

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**National Alliance for Public Universities goes viral, reaches 500 staff signatories**

A group of academics from universities across Australia **have this week formed the National Alliance for Public Universities (NAPU) to combat deregulation and promote the values of public universities.**

Officially launched on Monday, the alliance quickly gathered over **500 staff signatures on Monday and Tuesday**, as well as 900 likes on its Facebook page.

“The Senate committee report delivered yesterday claims that the bill has ‘overwhelming support from the higher education sector’. This is wrong as it **takes into consideration only the views of vice chancellors beholden to corporate self-interest when faced with massive spending cuts.**” Dr Ben Etherington a spokesperson for the group said today.

“**The viral growth of NAPU shows that university staff are desperate to let politicians and the Australian public know that the people actually in the lecture halls and laboratories reject these reforms and the principles that underlie them.**”

“We call on the government to engage in a proper process of consultation with staff in Australia’s universities. They will find that they will need to scrap these reforms and fundamentally rethink the approach to supporting public universities.”

See the following for more:

<http://www.crikey.com.au/2014/10/28/uni-vcs-selling-australian-students-short-for-a-quick-buck/>

<https://newmatilda.com/2014/10/28/battle-save-our-universities-now>

<http://theconversation.com/vice-chancellors-vs-the-collegiate-who-is-right-on-deregulation-33461>

A *Charter for Australia’s Universities* can be found here: <http://napuaustralia.org/charter/>  
Signatories include the Nobel Prize winner Prof J.M. Coetzee (Adelaide), Prof Paul Salzman (La Trobe), Professor Ivor Indyk (UWS), and Winthrop Prof Jenny Gregory (UWA)

The following may be contacted for further details and comment

Dr Ben Etherington (UWS):            0478 665 692            [b.etherington@uws.edu.au](mailto:b.etherington@uws.edu.au)

Can comment on the background and formation of the alliance, the text of the charter and its underlying philosophy; UK/Australia comparisons.

Dr Chris Peterson (UWS):           0414 449 847           [c.peterson@uws.edu.au](mailto:c.peterson@uws.edu.au)  
Can comment on US/Australia comparisons; perils of 'Americanisation'.

Dr Nick Riemer (USyd):           0481 339 937           [nick.riemer@sydney.edu.au](mailto:nick.riemer@sydney.edu.au)  
Can comment on the political stakes involved and the social consequences; long-time commentator on HE.

Dr Julie-Ann Robson (USyd):      0419 608 723           [julie-ann.robson@sydney.edu.au](mailto:julie-ann.robson@sydney.edu.au)  
Can comment on equity and institutional politics; long-time campaigner on academic freedom.