• Good afternoon.

• I don’t know about you, but when our Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced late last year that he wanted to kick start an innovation culture in Australia,

• I heard the thunder of corporate footsteps heading towards his $1 billion trough of funds.

• The package provides incentives
  
  o to boost STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics);
  o tax exemptions for investors;
  o a relaxation of bankruptcy laws;
  o changes in visa regulations to encourage more highly skilled workers to travel to Australia;
  and
  o the development of relationships with smart centres in Silicon Valley and Israel.
But how do we make innovation happen?

How do we create a culture of innovation?

Is it simply a matter of turning on the tap of government funding hoping it will buy creative thinking?

No.

Innovation grows out of a culture of enterprise.

That culture refers to the typical way of behaving within an organisation or in society as a whole.

Being enterprising means being prepared to take risks, to think of doing things differently, better, quicker, more effectively.
• An enterprising organisation has a culture where people are bold, imaginative and creative.

• They’re risk takers, they try different approaches and consider the possibility of failure not as an end point but as an inconvenience.

• They don’t fail. They might not succeed as quickly as they thought,

• but they get the opportunity to reinvent their method or approach to better adapt to factors they didn’t anticipate.

• This is the culture we need to develop throughout our society.

• Australia is a nation of inventors. Our distance from Europe meant we needed to invent our own solutions to problems or make do with alternatives until the next shipment from ‘home’ arrived.
• The stump jump plough, for example, was invented here in South Australia to plough fields in rough mallee country.

• (It was actually a broken regular plough that worked better at skipping over rocks and hidden roots).

• Artificial ice for refrigerated ships was an Australian idea that meant Australian grown meat could be exported.

• Australian inventions have been life changing yet always practical:
  o Pedal-powered radio which made the Flying Doctor Service possible;
  o The lifesaving reel, the surf ski – even Speedos (although the less said about them the better);
- plastic disposable syringes;
- the pacemaker;
- the bionic ear;
- polymer banknotes;
- plastic spectacle lenses;
- spray-on skin;
- Wi-Fi; and
- Google maps

- The list is long and fascinating, but they are inventive, not necessarily innovative.

- Innovation is finding – and solving - a problem we didn’t know we had;

- Challenging existing ways of doing things and creating new ideas and solutions that benefit all of society.

- Who knew, for instance, that we needed 3D printers?
• they first were sold in 2009, now they’re considered the third industrial revolution;

• they even make body parts and

• now you can buy one at Officeworks.

• We’re focusing our efforts at the University of South Australia on being a university of enterprise;

• On developing solutions to problems we know exist and those we haven’t yet discovered.

• We’re building a culture of enterprise where people are bold, imaginative and creative.

• We hear a lot about the need for STEM subjects that will form the basis of innovation.
• I believe STEAMED subjects are the ones to focus on when Science, technology, Engineering and Mathematics are joined by Art, Entrepreneurship and Design.

• Blending art and science is how you get the next 3D printer phenomenon,

• and all the other possibilities that come from innovative thought:
  o regenerative medicine that uses stem cell and gene therapy technology to restore the function of damaged organs and tissues;
  o and robots that will spray our crops, drive our cars, write books and produce original music and art.

• UniSA, an exemplar of a modern university. A brilliant blend of art and science. It always has been.
• And because we’re a university of enterprise we’re very easy to work with.

• We value the partnerships that we have built with industry and the professions – we have more than 2000 so far – and we’re always on the lookout for new and different opportunities to collaborate.

• One element of the Prime Minister’s Innovation package that you might have overlooked is a $127 million incentive to encourage collaboration between university researchers and industry.

• That includes streamlining and re-focussing a greater proportion of research block grant funding towards collaboration.

• There are also improved funding incentives and fast-tracking collaborative research grants to encourage universities to partner with industry.
• We’ve been partnering with industry and the professions for the 25 years that we have been a university,

• and for around 100 years before that when we were an institute of technology.

• All of the universities that are members of the Australian Technology Network have built their reputations by working hand in glove with industry.

• In fact, the government’s innovation statement made special note of our research income from industry,

• the results we got from the Excellence in Research Australia results and
• the Industry Doctoral Training Centre, a program that’s unique to the ATN universities, which incorporates a traditional PhD thesis with training in professional and broad technical skills required by industry.

• The government used us as an example of where increased collaboration between universities and industry works well.

• And political offices regularly tell us that we are the more agile and industry-friendly of the university groupings.

• They also tell us that our Higher Degree by Research graduates are far more useful, trained as they are to work as effectively with industry as they are to contribute further to academia.
• I wonder how many of the businesses and organisations here today would consider themselves potential partners to universities.

• I note there are guests here today from the solar pumping and water industry – could our Engineering division work with you to create real innovation which can be exported to other dry places in the world?

• The wine industry – our Ehrenberg Bass Institute already works with many wine companies to provide consumer insights.

• But could we work with you to develop truly unique new packaging or marketing products or better logistics and distribution?
• There are people here from the aged care and disability sector – the fastest growing sector in the world and the greatest area of demand for employment.

• Our students are already supported by you with internships and work experience –

• but how can our Health Sciences and Engineering researchers work with you to develop robotic aids and better practices to make your work less physically demanding and more client focused?

• I understand the Adelaide Football Club is here today – our rehabilitation, health sciences and sports sciences researchers can produce performance enhancing products which are both legal (!) and exportable.
• To the property and land development and construction sector – how can we help you with demographic research and future thinking through our Centre for Social Change?

• And one day we might also partner with you in developing hi-tech mini-campuses that look more like Qantas Lounges than lecture theatres, to meet the modern, online needs of our students.

• I see that Mary Hobson from eRSA is one of your guests –

• we already work closely with Mary and her team to utilize data storage that we would have once only dreamed of.

• What could your business do with this super-computing power which is making South Australia internationally competitive?
• There are guests from the primary and secondary education sector –

• how can we work more closely with you to look into the future of education, and promote South Australia as an education city?

• You will no doubt be interested in the revolutionary education precinct we’re planning for the Magill campus,

• where we’ll be locating schools on campus so our education students and researchers will have access to the living laboratory that is the school classroom.

• where we can more closely couple the discipline of education to those of psychology, neuroscience and social work,
where we can transform the way we educate educators to provide best possible practice for teaching and learning.

And all of you are businesses or organisations where people are your greatest asset –

how much more could your culture improve by partnering with our Centre for Workplace Excellence?

Many of you might not consider yourself big enough to partner with a university. But I ask you to think again.

Innovation won’t happen in isolation.

UniSA, as a university of enterprise, has a long history of throwing open our doors to business and organisations and we see our future as creating a culture of enterprise that will benefit all of us.
• We live in interesting and demanding global times, and opportunity abounds for nimble, focused institutions to respond to local, national and global changes.

• Partnered with you we can focus on the future where innovation and creativity, combined with knowledge, will deliver economic growth for this State and this nation,

• and I can’t wait to make that happen.

• Thank you.