

Media release

Friday 18 December 2015

World-leading tourism tracking research hits the road

One of the most innovative and extensive research projects ever conducted into tourist travel has begun tracking the first of 600 visitors to Tasmania as they move around the State during the current summer tourist season.

The world-leading research was launched at Hobart International Airport today by the Federal Minister for Tourism and International Education, Senator Richard Colbeck, and Tasmanian Premier and Minister for Tourism, Will Hodgman.

The Sense-T Sensing Tourist Travel Project will use smartphones and an app developed by Tasmanian ICT company Ionata to provide unprecedented insights into where particular groups of visitors go, how they move around the State, and what influences their decisions.

The data collected will help to guide marketing and investment decisions in the rapidly expanding tourism sector and will ultimately improve the visitor experience in Tasmania.

Led by the University of Tasmania's Professor Richard Eccleston and Dr Anne Hardy, the international multi-disciplinary project team includes specialists in GIS tracking and analysis, digital media marketing and decision-making, governance and evaluation, digital media use and economic evaluation.

Dr Hardy said the research is an international first in that it will track visitors' precise travel patterns on a statewide basis over a period of up to 10 days, with tourists to be recruited at Launceston and Hobart airports and the Spirit of Tasmania.

"The project will provide a proof of concept that app-based tracking can replace more traditional surveys of visitor experiences.

"It was designed in conjunction with the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania, Federal Hotels and Tourism Tasmania, and a wide range of industry stakeholders have been consulted as part of the project's design."

Media release

Sense-T Director of Research, Professor Jugdutt (Jack) Singh, said the project demonstrated the power of collaboration between researchers, government and industry.

“Sense-T’s data and sensor research projects are industry-driven and designed to provide practical solutions while helping people to make better decisions across the community and economy.

“It’s vital that industry and end-users play a key role in designing and implementing our research projects so we can ensure we are tackling and solving real world problems.”

The Sensing Tourist Travel project is one of 14 Industry Research Projects currently being undertaken by Sense-T with funding from the Australian Government and contributions from research and industry partners.

Due for completion in December 2016, Sense-T’s other sensor and data research projects focus on tourism, agriculture, aquaculture and new financial services.

Media contacts: Andrew Rhodes, 0417 239 537

About Sense-T

sense-t.org.au

Sense-T is a data research project which collects and analyses data from a range of different public and private sources, particularly from sensors. Information can then be given back to industry, governments, researchers and communities to help them to make better decisions and find practical solutions to real-world problems. Sense-T is a partnership between the University of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Government and CSIRO, and is also funded by the Australian Government.