



Kate Carnell MLA

Chief Minister

Australian Capital
Territory

ACT GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO ENSURE CANBERRA IS THE CLEVER AND CARING CAPITAL

The ACT Government has delivered on its commitment to a clever and caring Canberra with new proposals in the Chief Minister's Department 2000-2001 Budget.

There are new and continuing initiatives to improve the quality of life of all Canberrans, including programs and services to build 'social capital' and the Department will oversee new initiatives for business, research and development and tourism, while ensuring the emphasis on the arts and culture are maintained.

ACT Chief Minister Kate Carnell said these initiatives will be driven by the Government's Policy Group, which aims to achieve a more coordinated approach to policy development and outcomes assessment across government, particularly in the key areas of business, employment, health, education, urban services, justice and community services, and the environment.

Mrs Carnell said that the ACT Government is putting a great importance on building a social capital, with \$3.5 million to be spent across government on programs and services that will further develop social capital in Canberra, with \$500,000 of this funding to go to the Canberra Community Foundation.

"The aim of the Canberra Community Foundation will be to encourage philanthropy in the private sector. The government has provided \$500,000 in the budget to establish the foundation to encourage the business community to become further involved and see it as a positive way to invest in the community," Mrs Carnell said.

The foundation will provide funding to suburban community groups for locally initiated projects that have the support of the community, business and government. It will be administered by a board of government and business representatives.

In other positive moves by the Government in this budget, more than \$40 million has been allocated to improving the ACT's competitiveness in the business sector, including the establishment of a \$11 million research and development grant scheme.

"This will complement other highly successful assistance programs run by the government, such as the ACT Business Incentive Scheme and the ACT Industry Development Program," Mrs Carnell said.

media release



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"\$18 million has been set aside for developing and enhancing electronic service delivery of government transactions and information, further enhancing the ACT's reputation as a 'clever capital'."

Mrs Carnell said support for Canberra's IT industry will continue through the Information Industries Development Board formed in September 1999. An increase in funding for the ACT Business Incentive Scheme will provide further assistance for companies looking to relocate or develop in Canberra. Nearly 1200 jobs have been created through the scheme since its inception in 1996, with another 3000 still to come.

The Chief Minister's Department budget provides funds for the assistance package for Impulse Airlines and the balance of the assistance package to BRL Hardy for the Kamberra Wine Tourism Complex. Funding has also been allocated for contract negotiation on the Very High Speed Train project, contingent on the project successfully completing the current 'prove up' evaluation stage being conducted by the Commonwealth, ACT and NSW governments.

"More than \$1 million has been allocated to marketing Canberra interstate and overseas as a business, investment and tourist destination. Canberra's major festivals and tourism activities will also be highlighted in an effort to increase their value to local operators and the community. It has been estimated one in six visitors comes to Canberra for these events, accounting for more than \$100 million spent in the community," Mrs Carnell said.

Mrs Carnell said the Chief Minister's Department budget also provided additional funding for the arts.

"\$3.23 million has been allocated to the Arts Program, which aims to profile Canberra as a centre of artistic excellence and provide opportunities for local artists and arts organisations," said Mrs Carnell.

"\$350,000 has been allocated in the capital works program to enlivening Canberra with public art, and work will progress to the next stage to assess the viability of a contemporary glass industry development centre in Canberra.

"The ACT Government plans to spend \$100,000 to refurbish the Gorman House Arts Centre in Braddon, and nearly \$100,000 for improvements to the Nolan Gallery at Lanyon and the Lanyon Homestead," Mrs Carnell said.

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