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Professor Mark Kenny Appointed Inaugural Australia in China Fellow

* Australia in China Fellowship to Deepen Understanding and Academic Exchange*

[Sydney/Canberra - 03/09/2025] — The Foundation for Australian Studies in China (FASIC), The Australian National University (ANU), and the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations (NFACR) are delighted to announce the appointment of Mark Kenny, Director of the Australian Studies Institute at ANU, as the inaugural Australia in China Fellow.

The Australia in China Fellowship, an initiative by FASIC, is designed to enhance academic and cultural engagement between the two nations through high-profile, in-country programming. As the first Australia in China Fellow, Professor Kenny will visit multiple cities in mainland China in late 2025 to deliver a series of public lectures, seminars, and institutional visits.

Engaging with students, scholars and a broader public audience, the program will explore how contemporary ideas and narratives are shaped and shared in Australian society through the lens of Australian public discourse. Events will be hosted in collaboration with Australian Studies Centres in China – of which there are many - and other academic and cultural institutions.

Professor Mark Kenny, Australia in China Fellow, Director of the Australian Studies Institute at ANU, said:

“Different languages, as well as divergent political systems and institutions tend to frame and frustrate a richer understanding of each other in this interdependent bilateral relationship.

But the fundamentals remain constant. The two Asia-Pacific nations have a long productive history together, vigorous people-to-people ties, and economic interests that are mutually critical.



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While I have often travelled to China with Australian prime ministers and witnessed the official relationship up close, this fellowship affords the opportunity to learn more about other aspects and perhaps, to enhance the Chinese understanding of Australian culture, democracy and economy.”

Dr Angela Lehmann, Chair of FASIC, said:

“We are very excited to launch this Fellowship program, which highlights the value of academic leadership in strengthening bilateral engagement. By creating opportunities for open exchange, we not only enrich scholarship but also reinforce the importance of education in fostering mutual understanding.”

The program forms part of a broader commitment to strengthening bilateral academic networks and cultural understanding through public programming and institutional collaboration. By bringing together leading voices from Australian academia with scholars and students across China, the Fellowship fosters enduring relationships, encourages shared inquiry, and supports a deeper appreciation of contemporary Australia. It also builds on the ongoing efforts of FASIC, ANU and NFACR to create inclusive platforms for exchange and engagement between the two countries.

Further details about the itinerary and participating cities will be announced in the coming weeks. A reciprocal fellowship program in Australia from China is planned for 2026.

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