

Mr Michael Short
Business Editor
The Age
256 Spencer Street
Melbourne 3000

Dear Michael,

I read with delight your comments in today's Age about the strength of the local financial services sector. I wish to re-affirm these sentiments as the Melbourne Centre for Financial Studies this week celebrated its one year anniversary. At a reception on Wednesday night addressed by the Minister for Financial Services, Hon. Andre Haermeyer, the Melbourne Centre launched its first Annual Review and thanked all those that had contributed to a successful first year. On Monday night, the joint Melbourne Centre-Finsia (Financial Services Institute of Australasia) Banking and Finance Conference dinner heard from guest speaker David Murray, Chairman of The Future Fund, on the importance of research and continuous training to the development of a skilled finance-sector workforce.

With over 100 people at both events, the strength and growing sense of shared purpose within Melbourne's financial services sector was clearly highlighted.

Since its launch in 2005, the Melbourne Centre has run or developed the program for twenty varied events based around the Centre's research focus on the areas of Funds Management, Financial Regulation, and New Financial Markets. In these three areas Melbourne now leads, or has the capacity to lead the way, in Australia and the region. Many of these events have been held at no charge at Finsia's office in Melbourne. They have brought together a diverse mix of local and visiting academics, policy-makers, bankers, investors, corporate financiers and allied practitioners.

Moreover, in keeping with its charter, the Melbourne Centre for Financial Studies has already funded over twenty research proposals by local academics to conduct advanced financial studies. This research will add to the knowledge base, capacity and experience of the local financial community. It will also build on Melbourne's reputation for research excellence

On December 21st, the Melbourne Centre will inaugurate the annual International Distinguished Lecture Series. The first speaker will be Mr. Mervyn King, Governor of the Bank of England in his only Australian appearance. Melbourne's finance sector has much to which it can look forward.

Yours sincerely,

John Unkles F Fin
Executive General Manager, Finsia - The Financial Services Institute of Australasia
And
Chair Melbourne Centre for Financial Studies