



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR THE HON. KIM CARR

Minister for Innovation, Industry,
Science and Research

THE HON. PETER GARRETT MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

Tuesday, 17 February 2009

\$17M CENTRE TO BOOST CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

A \$17 million Creative Industries Innovation Centre will provide free hands-on assistance to small and medium businesses in the creative sector to boost their productivity and realise their potential for wealth and job creation.

The national centre, hosted by the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), was launched today by Innovation Minister, Senator Kim Carr, and Arts Minister, Peter Garrett.

The centre is one of six Innovation Centres funded under the Government's \$271 million *Enterprise Connect* initiative. Other centres focus on sectors such as clean-energy, mining and remote enterprises.

"Australia's creative enterprises are among the world's best, but to remain competitive they must continue to innovate and improve their processes," Senator Carr said.

"Small and medium enterprises in this sector face similar issues to those in other sectors – they are strong in their creative focus, but sometimes lack the skills required to successfully run and grow their business.

"Most cannot afford to pay for external advice to help improve how their business operates, particularly in these tough financial times.

"This is where the Creative Industries Innovation Centre comes in. It will give eligible firms access to a free business review, followed up with matching funding of up to \$20,000 to implement changes identified."

Mr Garrett said the centre was focused on working in partnership with the creative sector and businesses could draw on the centre's expertise well after the initial review process.

"This centre will bring together cultural entrepreneurs, practitioners and researchers to maximise the contribution of Australia's creative industries to our economy and cultural life. Ongoing support will be provided through mentoring, networking opportunities and help with linking into local and global supply chains," Mr Garrett said.

"This initiative delivers on the Government's election commitments in *Fresh Ideas for the Arts* and *New Directions for the Arts* to establish a centre and to facilitate the development of creative industries in Australia."

Professor Ross Milbourne, UTS Vice-Chancellor, said the university is delighted to host the centre.

"Investing in our infrastructure and our creative industries research and academic profiles has been a priority," Professor Milbourne said.

"We are proud of our achievements and our track record for leading sustained, effective collaboration with industry, business and the professions."

While the centre is based at UTS' Sydney city campus, it will have a national focus on industries including design, publishing, writing, architecture, visual arts, television, radio, advertising, performing arts, music and interactive entertainment.

Services are provided Australia-wide through UTS' consortium partners, a national business adviser network and other Enterprise Connect centres.

Each year the centre will provide up to 300 business reviews, 50 incubation services, and assist 2000 businesses through workshops, seminars and networking opportunities.

Enterprise Connect is a national network of manufacturing and innovation centres offering practical assistance to help firms become stronger by focusing on innovation, creativity and excellence.

To see how your business can benefit from Enterprise Connect, visit www.enterpriseconnect.gov.au or call the Enterprise Connect hotline on 131 791.

UTS CONSORTIUM PARTNERS

Business and technology: Frasers Property; Arup; Ernst & Young; Macquarie Bank; IBM Australian Development Laboratory; Imany Investment Group; Neville Freeman Agency; DDB Worldwide Communications Group; SGS Economics and Planning; Australian Technology Park Innovations; Standards Australia; ABC Innovations and Sydney Olympic Park (SOPA).

Partners with specific creative industries expertise: Australian Business Arts Foundation; Australian Network for Arts and Technology (ANAT); Australian Interactive Multimedia Industry Association (AIMIA); Powerhouse Museum; Object-Australian Centre for Craft and Design; and Workshop 3000.

Universities: University of Sydney; Monash University; University of South Australia; University of Western Australia; University of Tasmania; University of Wollongong; University of Newcastle; and University of Canberra.

UTS is committed to openly building an inclusive national network and expects this group to expand to encompass an even wider range of support to the creative industries sector.