

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Regional Development



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LA TROBE UNI TECH HUB SUPPORTS VICTORIA'S DIGITAL FUTURE

Victorian small businesses and start-ups can collaborate with digital technology students to test ideas and solutions for real business challenges, thanks to an investment by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today officially opened La Trobe University's Digital Innovation Hub at its Bundoora campus, bringing three digital labs together – the Optus 5G Lab, Cisco Innovation Central Melbourne, and La Trobe's Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Internet of Things.

The Hub was funded by a \$9 million investment from the Labor Government alongside a \$2.75 million investment by La Trobe University. Optus and Cisco also contributed funding to the project.

The Hub brings together industry, research and teaching – and will give businesses and students the chance to work together to develop and test digital solutions, explore robotics and automated manufacturing, create new product lines and enter new markets.

This will give students the chance to gain real work experience while small businesses will have the opportunity to get access to advice and ideas for in demand skills.

Work in the Hub will focus on five priority areas: business transformation, building skills and capability, digital agriculture, digital health and clean technology.

Funding for the new Hub comes from the \$350 million *Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund*, which was set up to support universities with capital works, applied research and research infrastructure projects, boosting productivity and Victoria's economy as the state emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"Victoria is an innovation powerhouse and as international leaders in research and development, our universities play a crucial role in our state's success."

"Facilities like La Trobe University's Digital Innovation Hub give students a chance to test and improve their skills while helping businesses to tackle real-world challenges – this means everyone involved is transforming and growing."

Quote attributable to Member for Bundoora Colin Brooks

"The Innovation Hub at La Trobe is a great addition to the Bundoora precinct. Not only will it connect students with industry partners, it will also take their studies up a notch as they experiment with its exciting new technologies."

Quotes attributable to La Trobe University Vice-Chancellor and President Professor John Dewar AO

"The Digital Innovation Hub reinforces our commitment to providing practical solutions to global issues, and meeting the research and commercialisation needs of Victorian businesses."

"This state-of-the-art centre provides students, academics and businesses with access to leading technology innovators, which will particularly benefit the communities of the north of Melbourne, and regional Victoria."

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