

MEDIA RELEASE

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NICTA: Forum to Improve Industry and Research Collaboration in Wireless Sensor Networks

National ICT Australia (NICTA) today launched The Sensor Network Forum to promote industry and research collaboration in the fast-growing area of wireless sensor networks.

The Forum will present a series of seminars and short courses to the wider sensor network research community. Presentations will be given by local and international technology experts and business leaders. By creating the Forum, NICTA aims to share its research, promote understanding and adoption of sensor technology, and encourage further innovation in this field.

With analysts predicting the market for sensor networks will be worth AUD\$60 billion by 2010¹, Dr Stan Skafidas, NICTA's Sensor Network Program Leader says, "The Sensor Network Forum will be a valuable catalyst providing Australia with an opportunity to capture a share of this growing market."

Intelligent sensor networks are relatively inexpensive electronic devices, which have the potential to create systems that can monitor what is happening in the environment, communicate with each other, and take action if necessary. They have the potential to be used in sustainable agriculture, water management, environmental monitoring and can also be employed in industrial applications, for example to monitor machinery and infrastructure such as bridges, dams, and roads.

According to Dr David Skellern, NICTA Chief Executive Officer, "Sensor networks are a clear example of how NICTA's basic research can deliver solutions to current problems. This technology has enormous potential for use in crucial areas such as water and environmental management."

At the Sensor Network Forum launch at The University of Melbourne today, Professor Rob Evans, Director of NICTA's Victoria Research Laboratory, presented an address to key representatives from the industry and research communities.

Focusing on the challenges facing wireless sensor networks and the potential for applying the technology globally Professor Evans explained, "Wireless sensor networks have the potential to significantly reduce the cost of data capture and to transform current methods of information gathering. They offer some of Australia's strongest industries opportunities to further enhance productivity, growth and global competitiveness."

¹ ON World

Since it was established in 2003, NICTA has researched ways of employing wireless sensor networks to benefit Australian industry. Earlier in 2005, NICTA launched NICTOR™, a wireless sensor network technology platform that will be used to monitor and control critical infrastructure in Australia's horticulture and agriculture industries.

The NICTOR platform enables the monitoring and control of critical infrastructure, requires minimal configuration, is highly scalable, and is designed to have a low cost of ownership. It has the potential to boost the quality and yield of Australia's farm produce, and address the challenges associated with on-farm water management.

For more information on NICTOR, please see:

http://www.nicta.com.au/director/mediacentre.cfm?viewArticle=true&content_id=2325&startrow=1

For more information on The Sensor Network Forum, please see:

<http://www.nicta.com.au/director/research/programs/sn/snf.cfm>.

About NICTA

National ICT Australia (NICTA) is a national laboratory with a charter to build Australia's pre-eminent Centre of Excellence for information and communications technology (ICT). NICTA is building research, education and commercialisation capabilities in the ICT sector for the generation of national benefit.

NICTA is funded by the Australian Government's Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and the Australian Research Council through *Backing Australia's Ability* and the ICT Centre of Excellence program.

NICTA 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 is also supported by its partners: the University of Sydney; University of Melbourne; the Victorian Government; the Queensland Government; Griffith University; Queensland University of Technology; and Queensland University.

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