Media Release

THE HON PETER McGAURAN MP
ACTING MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

$12 MILLION FOR MANAGING UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

22 October, 2003

Australia’s research information will become more easily accessible and better managed thanks to more than $12 million in funding to improve infrastructure.

The new information infrastructure will put Australian institutions in an even better position to take part in, and lead, national and international research projects. The funding was announced by the Acting Minister for Education, Science and Training Peter McGauran.

"Information infrastructure supports world-class research in Australia that is complex and continually evolving,” Mr McGauran said. “It must accommodate emerging technologies and changes in research practices, theory and priorities.

“This funding will provide for four new projects as well as international consultation and collaboration. The new projects will be guided and coordinated by the newly established Australian Research Information Infrastructure Committee (ARIIC) headed by Professor Wyatt R Hume, Vice Chancellor of the University of New South Wales.”

The agencies involved in these projects include 15 Australian universities, Australian and international libraries, industry representatives and international organisations. (For more details on these projects see attached list.)

"As the projects progress I anticipate that more universities will help develop the infrastructure and this will benefit the entire Higher Education sector,” Mr McGauran said.

The Higher Education Information Infrastructure Implementation Steering Committee found there was a need to enhance the creation and management of information, improve access to information resources, and facilitate the discovery and dissemination of new information to researchers and institutions. This funding implements these findings.

The funded projects are:

- Meta Access Management System;
- Towards an Australian Partnership for Sustainable Repositories;
- The Australian Research Repositories Online to the World (ARROWS); and
- Australian Digital Theses Program Expansion and Redevelopment.

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Attachment

Research Information Infrastructure Proposals Recommended for Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead University</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
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<tr>
<th>University</th>
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<tr>
<td>Macquarie University</td>
<td>Meta Access Management System Project (MAMS)</td>
<td>This project allows for the integration of multiple solutions to managing authentication, authorisation and identities, together with common services for digital rights, search services and metadata management. The project provides an essential “middleware” component to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Australia’s higher education research infrastructure. It will develop a new conceptual architecture which is capable of supporting multiple, independent models of (a “meta access management system” of “MAMS”), which is implemented locally within organisations, but with the potential for inter-institutional communication.</td>
<td>National Library of Australia; Education.au; Telstra; University of Southern Queensland; University of New England; University of Tasmania; University of Newcastle; University of Western Australia; Curtin University of Technology; Edith Cowan University; Murdoch; Notre Dame University; Internet2/MACE Shibboleth' University of Ulster/Athens DA; National Library of New Zealand; Massachusetts Institute of Technology OKI Group; JISC/CETIS UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Australian National University</td>
<td>Towards an Australian Partnership for Sustainable Repositories (APSR)</td>
<td>APSR has three parts. First, the proposal has an overall focus on the critical issues of the access continuity and the sustainability of digital collections. Second, it will build on a base of demonstrators for digital continuity and sustainability, embedded in developmental repository facilities within partner institutions. Third, it will contribute to national strength in this area by encouraging the development of skills and expertise and providing coordination through out the sector. APSR will actively provide international linkages and national services.</td>
<td>National Library of Australia; University of Queensland; University of Sydney; Australian Partnership for Advanced Computing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>The Australian Research Repositories Online to the World (ARROW)</td>
<td>The ARROW project will identify and test a software solution or solutions to support best-practice institutional digital repositories comprising e-prints, digital theses and electronic publishing. A wide range of digital content types will be managed in these repositories. The National Library of Australia (NLA) will develop a repository and associated metadata to support independent scholars (those not associated with institutions). A complementary activity of ARROW is the development and testing of national resource discovery services (developed by the NLA) using metadata harvested from the institutional repositories, and the exposing of metadata to provide services via protocols and toolkits. This will include a potential path for</td>
<td>University of NSW; Swinburne University of Technology, National Library of Australia</td>
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the redevelopment of the Australian Digital Theses (ADT) metadata repository incorporated into the NLA’s national resources discovery services. Initially ARROW will be tested in the four partner institutions, prior to it being offered more widely across the higher-education sector. The solution will be open-standards based, or will support open standards, and will facilitate interoperability within and between participating institutions.

| University of New South Wales | Australian Digital Theses Program Expansion and Redevelopment (ADT) | This project will redevelop the existing central metadata repository of the Australian Digital Theses Program (ADT) to increase its coverage and utility to the national and international research community. The repository’s content will expand to include metadata about all Australian higher degree theses, whether in digital form or not. This goal responds to a clearly stated desire of the Australian research community, who report difficulty in finding information about theses. The redevelopment of the ADT metadata repository is an essential adjunct to institutional initiatives by providing efficient search services and metadata support services. The partnership with ProQuest Information and Learning provides opportunities for retrospective digitisation of Australian higher degree theses, enabling more rapid growth of a critical mass of online content. | Curtin University of Technology; University of Melbourne, University of Queensland; Sydney University of Technology; ProQuest Information and Learning |

Further information:
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