

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Thursday 12 June 2014

University of Tasmania to drive economic transformation thanks to \$13 million Sense-T funding

A \$13 million Federal Government allocation to the University of Tasmania for the ground-breaking Sense-T Program would underwrite employment, globally impactful research and economic transformation in Tasmania, Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said.

The big data project - established in July 2012 as a partnership between the University, CSIRO, the Tasmanian Government and IBM – was poised to enter an exciting new phase with the backing, he said.

The allocation for Sense-T was confirmed today by the Federal Government.

“Sense-T is an exemplar of the University’s central focus upon globally impactful research which contributes to our prosperity and addresses the issues impacting our society and environment,” Professor Rathjen said.

Sense-T Director Ros Harvey said the Program had already delivered more than 50 jobs and research positions, new prototype hardware and software for farmers, cutting-edge scientific research and an international spotlight on Tasmania.

“This funding will take Sense-T to the next level. It will put our technology into the hands of farmers and help create highly-skilled jobs. It will also expand the fields of research into areas like freight and logistics, eHealth and finance,” she said.

Sense-T is creating a real-time digital view of the State’s economy by federating different public and private data sets, with a particular focus on real-time data from sensors.

The data is sorted and analysed, with privacy controls to protect confidential data. Then the data can be made available to businesses, governments, researchers and communities to help them innovate.

University Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Paddy Nixon said Sense-T worked as an ecosystem that links research to industry need.

“Sense-T is a vehicle not just to undertake research but to get new technology and science into the commercial market. More commercial activity means more jobs, but also more data going back into Sense-T to be made available to researchers,” Professor Nixon said.

“We are creating an unparalleled resource of data to support scientific discovery, technological innovation and economic development.

“We won’t have to collect information again and again, every time we have a new question to ask or problem to solve. Tasmania will be a source of cutting-edge technological innovation and a beacon to the very best scientists.”

Information released by:

University of Tasmania, Communications and Media Office

Phone: 61 3 6226 2999

Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au