



SENATOR KIM CARR
Shadow Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
Labor Senator for Victoria

Mr Sam Popovski
Secretary, CSIRO Staff Association
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Dear Mr Popovski,

Thank you for providing the CSIRO Staff Association *Science Policy Priorities for Federal Election 2019*.

I wish to place on record my appreciation, and that of the Labor Party, for the leadership and steadfastness the Staff Association and the CPSU have shown in your defence of public good science and the role of science and evidence in public life.

As you know Labor has already made several commitments that directly affect the CSIRO and your members:

- Labor will end the war on science and research by resetting the relationship between the Australian Government and Australia's science and research community. This will involve a new formal charter between the Commonwealth and the science community – both in and outside of government.
- A Shorten Labor Government will aim to dedicate 3 per cent of our national Gross Domestic Product to science, research and development by 2030.
- To that end, we have announced a wide ranging *Research in Australia* review to be led by the former Chief Scientist and former ANU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ian Chubb.

When Labor was last in government we ensured that there was consistent Commonwealth investment in innovation and science. We increased investment in innovation, science and research by 50 per cent, from \$6.6 billion to \$9.9 billion. Since the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government was elected in 2013, however, there have been persistent attacks on the public service through wage freezes, attempts to strip agreements of hard-won conditions, and relentless tightening of the APS bargaining framework.

Labor values the expertise and experience of our public servants, from service delivery staff, engineers, scientists, national security professionals, policymakers and the raft of other public service employees who do an excellent job of making Australia a world leader in so many areas through their contributions.

Labor rejects Mr Morrison's cutting of jobs and stripping of rights, and a Shorten Labor Government will quickly, fairly and equitably fix the mess.

We will not proceed with the remaining 0.5 per cent additional efficiency dividend next financial year, thereby saving an estimated 550 jobs and ensuring valuable experience, expertise and corporate memory is retained within the Australian public service. Further, the APS staffing cap will be removed from the CSIRO. We also made a commitment at our National Conference last year to create a staff-elected position on the CSIRO Board.

We are committed to a strong science focus for the CSIRO, and as a part of the process of ending the war on science we will revive and update the science integrity charter we instituted when we were last in government.

Labor notes CSIRO's Reconciliation Action Plan to move to 3 per cent participation in its workforce by people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, and your concern about the pipeline of STEM-qualified candidates. To that end, Labor will remove the freeze on university places and restore the demand driven system which since 2009 has seen the number of indigenous students almost double.

We also note the CSIRO's gender initiatives, particularly the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) program and the growth in gender diversity. As a point of principle, we would expect the CSIRO to maintain and increase its gender equity initiatives, and that CSIRO and other publically funded science and research agencies will become model employers in this regard.

Labor is also considering its position on the changes to the R&D Tax Incentive announced in the 2018-19 Budget. As you know the changes are on hold after severe criticism by a government-controlled Senate committee. As Shadow Minister, I have made it clear that I support a premium rate for collaboration with industry, which was also supported by the Fraser, Ferris and Finkel Review of the incentive in 2015.

To read more about what Labor stands for, visit www.alp.org.au

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kim Carr', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Senator Kim Carr