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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my grave concern at the proposed disestablishment of the Dianoia Institute of Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University. Such a move would be utterly devastating to both the academic standing of ACU and to its reputation as a serious institution of higher education, not to mention (of course) to the lives and careers of those whose positions would be eliminated.

As a physicist who has recently started a joint appointment in a philosophy department, I can testify that the importance of philosophy in particular and the humanities more generally has never been greater. In a world characterized by rapid and unpredictable transformations, it is simply not sensible to rush to bring those transformations about without putting serious intellectual effort into stepping back and thinking about their possible consequences for human life. More than ever we need the kind of reflective analysis of people, nature, and the relationship between the two that is the stock in trade of the best research in the humanities. Every university should feel a responsibility to nurture that kind of work, since it won't be done anywhere else.

And it goes without saying that no university should recruit researchers from around the world, causing them to uproot their lives, and then dismiss them without warning. The ensuing reputational collapse would be serious and long-lasting.

I hope that some way can be found to continue to support the scholars and intellectual work of the Dianoia Institute, both for the sake of ACU and that of philosophy worldwide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Carroll".

Sean Carroll
Homewood Professor of Natural Philosophy
Fractal Faculty, Santa Fe Institute