



Senator the Honourable Kim Carr
Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

February 19th 2010

Dear Minister,

Funding for the Science and Mathematics Olympiads

I am writing to you because of the continued delay in the announcement of your government's support for Australian participation in the International Olympiads in Biology, Chemistry, Informatics, Mathematics and Physics. Without this support Australian involvement will be compromised and potentially may cease. I urge you to act to quickly dispel the growing anxiety about the Olympiads in the scientific and educational community.

There are many reasons why the government must reaffirm its commitment, but there are two which stand out. The first is equity and opportunity: through the Olympiad programs young Australians from all backgrounds are given the opportunity to develop their talent into virtuosity. The second is the undoubted success of these programs in putting many of the participants on the road to careers and often leadership in mathematics and science. Australia's Fields medallist, Professor Terry Tao, is the example without peer in the mathematical sciences but there are very many others across the sciences.

Australia must not deny itself access to such a wonderful and international program, one which is so influential in the training of our scientists and mathematicians.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Geoff Prince
Director
Australian Mathematical Sciences institute