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Technology cluster boots up with new funding from ACT Government

NICTA and the ACT Government have launched a Government technology cluster to support and strengthen Government ICT industries in Australia. The ACT Government is providing \$150,000 to help establish the cluster in 2009-10, with a commitment for a further \$100,000 per annum through to 2011-12.

Deputy Chief Minister Katy Gallagher MLA announced the technology cluster today at a NICTA Research Laboratory Showcase held in Canberra as part of the ACT Government's Business in Focus Month.

"Governments around the world recognise that they must embrace technology in their systems and business processes in order to meet the increasing expectations of the community, as well as to reduce costs," Ms Gallagher said.

NICTA's Acting CEO Dr Phil Robertson said that there was growing awareness that advanced ICT is transforming the way in which government and business services are delivered. "Internationally, in leading economies it is commonly recognised that around 40 percent of productivity growth can be attributed to the use of advanced ICT. The technology cluster initiative will help increase efficiency and position Australia more competitively."

"We are most grateful to the ACT Government for its support of the cluster," said NICTA Senior Researcher Dr Jonathan Gray. "We have had many expressions of interest in the cluster from large organisations and we are confident that, with this support, we can now make a significant contribution to e-Government practice in Australia."

The e-Government cluster is a partnership between National ICT Australia (NICTA), the ACT Government, several major international companies, innovative ACT companies and other research organisations including the ANU. It aims to develop technology that will enable governments to deliver better services, reduce costs and open up new opportunities for businesses.

"NICTA has a strong track record in e-Government research and has been working for some time with a number of government agencies in Canberra to help improve the performance of IT systems and processes. These include the Department of Innovation, the Department of Health and Ageing, the Australian Research Council and IP Australia," said Ms Gallagher. "The ACT Government recognises the unique opportunity presented by NICTA's e-Government research here in Canberra, which has the potential to make Canberra the e-Government centre of the country and the region."

About NICTA

National ICT Australia Ltd (NICTA), Australia's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Research Centre of Excellence, is developing technologies which will meet the current and future needs of the community in fields which will lead to large economic, social and environmental benefits for Australia. NICTA has five laboratories around the country. Since NICTA was founded in 2002, it has created four new companies, developed a substantial technology portfolio of patent applications and continues to supply new talent to the ICT industry through the NICTA-enhanced PhD program. NICTA is funded by the Australian Government as represented by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy and the Australian Research Council through the ICT Centre of Excellence program. It was established and is supported by its members: The Australian Capital Territory Government; The Australian National University; NSW Department of State and Regional Development; and The University of New South Wales. NICTA's partners include: the University of Sydney; University of Melbourne; the Victorian Government; the Queensland Government; Griffith University; Queensland University of Technology; and The University of Queensland.

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