

CHASS Response to the changes in the federal government's Investment Plan for national collaborative research infrastructure

The Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) is deeply disappointed at the contents of the recently released federal government Investment Plan for national collaborative research infrastructure.

Despite the 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap clearly recognising Humanities and Social Science research as a top priority, the announcement provides only very limited support for scoping work in two years' time.

“You might call it jam tomorrow – and not much of it,” said Professor Joseph M. Siracusa, President of CHASS.

CHASS is especially disheartened at the government's claim that \$43 million allocated to CSIRO, to build a facility to care for insect and plant collections, is dedicated Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) funding.

“There is no way under the sun you could describe this as support for Humanities and Social Sciences research. To announce it this way reflects either monumental misunderstanding or just old-fashioned deception,” said Professor Siracusa.

HASS infrastructure is focused on people and networks. Investment in the area provides time and space for collaborative research in a system until now dominated by bricks and mortar thinking. Globally, there is increasing recognition of the importance of cross-disciplinary research, with interconnections across STEM and HASS sectors producing better outcomes, more impact and greater societal benefits, than a focus on STEM alone.

New challenges require new infrastructure responses. The Roadmap articulates the need to adapt to a rapidly changing social and economic environment. When it comes to the government's Investment Plan, however, HASS research has been ill-served.

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Further information

About CHASS

Established in 2004, the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) promotes and provides advocacy services for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences in Australia. It serves as a coordinating forum for academics, teachers, researchers, professionals and practitioners in the sector. Supporting more than 70 organisations in their relationships with policy makers and the broader community, CHASS is an important network for knowledge and skills. It provides a strong voice to the sector and helps members to contribute to public debate through programs for knowledge exchange and media awareness. For more information, please visit www.chass.org.au or call CHASS Executive Officer Divya Das on (03) 9925 3935.