



MEDIA RELEASE

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Innovative Regions Centre to Strengthen Deakin's Research in Manufacturing

Australia's Innovative Regions Centre was opened today (Thursday 21 August) by Senator Kim Carr, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, at Deakin University's Geelong Technology Precinct (GTP). The GTP is located on Deakin University's Geelong Campus at Waurn Ponds. The \$20 million Innovative Regions Centre will offer direct support to small and medium-sized businesses in Geelong and other targeted regions.

Professor David Stokes, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at Deakin University, welcomed the opening of the Centre by Senator Carr. Professor Stokes said that the idea and practice of such a Centre sits well with Deakin's research focus in manufacturing.

"At Deakin University in Geelong we have been building a strong portfolio of discovery and applied research in advanced manufacturing. This includes research in new materials, composites, nanotechnology, biotechnology and intelligent systems. We have also been building opportunities for industry to co-locate and collaborate with Deakin researchers at our GTP – more than 40 partnerships are already in place," Professor Stokes said.

Deakin's manufacturing research expertise already includes more than 150 staff and research students involved in research at the GTP. Deakin has partnerships with large Indian firms in biotechnology and IT such as Biocon and Satyam, with many large local firms such as Ford and General Motors and with CSIRO. As a result, Deakin University was an obvious host location for the Innovative Regions Centre.

Deakin University is also looking to build even more momentum at the GTP with a proposal to Government under the Higher Education Endowment Fund (HEEF) to establish a new world class manufacturing and design centre at Waurn Ponds. The proposal includes developing a purpose designed building and cutting-edge technologies that will support and enhance knowledge-based research in manufacturing in Australia. The proposed centre will use new technologies in virtual engineering and advanced manufacturing to deliver innovative research and education programs for high-value, environmentally sustainable manufacturing processes and products.

The proposed centre will leverage from Deakin's expertise in manufacturing research and education and its record of success in developing industry partnerships. Professor Stokes added, "The regional significance of the 'here and now research and innovation' which needs to occur in our existing industries and its impact on the economy of today is immense. Innovation in current practice as well as innovation in future design are both essential in the survival of these industries."

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