

## Acceptance Speech

Good morning. Today more than ever the challenges and opportunities facing Australia must be met with the assistance of science. Never has our understanding of the world been so great and the tools that we have created with that understanding been so powerful and yet, at the same time, seldom have the stakes been higher, the rate of change faster or the interdependency of our actions greater.

I believe that science has a unique and critical role in our nation's future, including generating and communicating new knowledge about the world around us and applying that knowledge and scientific thinking to tackle the big challenges ahead for Australia. Scientists can and should engage with government to inform national policy while effectively communicating with the people of Australia about the scientific issues that affect their lives.

We must compete and collaborate on the broader global stage and, very importantly, inspire and assist the nation's youth to equip themselves for our common future.

The next Chief Scientist of Australia will have the honour and the responsibility to provide independent advice to the Government on the key questions for Australia on the scientific side of the interface between science and policy; questions such as, how can we shape the nation's research effort to meet the related issues of water, climate and sustainable energy? How can we best innovate to add value beyond the primary industrial sectors? What must be done to confront health care and lifestyle issues arising from demographic shifts? And how do we reach and engage the youngest Australians to ensure that we have the scientific and technical skills that we need in this global and changing marketplace?

The solutions will require collaborating across sectors and innovating across traditional boundaries of the physical, the biological and the social sciences. No individual scientist could pretend to be an expert in all of these issues.

The title of my new post is Chief Scientist for Australia, not Chief Scientist of Australia. And so I will have many hats to wear, as a commissioner of expert studies, facilitator for innovation, a bellwether for the nation's most important scientific issues, a communicator and an ambassador and, perhaps most importantly, the Chief Scientist must be a strong and continuous advocate of evidence-based decision making.

It's an enormous honour and privilege to be given the opportunity to serve as the next Chief Scientist for Australia, a role that I am most enthusiastic and eager to undertake for the benefit of the nation.

Thank you.