

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio  
Budget Estimates Hearing 2010-11  
31 May 2010

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

**TOPIC:** Education Investment Fund

**REFERENCE:** Written Question – Senator Eggleston.

**QUESTION No.:** BI-84

Can the Minister account for the fact that nearly 85% of funds spent under the Education Investment Fund were spent in Labor electorates? (*The Australian* 7/4/2010)

**ANSWER**

The Education Investment Fund (EIF) is one of four Nation Building Funds established by the *Nation-building Funds Act 2008*. Under the terms of the Act, the Government can only fund projects which have been assessed by the independent EIF Advisory Board as meeting the EIF evaluation criteria.

EIF funding for Rounds 1 and 2 (those cited in the article) were allocated on the basis of competitive processes, overseen by the EIF Advisory Board.

Key evaluation criteria include enhancement of the sector and collaboration, so that projects with benefits beyond a single institution are favoured.

Information on the electorate of EIF applicants has not been captured as part of the application, selection or briefing process.

Australia's universities and research institutions tend to be located in inner city or major suburban centres and it is to be expected that the majority of EIF funding will be directed to these institutions.

The grants do not only benefit the electorates in which the receiving institutions are located. They benefit the students and researchers who come from all over Australia to work and study there, as well as the broader community which gains from the enhanced research and education capacity.