

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### iFix Pen set to revolutionise corneal health

Researchers at the [ARC Centre of Excellence for Electromaterials Science](#) (ACES) at the University of Wollongong are transforming the treatment of corneal disease and injuries in collaboration with the [Lions NSW Eye Bank](#) and Sydney University's Corneal Bioengineering Group.

The team has received \$1.15 Million in funding from the NSW Government's 2018 NSW Medical Devices Fund (MDF) to further develop its iFix system, a novel medical treatment technology that incorporates 3D printing to repair corneal ulcerations.

The iFix system distributes a 3D-printed structure directly onto the eye, utilising the iFix Pen developed by ACES researchers at the University of Wollongong. The iFix Pen is a handheld 3D-printing device that delivers a specialised bioink formulation to the eye defect with high accuracy.

ACES Director Professor Gordon Wallace said the support provided by the NSW Government Medical Devices Fund will facilitate the translation of research over the past year into a commercial product.

"We have partnered with the NSW Lions Eye Bank led by Professor Gerard Sutton and the University of Sydney's Corneal Bioengineering Group to bring together the variety of skills needed to tackle this challenging area practically and successfully," Professor Wallace said.

"We believe the advancement of this technology through the Medical Devices Fund will have a significant impact on reducing corneal blindness in Australia and around the world.

Professor Gerard Sutton said he was delighted that the team had secured funding to further develop the iFix technology.

"Corneal disease is the third most common cause of blindness worldwide, and corneal ulceration accounts for 55,000 presentations to hospital each year in Australia," Professor Sutton said.

"Our iFix system will provide easy-to-use technology to repair corneal ulcerations with precision, while addressing current issues associated with corneal repair including pain relief, infection and the development of scar tissue, and has a low risk of error in terms of compromising sight."

The 2018 NSW Medical Devices Fund grant recipients were announced at NSW Parliament House last night (Wednesday 8 August).

### Media opportunity:

Prof Gordon Wallace is available for interview via ACES Communication and Media Coordinator Lauren Hood at [lhood@uow.edu.au](mailto:lhood@uow.edu.au) or on 4221 5306.

### **About the ARC Centre of Excellence for Electromaterials Science (ACES)**

Based at the University of Wollongong's Innovation Campus, ACES is a multidisciplinary research group with a focus on developing functional devices for applications including batteries, solar cells and systems that interact with living tissue.

### **About the NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service**

The NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service, incorporating the Lions NSW Eye Bank, NSW Bone Bank and Australian Ocular Biobank, is the state-wide service for the coordination of organ and tissue donation in NSW. The NSW Eye Bank is responsible for eye donation and providing ocular tissue for transplantation.

### **About the Medical Devices Fund (MDF)**

The NSW Medical Devices Fund is a cornerstone of the NSW Government's health and medical research portfolio. It recognises the important role medical devices play in providing better health for the people of NSW and beyond. It is also an acknowledgement of NSW's leadership in the medical devices field and the economic importance of the industry to the state.

The Medical Devices Fund (MDF) is a competitive technology program that supports investment in the development and commercialisation of medical devices and related technologies.