



30 January, 2008

Mr Philip Clark AM
Chair, Higher Education Endowment Fund (HEEF) Advisory Board
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
heef@dest.gov.au

Dear Mr Clark,

I am writing to thank you for the opportunity to meet with you in Melbourne on January 24.

I have accepted your invitation to summarise key points in our discussion. These are attached.

We appreciated having CAUDIT join us in the meeting. CAUL supports the CAUDIT submission (21 January 2008) and notes that many of the issues raised by CAUDIT also apply to the library environment. There is a high level of convergence between CAUDIT and CAUL activities and responsibilities, and high levels of cooperation between the two sectors.

I look forward to further communication with the HEEF Advisory Board.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Wells
President, CAUL

President: Andrew Wells, *University Librarian, University of New South Wales*

LPO Box 8169
Australian National University
Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone +612 6125 2990
Fax +612 6248 8571

caul@caul.edu.au
a.wells@unsw.edu.au
<http://www.caul.edu.au/>

Summary of Matters Raised by Council of Australian University Librarians, 24 January 2008

Information infrastructure

Libraries have had a significant involvement with a range of information infrastructure initiatives over many years that have resulted in:

- building capability to provide repository storage of universities' digital assets (research outputs and teaching and learning material);
- increased national capacity to support research collaboration;
- overall savings in the development of these new functions; and
- international recognition of Australian best practice and leadership in this area.

This has been achieved in large part because the Government has led the process and established national platforms. The institutional perspective that HEEF has means that these infrastructure advances are not likely to be supported, unless an institution takes a lead role on behalf of the sector or a group of institutions. Encouraging institutions to provide leadership, and not putting their other institutional bids in jeopardy if they do so, would help, but it may also be necessary for the Government to provide other channels for supporting information infrastructure initiatives that are broader than those supported by NCRIS.

Library buildings

One of the most pressing issues facing universities, as articulated in the CAUL submission to HEEF of 24 August 2007, is the need to upgrade library facilities. The apparent focus of the HEEF Bill on research will discourage universities from including library building or refurbishment projects in their bids, as libraries are being reconfigured to include a wide range of learning spaces. Libraries also support research through their collections and services, as demonstrated by library involvement in research information infrastructure. They provide vital support for research and teaching. CAUL recommends that the guidelines for HEEF submissions encourage proposals that address the research and teaching nexus

Philanthropy

Libraries have some, but limited, scope to benefit from increased philanthropy resulting from HEEF activity. The philanthropic environment in Australia is not currently conducive to significant support being directed towards university libraries. Those most likely to benefit are the older research intensive libraries, which have richer special collections and, in some cases, more attractive buildings. Greater encouragement by HEEF may be beneficial, but goals should be modest.

CAUL involvement

CAUL appreciates the opportunity it was given to speak with HEEF and would welcome further involvement to provide expertise or advice. CAUL is keen to ensure that HEEF submissions take into account whole of proposal costs and implications, particularly with regard to information infrastructure. CAUL can identify possible areas of duplication or initiatives that could act against the national capacity to collaborate.

President: Andrew Wells, *University Librarian, University of New South Wales*

LPO Box 8169
Australian National University
Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone +612 6125 2990
Fax +612 6248 8571

caul@caul.edu.au
a.wells@unsw.edu.au
<http://www.caul.edu.au/>