

Jodi McKay

Minister for Tourism
Minister for the Hunter
Minister for Science and Medical Research
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



Embargoed until Tuesday September 1, 2009

New fund announced at opening of Australian first student engineering facilities

Minister for Science and Medical Research Jodi McKay has announced a \$1.4 million NSW Government initiative to build stronger relationships between universities and industry, ensuring business has access to cutting-edge research.

Ms McKay made the announcement at last night's opening of the Sir William Tyree Laboratory in Power Engineering at the University of Sydney.

Ms McKay said the new *Collaboration and Infrastructure Access Program* will result in more innovative use of research for developing and improving products, services and practices for NSW industry.

"The pilot program includes incentives such as vouchers of up to \$15,000 for companies to access public sector research equipment and grants of up to \$50,000 for research organisations to help them better engage industry," Ms McKay said.

"Access to the latest technology and research will enable businesses to create better products and practices, delivering benefits for the people of NSW, the economy and the environment."

Ms McKay said the program will be run by the independent, not-for-profit Australian Industry Innovation Xchange Network, which is one of Sir William Tyree's philanthropic endeavours.

"This not-for-profit knowledge network has been selected to run the new Collaborative Infrastructure Access program, using its expertise and industry contacts to maximise partnership opportunities," Ms McKay said.

Ms McKay said the critical task of linking industry with universities had been a focus of the NSW Government's recent Business University Government Forum.

"This forum considered how to foster stronger relationships between these important sectors, to identify and strengthen research and development in priority areas for our State," Ms McKay said.

Ms McKay said the new Sir William Tyree Laboratory in Power Engineering at the University of Sydney.

"This new power engineering laboratory will give students hands-on access to sophisticated industrial equipment – the first of its type in Australia," Ms McKay said.

Media contact: Hayley Thomas 0427 299 446

“Until now, Australian universities could only provide complex equipment training through software and computer-based simulations.

“This facility will bridge the gap between what industry needs and what tertiary education can deliver and provides a cutting edge to the research and teaching capacity of the University of Sydney.”

Ms McKay said the new laboratory was the result of work of the University of Sydney leadership team, including EnergyAustralia Chair in Power Engineering Professor Vassilios Agelidis.

“It is also the result of the generosity of Sir William Tyree and the A W Tyree Foundation, who provided the philanthropic support to fund this facility,” Ms McKay said.

“It is this kind of leadership and generous support that helps position NSW as Australia’s clever State.”

Ms McKay said the new facility would help make NSW a leader in the field of power engineering research, identified as an area of priority research by the NSW Government.

“This new facility has the potential to contribute to the creation of smart grid electricity production, a priority for the NSW Government,” Ms McKay said.

“We recently announced a \$5 million NSW Energy Challenge Prize as an incentive for researchers to develop new technologies for NSW to play a leadership role in striving for clean energy.

“Perhaps that solution will be found right here in this new facility.”

For more information on CIAP go to www.osmr.nsw.gov.au