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HASS Research Infrastructure Scoping Study to commence in 2019

The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) welcomes news that the Minister of Education, the Honourable Dan Tehan MP, has agreed to this year commence a Scoping Study into the research infrastructure capabilities and requirements of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS), bringing it forward from 2020-21.

Australians working in the HASS sector have long identified a need for research infrastructure enhancements to maintain our global competitiveness and increase the value of our contributions to the Australian public. This announcement is a positive sign indicating that the Federal Government recognises this need and is committed to supporting HASS researchers by investigating options for improving research infrastructure.

The forthcoming Scoping Study will build on work the Department of Education has been undertaking over the past 12 months in consultation with key representatives from the HASS community, including members of DASSH.

This has included a range of consultations, workshops, the commissioning of the Australian Academy of the Humanities to investigate international HASS infrastructure, and engaging Dandolo Partners Pty Ltd to consult with members of the community to develop a framework to communicate and develop National Research Infrastructure investments for the HASS sector.

As a further input to the Scoping Study, the Department has also recently engaged the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) to explore the establishment of a HASS research data commons. This was a direct result of the discussions between the Department, members of DASSH and other stakeholders.

DASSH President, Prof Mandy Thomas, applauded the Department's willingness to act on the advice of experts.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to take an active role in shaping the future of HASS research in Australia. Our members are ideally placed to comment on the impact of inadequate research infrastructure, and to make recommendations that will ensure Australia can lead the world in HASS research and engagement."

DASSH eagerly awaits further information about the Scoping Study, including the terms of reference and expert panel, expected in the coming weeks.

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About DASSH

The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) is the authoritative agency on research, teaching and learning for the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (ASSH) in Australian and New Zealand universities.

DASSH supports those within these institutions who have responsibility for the governance and management of research and teaching and learning in their universities. DASSH also supports those who aspire to these positions through a Network of Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) and a Network of Associate Deans (Research).