

## MEDIA RELEASE

**EMBARGOED: 10AM 9 MAY 2014**

### **Mastering better health solutions using 3D printing techniques**

The University of Wollongong, through the ARC Centre of Excellence for Electromaterials Science (ACES), has joined forces with three leading research universities to offer the world's first Masters degree in Biofabrication for Future Manufacturing to award graduates qualifications in both Australia and Europe.

Biofabrication – a process of regrowing human tissue using 3D printing techniques – will enable health professionals to offer patients improved, personalised treatments in the future.

All world leaders within the biofabrication field of research, the four universities offering the masters are: the University of Wollongong and Queensland University of Technology in Australia, the University Medical Center Utrecht in the Netherlands and the University of Würzburg in Germany.

ACES Director Professor Gordon Wallace said the Masters degree will provide participants with highly sought after, internationally recognised skills in biofabrication.

“Graduates of the program will have an international network, a track-record of collaboration with the world's leading bionics, fabrication and bio-ethics experts and an appreciation of all the processes involved in taking an idea through to commercial reality,” he said.

Each participating university has a track record in key areas of biofabrication, including polymer chemistry, cell biology, clinical implants and the process of fabrication.

“The key strength ACES brings to the partnership is our expertise in providing end-to-end biofabrication solutions. This means we have the capability to help researchers take their idea from a concept, right through to a product that can be used to help patients,” Professor Wallace said.

For example, ACES has expertise in forming printable bio-inks, stem cell biology, and developing custom bio-printing and 3D printing hardware. This expertise has led to many innovations, including the development of co-axial 3D bioprinting, the BioPen, and formulations that allow living cells to be delivered as part of the 3D printing process.

The Masters degree, which will open to applicants later this year, will admit 10 students per participating university to the degree. Students will spend the majority of time with their host organisation, and between nine to 12 months with one of the participating international counterparts.

Professor Wallace said biofabrication is a multidisciplinary area of research that requires an understanding of chemistry, physics, biology, medicine, robotics and computer science and encouraged graduates in these fields to apply for the Masters degree.

*The Masters degree in Biofabrication for Future Manufacturing is supported by the Australian Government and the European Union.*

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## Media Opportunity:

The Masters degree in Biofabrication for Future Manufacturing will be launched at 10am on Friday 9 May 2014 at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and later in the evening at the Australian Embassy in The Hague, The Netherlands.

Professor Gordon Wallace is available for phone interviews from The Hague:

- Thursday 8 May and Friday 9 May 2014 (CEST).

Dr Stephen Beirne, representing Professor Gordon Wallace, is available for interview:

- Thursday 8 May 2014 at ACES, University of Wollongong.
- Friday 9 May 2014, at the Masters in Biofabrication launch at QUT, Brisbane.

Dr Beirne is a 3D printing expert at ACES and can offer comment on the benefit of the degree to potential students, as well as the key strengths the University of Wollongong brings to the degree.

## Media Contact:

- ACES Communication and Media Officer Sarah McMaster on 02 4221 3788.
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