

30 June, 2013

\$10 million for Sense-T to create tech jobs and boost traditional industries

Sense-T will deliver highly-skilled technology jobs for Tasmanians and help drive innovation in traditional industries, thanks to the funding injection announced today by the Federal Government.

As part of the Tasmanian Jobs Plan, Sense-T, a collaborative project based at the University of Tasmania, will receive \$10 million to continue its work in establishing the world's first economy-wide sensor network in Tasmania.

The real-time sensor data will be combined with historical records and maps to create a digital view of the whole economy.

Sense-T Director, Ros Harvey, said the funding would combine research excellence with practical industry outcomes.

"Sense-T will be an ongoing resource for creative people to come up with the new businesses, services and jobs of the digital economy. It will also generate easy-to-use apps that will help traditional industries be more efficient, competitive and sustainable.

Ms Harvey said Sense-T was initially focusing on regions most affected by the downturn in forestry, with projects in agriculture, aquaculture, viticulture and water management.

"We'll also be able to look at relationships across the whole Tasmanian economy; not just individual industries, but how they all impact on one another and on the environment."

University of Tasmania Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, said the \$10 million for Sense-T would allow the project to take a quantum leap, with tangible and lasting benefits for the State.

"This is a transformational project for Tasmania, with potential to be international in its application and impact," he said.

"The University of Tasmania is proud to be instrumental in driving Sense-T as an exemplar of innovation and collaboration. The returns to the State from this additional funding will be real and consistent with the aim of moving Tasmania towards new industries and skills."

Sense-T was established in 2012 from a \$3.6 million grant from the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement. Since that time it has attracted international attention and generated significant private and public sector investment.

Sense-T will soon have 75 full-time workers and researchers dedicated to the program. The \$10 million announced today will go towards Stage II of Sense-T, which is expected to generate 175 direct jobs and research positions and 260 indirect positions in service delivery and support.

Melbourne technology company Grey Innovation, is also working with Sense-T to design commercial, low-cost sensors. It is currently undertaking a feasibility study supported by the Tasmanian Government to establish advanced sensor manufacturing in Hobart.

Media contact: Megan Tudehope, Sense-T, on (03) 6226 2292 or 0450 452 733.

See next page for supporting statements from industry

Media Release

Jan Davis, CEO Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association

“We are delighted with the funding for Sense-T. This is exactly the sort of investment we need to make Tasmania's economy resilient. Sense-T will give Tasmanian farmers a competitive edge through using technology to drive improvements in productivity, environmental performance and food provenance.”

Jefferson Harcourt, Director Grey Innovation

“Grey Innovation sees enormous commercial opportunity in bringing Sense-T technology to market – in Tasmania, nationally and internationally. Our goal is to see advanced electronics for Sense-T developed and manufactured in Tasmania and exported to the world.”

Dr Tom Lewis, Executive Officer, Oysters Tasmania

“The Tasmanian oyster industry was an early adopter of the technology and expertise offered through Sense-T. Last week we won an iAward for this work. This week we are negotiating to extend the trials to other Australian states. This investment in mobilising mission-critical data is a winner for our industry.”

Sheralee Davies, CEO Wine Tasmania

“Sense-T provides a major opportunity to assist the Tasmanian wine sector's future success, supporting producers to optimise fruit quality and efficiencies. Wine Tasmania welcomes the additional support announced for this initiative.”

Linda Sams, Head of Sustainability, Tassal

“Tassal is excited about working with the Sense-T team to use sensor technology to help us improve productivity, reduce the cost of green tape and build on our environmental stewardship. We see real opportunities to be a global leader in technology and sustainable development.”

Simon Tyrrell Global Innovation Manager, nSynergy

“We've got strong support from private companies that are willing to put money on the table to create a Digital Services Innovation Precinct in Tasmania, using Sense-T as the primary resource. That shows there are real commercial opportunities and the confidence to invest in Tasmania.”

About Sense-T

Based in Tasmania, Sense-T is creating a digital view of the entire island by combining different data sources, including historical records, maps and real-time data from sensor networks. Information will be available through easy-to-use apps to help businesses, governments and communities better manage their resources - to help them do more with less.

Sense-T is a partnership program between the University of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Government, CSIRO (through the Australian Centre for Broadband Innovation) and IBM. It is also funded by the Australian Government through the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement. Sense-T establishes Tasmania as a centre for technology and research excellence, where shared data drives new approaches to social, environmental and economic sustainability that can be scaled cost-effectively elsewhere. Visit the Sense-T website at www.sense-t.org.au for more information.

