

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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Magic Map application a HIT with R & D judges

A major development in human interface technology by the University of Tasmania and CSIRO has been recognised by Australia's ICT industry.

The Magic Map project has won the most outstanding ICT research and development category of the annual Tasmanian iAwards and is now a strong contender for national honours next month.

"Magic Map has been jointly developed by UTAS' Human Interface Technology Laboratory Australia (HIT Lab AU) in Launceston and the CSIRO Intelligent Sensing and Systems Laboratory," the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Paddy Nixon, said today.

"It is a project that aims to increase public awareness of available environmental sensor data. Our solution is through the improvement of the way users interact with environmental sensor data."

Professor Paulo de Souza, who was appointed to HIT Lab earlier this year from CSIRO to drive the scientific development of the SenseT data sensor network, said the R & D category of the iAwards was "very competitive" this year.

Prof de Souza received the State award on behalf of the HIT lab-CSIRO project team from the Premier, Lara Giddings, at a dinner in Hobart tonight [**Thursday 12 July**]. He paid tribute to Project Leader Dr Winyu Chinthammit and to Bruce Andrews for their "outstanding" work.

"Through the combination of Augmented Reality and Tangible User Interface technologies, the collaborative team has developed the Magic Map application that enables users to engage with the data in a very intuitive way," Prof de Souza said.

"It is also an application that we can use in the SenseT program to access and visualise very complex data sets."

SenseT is being developed by UTAS in conjunction with the Federal and State governments and a range of industry partners, including CSIRO.

The Magic Map application allows real-time sensor data to be overlaid on a physical map of Tasmania. Data such as the level of rainfall is represented as 3D bar column (level shown in height) overlaid on the physical map at the location of the sensor station where the data was collected.

Users can rotate the map, zoom in and out of a particular area in the same way that they would have done with a traditional map. They can move closer to the map to see more detail of augmented satellite imaging. They can rotate the map to see the other side of the mountain.

The selection of data types is available through manipulation of turntable dials. By turning the dials, users can change the type of data across sensor stations in Tasmania, can scroll forward and backward in time, and can change the terrain imaging overlaid on the Tasmanian map.

HIT Lab AU is a research and teaching facility within the School of Computing and Information Systems, and located on the Newnham campus.

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