIS EVANS

Leader of the Government in the Senate
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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Asian Century drives stronger Australia-China partnership

Australia's future lies in a deeper collaboration with China across education, research, industry and innovation, Minister for Tertiary Education, Senator Chris Evans, said today.

Celebrating 40 years of diplomatic relations, Senator Evans today told the Australia-China University Leaders Forum that Australia's relationship with China needs to build on the enduring foundations of the past four decades.

"Australia and China have established a strong educational and research relationship over the past 40 years, and the Asian Century presents an opportunity to take this partnership to a new level," Senator Evans said.

"China has become our most significant knowledge partner, thanks to our deliberate decision to boost collaboration across research and education.

"Universities Australia has today announced that Australian universities now have 885 agreements with China – the number has risen by 72 per cent since 2003 and, for the first time, Australia has more agreements with China than with the USA."

Senator Evans said Australia and China stand to benefit from sharing our brightest minds and pooling our resources to tackle common and global challenges.

"Australia is a modest but high performing global player in the research space and regards China as a very strong research partner," Senator Evans said.

"Australia's next priority is to further develop higher education partnerships with China, deepen postgraduate and research collaboration, and develop more partnerships with industry."

The Gillard Government recognises a two-way flow of students between Australia and China is vital to driving higher level collaborations between the two countries.

"While 90,000 Chinese students studied here in Australia last year, only 3000 Australian students took up university study in China," Senator Evans said.

"The Gillard Government's \$37 million AsiaBound Grants Program will support more than 10,000 Australian students to live and study in an Asian country. Thousands more will have access to generous student loans to support their international study choices."

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