



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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Education and research to strengthen Australia-China relationship

Australian and Chinese researchers and educators will work more closely on key issues facing the region after the two Governments signed a new higher education and research agreement.

In this 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and China, Minister for Tertiary Education, Senator Chris Evans, and Chinese Vice Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Wang Zhigang, today announced six new joint research centres will be established under the Australia-China Science and Research Fund.

Each government is providing a total of \$5 million to support these joint research centres.

The announcement was part of a visit by a Chinese delegation, headed by State Councilor Madame Liu Yandong, Minister of Education Mr Yuan Guiren and Mr Wang.

“A two-way flow of researchers, students and information between Australia and China is vital to driving higher collaboration between our countries,” Senator Evans said.

“It builds on our long history of cooperation and sets out a path to further strengthen ties between educators and researchers in both of our countries.”

The joint research centres will support collaboration between universities and research agencies in environmental science, energy, sustainable futures, agriculture and biological sciences, engineering and materials science.

Senator Evans and Mr Yuan also signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Education, Training and Higher Education Research.

“Over the past 40 years, education links have been the forefront of developing this important relationship and this renewed memorandum of understanding will ensure it continues,” Senator Evans said.

Senator Evans said the announcement supports the Gillard Government's efforts to ensure young Australians were well placed to take advantage of deepening engagement with Asia.

"The next generation of Australian leaders will need to be increasingly Asian-literate and these are skills best learnt by experiencing Asia first-hand," Senator Evans said.

"While 90,000 Chinese students enjoyed educational opportunities in Australia last year, only 3000 Australian students took up university study in China.

"That's why we are investing in programs like AsiaBound that will help thousands of Australian students to enjoy and learn from the experience of living and studying in Asia."

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Joint research centres co-funded by Australia and China

Joint research centre	Priority area	Lead Australian organisation
Australia-China Joint Research Centre for Energy	Energy	Curtin University of Technology
Australia-China Research Centre for Light Metals	Engineering and materials science	Monash University
Australia-China Centre for Wheat Improvement	Agriculture and biological sciences	Murdoch University
Australia-China Joint Research Centre for Minerals, Metallurgy and Materials (3-M Centre)	Multidisciplinary projects related to sustainable futures	The University of New South Wales
Australia-China Research Centre on River Basin Management (water resources and water quality)	Environmental science	The University of Melbourne
ANSTO-SINAP Joint Materials Research Centre	Energy	ANSTO