



Chief Scientist

MEDIA RELEASE

PROFESSOR PENNY D SACKETT

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PREPARING A LEARNING SOCIETY FOR THE FUTURE

The Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (PMSEIC) was today advised by an Expert Working Group that breakthroughs in the science of learning, including brain function, motivation and the practice of teaching, have the potential to transform how individual Australians acquire and retain knowledge throughout their lives.

The *'Transforming Learning and the Transmission of Knowledge: Preparing a learning society for the future'* report presented to the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Council members focuses on fundamental questions that influence our ability to learn and highlights the potential of bringing together researchers and practitioners to address the science of learning within a structured and sustained program.

The Executive Officer of PMSEIC, Professor Penny Sackett, Chief Scientist for Australia, said that the report highlights the opportunity for Australia to transform its practices related to learning, with the aim of enhancing life-long learning outcomes for all Australians.

"The report contains as its central recommendation the establishment of a *Science of Learning Program*, to be delivered through a number of interdisciplinary and inter-professional *Science of Learning Centres*.

"The Centres would have a transformational impact on learning by advancing the scientific understanding of effective learning techniques; generating knowledge to inform education policy and practice; and by testing innovative approaches in real world environments to maximise learning outcomes.

"It is expected that the research findings from these Centres could lead to improvements in equity, educational practice and practitioner development. All of which, should narrow the achievement gap and maximise Australia's economic productivity, Professor Sackett said.

The Centres, if established, would cover Australia geographically and socio-economically; and would build on the work already being conducted across Australia by Departments of Education, researchers and other educational groups.

It is also expected that input into the Centres would be harnessed from parents, carers, learners, community leaders, formal and informal educators, and researchers from different disciplines.

"By adopting the recommendation from the report to establish *Science of Learning Centres*, we can deliver a society of effective life-long learners who have the ability to engage in the rapidly developing knowledge society that is the global future," Professor Sackett concluded.

A copy of the full report and an impact statement can be found on the [PMSEIC](#) website

For more information on the Chief Scientist for Australia, Professor Penny Sackett, please visit www.chiefscientist.gov.au.

Media Contact: Rebecca Richter, Office of the Chief Scientist, Mobile: 0410 029 407