

MEDIA RELEASE

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Grattan launches innovation and productivity series with Google

*Grattan Institute's **Spreading Smart Ideas** series will identify policy reform opportunities to accelerate the spread of innovation, with the aim of contributing to a looming national challenge – improving Australia's productivity.*

Spreading Smart Ideas will initially tackle the productivity challenges faced by small and medium businesses and the education sector; two crucially important sectors that together contribute over 40% of GDP and employ over seven million people. The series will consist of workshops and conferences for experts and policy makers, with public consultation.

Growth in productivity, or output per person, has been in decline in Australia since 2004. As the economy transitions post-mining boom, Australia will have to achieve strong productivity growth in order to maintain our living standards, or take a pay cut.

Spreading innovative practices has the potential to improve productivity and strengthen the Australian economy. Innovation – ideas successfully applied – happens when businesses do things in new ways. Such improvements are the most important drivers of long-term economic growth, and therefore to social and individual wellbeing. Productivity lifts when a business invents or adopts better ways of doing things.

"The series – made possible with the support of Google – will enable Grattan Institute to contribute to understanding and influencing the complex interplay between government policy and innovation," says Grattan Institute CEO John Daley.

"Australian governments spend over \$10 billion each year that aims to support innovation. Government needs to ensure that this public money is spent where it makes the biggest difference and the innovation encouraged is socially worthwhile."

Google Australia's Head of Public Policy and Government Affairs, Iarla Flynn said: "we are delighted to partner with Grattan Institute on this Series, which will make a contribution towards strengthening the Australian economy for the long term by unlocking and sharing the benefits of new ideas and technologies."

Grattan Institute is an independent, rigorous and practical think tank focused on Australian domestic public policy. Formed in 2008, it has made substantial contributions to public debate through its programs in productivity growth, school education, higher education, cities, energy and health. This new initiative will extend its work to an important area of public interest.

For further enquiries:

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