



**Sharon Grierson MP**  
Federal Member for Newcastle

## Media Release

11 October 2006

### FUNDING FOR NEWCASTLE’S INNOVATIVE RESEARCHERS

Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson today congratulated University of Newcastle researchers for securing over \$9 million in Commonwealth funds from through the Australian Research Council.

Speaking after attending the 2006 grant announcements in Canberra, Ms Grierson said the funding received was a tribute to the University’s reputation for innovation and excellence in research.

“For a relatively small University, Newcastle consistently punches above its weight in terms of research,” Ms Grierson said. “It is a tribute to the institution that it consistently ranks in the top ten Australian universities for research.”

“It is also good to see research being undertaken in areas of particular relevance to our community.”

“With our seaport so important to our economy, I am pleased the University has been awarded a grant to investigate sensors to target the transportation of illicit drugs and explosives.”

“And with Newcastle having the seventh highest rate of Disability Support Pension payments in New South Wales, a research grant to look into improving levels of communication and engagement by training teachers and teachers’ aides who work with students with multiple and severe disabilities.”

In all, the University received 27 *Discovery Projects* grants worth a total of \$7,846,546, 2 *Indigenous Discovery* grants worth a total of \$76,000, 3 *Linkage Project* grants worth a total of \$758,942 and *Linkage Infrastructure* grants worth \$400,000.

“While this funding is welcome and vital for our University, it comes a day after new figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed overall Commonwealth funding for research and development fell to below 1996 levels – from \$1,599 million in 1996/7 to \$1,573 million in 2004/05.”

“Innovation is a vital driver of productivity - and by cutting back on R&D the Howard Government is selling out Australia’s economic future.”

**Labor’s *Innovation Blueprint* is available from [www.sharongrierson.com.au](http://www.sharongrierson.com.au)**

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