



Dr David Skellern – NICTA CEO

2008 NICTA Techfest Speech

Thank you all for coming to the 2008 NICTA Techfest I am pleased to see so many people from research, industry and government here.

I'd particularly like to welcome Senator Conroy to NICTA's 2008 Techfest. As Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy he has the responsibility to develop a world-class Australian communications and information technology sector. This is an exciting challenge to have! Senator Conroy's Department provides NICTA with half of our Australian Government funding which plays a vital role in supporting our commercialisation and business infrastructure that enables us to transfer our research into use and deliver lasting impact.

NICTA's vision is that our imaginative research drives Australia's ICT future. I believe that the way forward for the Australian ICT sector is to develop products for global markets. I believe that we can generate truly global ICT companies. We can do it by starting to build up groups of companies in new market segments in which we capture a significant fraction of the market. And I believe that we can develop new industries based on technologies that we haven't even thought of yet.

Why? Because the thing about technology is that it is constantly evolving and there is always room for new players. And I'm absolutely convinced we can come up with the solutions to some of the technological hurdles of the future. Some of those solutions are in the room today and some of them are still being imagined across our laboratories.



Of course, we have some very real and difficult challenges in creating, sustaining and growing these companies. But the first steps in my view are that we have to show that we can generate a sustainable flow of technologies that can underpin globally competitive ICT companies. That's what NICTA is all about. And the reason you are all here today, I hope, is that you see an opportunity to work with NICTA to achieve this.

NICTA's role is to develop breakthrough technology, work with industry and lay the foundations of tomorrow's industries today. NICTA needs to increase the likelihood of getting research used and be creative about how we do this. Thanks to the support of the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy we are able to set up clusters, engage entrepreneurs-in-residence and turn our imagination to impact.

I'd like to leave you with a quote from John M Richardson, which is this: "When it comes to the future, there are three kinds of people: those who let it happen, those who make it happen, and those who wonder what happened."

In Australia research, business and government can work together to build a future ICT industry. We have a crucial role to help turn Australian research into products that we take to the world. And stepping up to that role is the challenge before us. Thank you all for coming today and I hope you see opportunities at NICTA's 2008 Techfest.