

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Tassie named national HQ for digital services

International firm nSynergy and the University of Tasmania (UTAS) are spearheading a digital services revolution in Tasmania. The organisations are leading the Digital Services for Sustainable Development Innovation Partnership, announced by Senator the Hon Kate Lundy in Hobart today.

Senator Lundy committed \$6 million over five years, with access to grants of up to \$10 million a year for individual projects. The Partnership is one of 12 to be announced and the only one with its national headquarters in Tasmania.

It aims to make Australia an innovator in Digital Services, using sensing technology to address global sustainable development challenges. It will leverage super-fast broadband to drive new ideas and bring them to market faster, generating businesses and jobs in the digital economy.

The Partnership brings together leading sensing and digital research, Sense-T, digital companies, industry and business support. A feasibility study is also underway to include an advanced sensor manufacturing facility in Hobart, which would create up to 80 highly-skilled jobs over five years.

The Partnership focuses on generating new digital services to help industries be more efficient and sustainable, for example new aquaculture tools, apps for farmers, software for construction or digital tourism experiences.

nSynergy Chief Strategy Officer Simon Tyrrell said they had already raised more than \$15 million for the initiative, mostly from the private sector, and welcomed the additional backing from government.

“This shows private companies are willing to put money on the table and invest in Tasmania. There is huge potential in the market. Sustainability is a global issue and industries are crying out for high-tech, cost-effective approaches.”

Mr Tyrrell is based in Hobart and connects to nSynergy offices throughout the world. He said the idea for the Innovation Partnership was borne out of discussions with Sense-T, a program based at UTAS which is federating sensor networks to create a real-time digital view of the whole island.

“There are a lot of advantages for digital companies in this state: low overheads; first roll-out of the NBN; and now Sense-T is creating an incredible data resource for companies to test and develop new services.”

UTAS Vice Chancellor Peter Rathjen said the Partnership would help drive new jobs in new industries for Tasmania as it took its cutting-edge research from the lab to the market.

“The Partnership connects the Universities to deliver the knowledge, the digital companies to deliver commercial services and the industries to tell us what they need, with Sense-T as the central data resource. It demonstrates how UTAS plays a critical role in the ongoing economic development of Tasmania.”

Australian tech guru Nicholas Gruen will Chair the Partnership. Dr Gruen is a respected economist, technology commentator and successful entrepreneur.

“With Sense-T connecting the disparate sensors around Tasmania into a general purpose platform, the data can be used and reused endlessly, leading to the massive escalation of value we see in other platforms – like Google, Facebook, Twitter and Wikipedia. With Sense-T as the connecting tissue for the initiative we should see some great opportunities for digital services providers and their customers,” Dr Gruen said.

The physical headquarters for the Partnership will initially be based at UTAS Sandy Bay Campus, bringing together Sense-T, digital and sensor research, business support services and the advanced manufacturing (subject to the feasibility study). Long term, the vision is to establish a Hobart precinct of digital businesses, research and manufacturing.

Notes to Editors

About nSynergy:

nSynergy is an information management and technology consultancy with offices in Hobart, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, London, New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Mexico City and Shanghai. In August 2013 nSynergy won the 2013 Microsoft Australia Collaboration & Content Partner of the Year award, and was a finalist in the Enterprise Public Cloud category at both the 2013 Microsoft Australia and Microsoft Worldwide partner awards.

Core partners in the Innovation Partnership:

- nSynergy (leading partner)
- UTAS (leading partner)
- Grey Innovation
- Pure Profile
- The Project Factory
- Arup Pty Ltd

- TasmaNet
- IBM
- Australian Information Association
- Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association
- NSW Farmers Association
- Tasmanian Government
- University of Technology Sydney