

Media Release

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New \$3.7M training centre in 3D bio-printing

The University of Wollongong is partner in a new training centre that will position Australia as a world-leader in 3D bioprinting for medical applications.

Minister for Education and Training Simon Birmingham today announced Federal Government funding of \$3.7M to establish the ARC Training Centre in Additive Biomanufacturing – a collaboration between universities, companies and clinicians, under the Industrial Transformation Training Centres scheme.

Additive bio-manufacturing, also known as 3D bio-printing, uses 3D printing technology to create medical implants, and is set to transform the foundations of manufacturing and medicine.

Particularly promising is the ability to develop personalised, customised medical treatments for patients. Recently, the team behind the new Training Centre 3D-printed a vertebral implant for a patient for severe back pain, and a custom titanium heel bone replacement.

University of Wollongong's Professor Gordon Wallace, a Chief Investigator in the new centre, says that despite advances in technology, significant gaps still exist in the hardware, materials and training of skilled personnel.

"It's important that research centres and industry combine to meet these needs. We at ACES are excited to be able to provide our state-of-the-art 3D printing facilities and highly skilled personnel to this venture. We look forward to working with our colleagues at QUT and other research training organisations." Professor Wallace said.

Industry partners in the ARC Training Centre in Additive Biomanufacturing include Osteopore – one of the first companies to use resorbable 3D-printed polymer implants to treat bone defects; Anatomics – a pioneer of patient-specific custom surgical implants and surgical planning tools; and Cochlear – the world's leader in cochlear implants.

Leading researchers with extensive experience in all aspects of additive biomanufacturing will come from the Queensland University of Technology, the University of Wollongong, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, Deakin University and the University of Melbourne.

Surgeons from St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre will drive the introduction of additive biomanufacturing into clinical applications.

Three research fellows and 12 PhD students will be recruited specifically for the centre.

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