



MEDIA RELEASE

FIRST AUSTRALIA-FRANCE JOINT INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH LAB TO BE BASED IN ADELAIDE

Canberra, Australia 26 February 2019: An International Research Laboratory which aims to turbocharge scientific collaboration between South Australian universities and the key French national science research organisation CNRS and Naval Group, is slated to be established in Adelaide.

The peak French Government scientific research organisation, [CNRS \(National Centre For Scientific Research\)](#) and French maritime technology, shipbuilding and energy company [Naval Group](#), have signed a Letter of Intent with [Flinders University](#), the [University of Adelaide](#), and the [University of South Australia](#) to develop a proposal to base what would be one of only five industry-linked CNRS international joint laboratories in the world, in Adelaide.

The undertaking is one of a number of significant defence-associated education and research commitments being sealed this week in Canberra during the visit of the Minister for Higher Education, Research and Innovation Mme Frédérique Vidal.

The initiative builds on successful collaborations between the three South Australian universities and CNRS research laboratories, such as Lab-STICC in Brittany.

Flinders University Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling says the combined strength of three world-class universities located in South Australia, the defence state, makes Adelaide an ideal location for the laboratory.

“This is yet more evidence of South Australia being an unbeatable place to do business – by drawing on the specific research fortes of each university we collectively provide an unrivalled capacity in advanced research.”

“In Flinders’ case, it’s the exciting emerging technologies we’re leading in autonomous systems, such as unmanned vessels that can undertake often hazardous tasks independently of human control. We’re also actively contributing to research involving psychology and innovation,” Professor Stirling says.

University of South Australia Vice Chancellor, Professor David Lloyd, says that the decision to create the Joint Laboratory is a visionary and very welcome initiative by the CNRS and Naval Group CEOs.

“This is a landmark opportunity to boost both Australian-French scientific cooperation and Australian sovereign technical capability in a range of key areas, including those that connect human factors with the physical aspects of maritime vehicles in novel ways.”



“The University of South Australia is delighted to contribute to the laboratory its unique world-leading expertise in an interdisciplinary combination of research relating to Human Solutions for Complex Environments, including psychophysiology and behaviour, metrics-based ergonomic design and virtual reality and augmented reality,” Professor Lloyd says.

University of Adelaide Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen says he welcomes further international collaboration with CNRS, Naval Group and industry.

“The intersection of autonomous systems, artificial intelligence and human factors is one of the key frontiers of research today – areas we are pursuing with vigour. The opportunity to collaborate with some of France’s brightest minds on this frontier promises exciting outcomes.”

“With our strong record in pure and applied research in the disciplines of human factors, AI and systems autonomy, the University of Adelaide understands that interdisciplinary research is a powerful means to enhance our contribution to human progress,” Professor Rathjen says.

Naval Group Vice President International R&D Cooperation François Duthoit welcomes the collaboration.

"We are committed to cultivating an innovation environment in Australia around our scientific, education and industrial community," Mr Duthoit says.

“The establishment of the laboratory is one of the key pillars of this commitment and will provide us with opportunities to collaborate with our Australian University and R&D partners in the areas of autonomous systems, human factors and artificial intelligence.”

Alongside academics from within the three South Australian universities, the joint laboratory will be able to draw on relevant expertise across CNRS’s 33,000 researchers as well as Naval Group experts.

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