



Stuart Ayres

Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW TAKES ONE GIANT LEAP FOR SPACE INDUSTRY

NSW is the first state to launch its own Node of the SmartSat Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), spearheading the development of Australia's space industry and creating jobs of the future.

The SmartSat CRC brings industry, universities and research together to support a thriving space industry through the development of advanced telecommunications, intelligent satellite systems and Earth observation data services.

Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney Stuart Ayres said the Node will foster research and industry collaboration to create jobs in space sectors such as launch and support services, ground systems, and satellite technology.

"Supporting a thriving research ecosystem is just one part of our Space Industry Development Strategy, which will also help develop a fit-for-purpose workforce by closing the STEM skills gap and supporting the growth of innovation precincts," Mr Ayres said.

"The technology innovations produced by the space industry have enormous impact here on earth, from using GPS on a smart phone to monitor bushfires to using artificial intelligence to reduce waste across all our industries."

The Node will run three separate grant programs to fund industry-research teaming and collaboration, facilitate the transfer of expertise by placing industry staff within universities, and provide access to state-of-the-art equipment, laboratory space and research infrastructure.

Applications for co-funding for projects of up to \$100,000 value are now open for industry to partner with university researchers to overcome existing challenges in agriculture, mining and resources, defence and security, transport, and bushfires and disaster management.

The SmartSat CRC was established in 2019 after the Morrison Government committed \$55 million through the Cooperative Research Centre program.

Federal Minister for Industry, Science and Technology Karen Andrews said SmartSat's NSW node will greatly enhance the Australian space industry by promoting collaboration between industry and researchers.

“This node will contribute to the Australian Government’s goal to triple the size of the space sector to \$12 billion and create an extra 20,000 jobs by 2030, and it will also complement the work of our \$1.5 billion Modern Manufacturing Strategy, under which space is one of six priority areas,” Minister Andrews said.

SmartSat CRC CEO Professor Andy Koronios said the NSW space ecosystem is poised to embrace commercialisation opportunities of space-related technologies.

“SmartSat is incredibly excited to be partnering with the NSW Government in establishing this Node and augmenting other NSW initiatives to supercharge the NSW space innovation ecosystem. We are already working on a number of exception R&D projects that will develop space capabilities and build the commercialisation pathways within the State,” Professor Koronios said.

The Node will be led by Coordinator Dr Tim Parsons and based in Tech Central. Dr Parsons is Chair of the Space Industry Association of Australia and has long supported the growth of the NSW space eco-system, in particular space startups, through his organisation Delta-V Newspace Alliance.

“With 38 per cent of space startups based here, the majority of Australia’s angel and venture capital tech investors, as well as the headquarters of its largest companies, NSW is a fantastic home for Australia’s space industry,” Dr Parsons said.

“The NSW Node will strengthen the outcomes of the SmartSat CRC by enabling more startups and SMEs to participate.”

NSW Chief Scientist Hugh Durrant-Whyte said NSW had the research strengths and strategic vision to lead space research in Australia.

“This investment will ensure we are well-positioned to take advantage of this growing industry and create new and exciting job opportunities.”

The NSW Government first launched its Space Industry Development Strategy in January 2020. The strategy aims to make NSW the premier destination in the Asia-Pacific region to develop and commercialise space technology.

To find out more about the Node’s funding opportunities, visit <https://www.business.nsw.gov.au/NSW-Node-of-SmartSat-CRC>

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