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MEDIA RELEASE

Budget supports key learning areas, but could include more

The 2012-2013 Federal Budget has protected many key measures related to higher education and research.

Professor Sue Willis, President of the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) congratulated Minister Chris Evans on the strong support for Science and Maths in response to the report by the Chief Scientist Professor Ian Chubb.

CHASS is the national peak body for the humanities, arts and social sciences in Australia, with a membership of 90 organisations which include universities, faculties, professional peaks and major national institutions.

Speaking about the budget measures she said, "I commend the support for the learned academies which include the Academy of Social Sciences and the Australian Academy of the Humanities. This provides valuable recognition of the humanities and social sciences knowledge."

While recognising the Minister's commitment to higher education and research, Professor Willis noted that some strategic knowledge areas could do with more recognition and resourcing. "With the government's Australia in the Asian Century agenda, recognising the importance of language and cultural studies, particularly of our regional context, is required to support this agenda," she said.

CHASS also notes the disappointment in the arts community about the delay in the National Cultural Policy announcement. Professor Willis said, "We congratulate the government for the investments that have been made in the arts in events such as the Canberra Centenary and in some areas of the cultural sector. While components of the National Cultural Policy have been included in the budget, we need to resource a comprehensive national vision in this area as soon as possible."

CHASS will continue to advocate for greater recognition of and resourcing for the learning areas that will support key government priorities in areas such as languages, cultural studies, social sciences and the arts.

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