

Bligh launches new Smart State strategy

Premier - The Honourable Anna Bligh

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Premier Anna Bligh today launched the next multi-million dollar phase of Queensland's successful Smart State strategy.

Ms Bligh said \$120 million would be allocated over the next four years with a major shift in focus from 'bricks' to 'brains'.

"We have built the foundations for the Smart State economy with a massive investment in infrastructure," Ms Bligh said.

"Now it is time to invest more in our best and brightest who work in our new institutes, research centres and laboratories.

"There will still be money for projects but I want to change direction and invest more in the most valuable commodity we have – our people."

Ms Bligh said there would be a major overhaul of existing programs as part of Smart State Strategy: Queensland's smart future 2008-2012 as well as the introduction of several new initiatives.

"We are trebling our investment in our people," she said.

"All up, we will spend around \$43 million providing scholarships, fellowships and other research grants to individual researchers – compared to \$12 million in the previous Strategy.

"This will fund around 280 scholarships and fellowships – 190 more than in the past.

"This includes funds to expand our existing scholarship and fellowship programs and offer new opportunities for exchanges between industry and research leaders, to commercialise research discoveries.

"It also includes a new Health and Medical research and development program with clinical and health research fellowships."

Under this program three streams of fellowship will be awarded:

- Senior Clinical Research Fellows – six of these fellowships will be awarded valued at up to \$850,000 per annum each. They will include a salary component as well as laboratory and support staff;
- Health Research Fellows – 22 fellowships will be awarded at up to \$250,000 per annum each. These fellowships are designed to help medical, nursing and allied health staff kick-start careers in clinical research; and
- Clinical Academic Fellows – 12 fellowships will be awarded at up to \$75,000 per annum each. These fellowships will provide 'top-up' funding to support academics already holding full-time appointments in clinical disciplines.

Ms Bligh said the fellowships are the most generous in the country and will give Queensland the edge to attract leading clinicians, health professionals and researchers to Queensland.

"They will also help us better translate results in the lab into better health services in our hospitals," she said.

"We will also establish the first dedicated Office of Health and Medical Research and Development in Queensland Health, to coordinate research in our health sector and signal the importance of research in dealing with demands on our health services.

"Another \$60 million will create new partnerships and collaborations to ensure that research is applied, to build our industries and solve contemporary challenges like climate change.

"We will also spend \$6 million to bolster creativity and innovation in design and tropical research."

Ms Bligh said she was keen to stamp her own mark on the successful Smart State Strategy.

"Smart State has transformed our economy," she said.

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“We have created new industries and thousands of new jobs in fields such as aviation, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing and creative industries.

“Our Government has provided the ‘bricks and mortar’ to drive this growth building 36 new institutes including world-class facilities such as the Brain Institute, Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Institute for Molecular Bioscience and the Institute for Molecular Bioscience.

“We have provided the platform for researchers to do their work. We have built it and they have come.

“Now, as we move into the next phase, I want to provide the springboard to take them to the next level.”

To view a copy of the Smart State Strategy 2008-2012, [click here](#).