

# APPLICANT INFORMATION

## THE AUSTRALIAN CHIEF SCIENTIST

### ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Australia's Chief Scientist needs to be a person with an outstanding record of achievement in science and innovation; a person who has the respect of the science, engineering and technology community, who is also well versed in the interests and needs of industry and the contribution that research and development can make to innovation.

Australia's Chief Scientist provides strategic policy advice to the Prime Minister and those Australian Government Ministers with science, engineering and technology portfolio interests. A key part of the role is to draw to the Government's attention emerging issues in science, engineering and innovation.

As well as being the Executive Officer for the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (PMSEIC) and chair of its Standing Committee, the position includes several ex-officio roles on a number of other key government standing committees such as the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Committee, the Coordination Committee on Science and Technology (CCST) and the Australian Research Council (ARC) Board.

The Chief Scientist will also work closely with various publicly funded research agencies such as CSIRO, ANSTO and AIMS, providing strategic direction and leadership as required.

The Chief Scientist's high level coordinating role can also include appointment to chair or be a member of specialist ad hoc policy development or advisory committees such as the Publicly Funded Research Agencies (PFRA) Committee, the National Research Priorities (NRPs) Standing Committee, the Research Quality Framework (RQF) Expert Advisory Group, and the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) Advisory Committee.

The position requires someone with a record of excellence and the ability to build effective working relationships that facilitate interaction and cooperation across all levels of the scientific community, industry and the public.

### Environment

The Australian Government's vision is to create a better future for all Australians by continuing to build a world-class innovation system. This agenda depends on effective partnerships between governments at all levels, researchers and business, to maximise the substantial financial investment being made and to ensure that ideas move smoothly from generation to end-use.

Australia's economy and population are small by world standards, with comparatively limited resources. Our publicly funded science and innovation investments must therefore be well-directed and provide excellent value for money.

The Australian Government fully recognises that our scientists and researchers are addressing the big-picture issues of our time. Successfully dealing with issues such as population ageing and demands on our health system, land degradation, water management and climate change, just to name a few, is vital to Australia's prosperity.

### Context

The Education, Training and Science portfolio has a general science policy responsibility, administers a number of science programmes and includes three publicly funded research agencies. Science, research and innovation responsibilities are also distributed across a wide range of other portfolios including the Department of Industry, Training and Resources (DITR), the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH), the Department of Health and Ageing (DH&A), the Department of Agriculture,

Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and the Department of Defence. A number of these portfolios have agencies with their own Chief Scientists. Most states and territories have also appointed Chief Scientists.

The Australian Government's Chief Scientist position is a specialist part-time advisory appointment because the occupant needs to be closely connected with the real world of science, research and industry. The position is located in the science portfolio and the occupant is expected to operate on a whole of government basis. The role and responsibilities of the Chief Scientist include, but are not limited to:

- a. Providing advice to the Prime Minister, and the Minister on such matters affecting science, engineering and innovation as the Prime Minister and the Minister requests;
- b. Drawing to the Minister's attention emerging issues in science, engineering and innovation that may affect the national well-being or require attention by the Government, including an awareness and education role, stimulating thinking in key influential groups about new policy and programme directions relevant to science and innovation;
- c. Chairing the Standing Committee of the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council and acting as the Council's Executive Officer (this will include overall management of the Council's working groups and coordination of their reports);
- d. Assisting in the coordination of government activities in science, engineering and innovation, promoting communication and collaborating with industry and
- e. Fostering close and effective working relationships between the Government and organisations with responsibilities for science, engineering, and innovation including particularly the Australian Academy of Science, the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, the Institution of Engineers Australia, and the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies; and by fostering relationships with key industry groups (eg Business Council of Australia, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian Industry Group).

## **Scope**

In addition to the advice provided to the Prime Minister and Minister for Science, the Chief Scientist has a significant advisory role on a range of science and innovation issues in various portfolios (eg. DITR; DEH, DH&A, DAFF, Defence) reflecting the spread of science responsibilities across government,. The Chief Scientist can also be commissioned to undertake specific reports and reviews from time to time.

As part of the advisory role to the Minister, the Chief Scientist's advice could, with approval, be made public, including through submissions and attendance at Parliamentary Committees.

The Chief Scientist will not be involved in executive or administrative duties within government.

More specific arrangements regarding the management of conflict of interest, accountability and requirements for reporting to Government will be covered in the contractual arrangements between the appointee and the Government.

The scope, scale and prioritisation of the Chief Scientist's work and the resources to be deployed will be generally agreed between the Chief Scientist, the Minister and relevant government agencies. By the nature of the position the Chief Scientist is required to identify and focus on key strategic issues of central or emerging interest to the Government.

## **Support**

For each of the activities described above DEST provides dedicated staff, research and advice, briefing, and funding to support the Chief Scientist's work. It also meets the salary, superannuation, travel, accommodation and other costs of the Chief Scientist position.

### **The Appointment – Time allocation and remuneration**

The appointment will be to a part-time Public Office with the level of remuneration determined by the Remuneration Tribunal. The Remuneration Tribunal has recently made a new determination for the position of Chief Scientist (Determination 2005/05: *Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-time Public Offices*) which provides a fee of \$102,760pa for a two day per week appointment. The Determination takes effect from 1 July 2005.

The workload described above suggests that a time allocation of 2 to 3 days per week would be appropriate, with a final decision about the number of days to be negotiated between the appointee and the Government.

### **Skills, knowledge and background sought**

The incoming Chief Scientist will:

- Have the respect of the science and business communities;
- Have an excellent academic record (eg research excellence, publications, citations etc) and demonstrated achievement in innovation;
- Have a clear understanding of the importance of research as a driver of innovation in the Australian economy;
- Have the ability to secure and maintain the confidence of the Prime Minister and Australian Government Ministers with science, engineering and technology portfolio interests;
- Have the ability to build effective working relationships that facilitate interaction and cooperation across all levels of the scientific community, industry and the public;
- Be aware of a wide variety of public policy issues;
- Be familiar with current issues in technology, education K-12, higher education and vocational education and training, economic development, health, environment, national security, and international affairs; and
- Be aware of global trends in science and innovation.

June 2005

## AUSTRALIAN CHIEF SCIENTIST

### Advertising Details

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, is seeking expressions of interest from suitable persons for possible appointment as Australia's Chief Scientist.

The Australian Government's vision is to create a better future for all Australians by continuing to build a world-class innovation system. This agenda depends on effective partnerships between governments at all levels, researchers and business, to share the substantial financial investment necessary to ensure that ideas move smoothly from generation to end-use.

Australia's economy and population are small by world standards, with comparatively limited resources. Our publicly funded science and innovation investments must therefore be well-directed and provide excellent value of money.

The role of Chief Scientist was established in 1989 following the recommendations of the then Government's Science and Technology Statement, *Science and Technology for Australia*.

The Chief Scientist is the senior science adviser to the Australian Government. The Chief Scientist provides advice to the Prime Minister and Ministers on matters affecting science, engineering and innovation. A key part of the role is to draw to the Government's attention emerging issues in science, engineering and innovation. The Chief Scientist is Chair of the Standing Committee of the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (PMSEIC) and is the Council's Executive Officer.

Another part of the Chief Scientist's role is to foster close and effective working relationships between the Government and organisations with responsibilities for science, engineering, and innovation including particularly the Australian Academy of Science, the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, the Institution of Engineers Australia, and the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies; and by fostering relationships with key industry groups such as BCA, ACCI and AIG.

It would be expected that applicants for this position would have broad experience across areas such as science, engineering, technology, industry and education.

It is anticipated that the position will be filled by appointment under contract to the Australian Government on a part-time basis. The period of appointment is negotiable but is likely to be from two to five years.

The remuneration package will be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2005/05: *Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-time Public Offices* (at present based on two days per week) effective from 1 July 2005.

### Contact details:

Interested parties are encouraged to first contact .....

Expressions of interest should include a full CV, be marked confidential, and forwarded by no later than cob..... to.....: