



Media release

Minister for Housing and Public Works
Minister for Science and Innovation
Hon Leeanne Enoch MP

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New Advance Queensland Women's Academic Fund

Women researchers in Queensland will be able to employ a research assistant to continue work on their project if they go on maternity leave, thanks to a new Queensland Government funding program announced today.

Science and Innovation Minister Leeanne Enoch announced the government had established a \$1 million Advance Queensland Women's Academic Fund, as part of the \$180 million Advance Queensland program.

"The Advance Queensland initiative has a key focus on investing in science and innovation in order to attract and retain the best and brightest research minds and encouraging researchers to keep working in their chosen profession," Ms Enoch said.

"The Advance Queensland Women's Academic Fund will support women researchers in Queensland to maintain their research careers and support Queensland organisations in promoting the achievements of their women researchers."

Ms Enoch was speaking at *Smashing the Glass Ceiling: Women in Queensland science and the ambition to succeed and make a difference* at the State Library today during National Science Week.

She said the fund included up to \$25,000 for a woman researcher going on maternity leave to employ another researcher or a research assistant.

"They can use this funding to maintain research progress while they're away, or to assist them to get back up to speed when they return to work," Ms Enoch said.

"We're also making up to \$1000 available to fund any out-of-pocket child care costs if a woman researcher has to take time away to present at a national or international conference or is involved in a professional research committee."

"This recognises that being invited to speak at a major conference is an important event for a researcher and they shouldn't miss out because they can't cover child care costs."

Ms Enoch said up to \$2000 would also be available to organisations to arrange conferences, lectures or presentations to highlight the work of leading women researchers.

The \$180 million Advance Queensland policy includes programs that will support women researchers and encourage more young women to pursue careers in science and technology.

“In many Australian universities the number of women now outnumber men, and women are increasingly taking on key roles in science and technology, yet we still see low levels of participation in engineering and IT, and low rates of retention beyond the post-doctoral phase,” she said.

“Advance Queensland Women’s Academic Fund will help to address this imbalance.”

Visit the Advance Queensland website at <http://advanceqld.initiatives.qld.gov.au/> for more information.

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