



Ridd Case: IPA Welcomes Historic High Court Appeal

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The Institute of Public Affairs has welcomed the announcement that Dr Peter Ridd will appeal the judgement in the case of *James Cook University (JCU) v Peter Ridd* to the High Court of Australia. Dr Ridd is seeking to reverse the 2-1 decision of the Federal Court of Australia, which overturned the earlier decision in the Federal Circuit Court, which held that Dr Peter Ridd was unlawfully dismissed by JCU.

“This is an historic appeal. It will be the first time that the High Court has been asked to adjudicate on the meaning of intellectual freedom,” said Gideon Rozner, IPA Director of Policy.

“The fundamental issues of free speech at Australian universities, the future of academic debate and freedom of speech on climate change are all on the line in this historic High Court appeal.”

“This has been Australia’s David vs Goliath battle. Dr Peter Ridd on one side backed by the voluntary donations of thousands of ordinary Australians, and JCU on the other side who with taxpayer funds secured some of the most expensive legal representation in the country in Bret



Walker SC to stifle the free speech of one of its own staff.”

Dr Peter Ridd, a professor of physics at JCU, was sacked by the university for misconduct for questioning in the IPA’s publication *Climate Change: The Facts 2017* the quality climate change science surrounding the Great Barrier Reef, and for public statements made on the *Jones & Co Sky News* program.

Dr Peter Ridd today reopened his [Go Fund Me page](#), appealing to thousands of mainstream Australians to once again support his historic fight for free speech on climate change.

“Peter Ridd’s fight is representative of every Australian who has been censored, cancelled or silenced,” said Mr Rozner. “Alarmingly, the decision of the Federal Court shows that contractual provisions guaranteeing intellectual freedom do not protect academics against censorship by university administrators. This is a point where the IPA and the NTEU are on a unity ticket.”

“James Cook University’s actions prove there is a crisis of free speech at Australian universities. Many academics are censored, but few are prepared to speak out and risk their career, particularly if faced with the prospect of legal battles and possible bankruptcy.

“The case has identified a culture of censorship when it comes to challenging claims surrounding climate change and the Great Barrier Reef. JCU to this date has never attempted to disprove claims made by Dr Ridd about the Great Barrier Reef,” said Mr Rozner.

Listen to The Heretic: Inside Peter Ridd’s fight for freedom of speech on climate change at www.ipa.org.au/TheHeretic