

WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of Curtin's Office of Research and Development newsletter, *Curtin R&D*. The newsletter is designed to increase communication across the University about R&D management initiatives, strategic developments and upcoming events. It also provides the opportunity to celebrate achievements in R&D by Curtin staff.

Curtin R&D will be published monthly between March and October.

We look forward to your comments on matters raised in the newsletter and hope to include a 'Letters to the Editor' column in future editions.

Please email correspondence to me at B.Glover@curtin.edu.au

BARNEY GLOVER
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

For more information on the activities of the Office of R&D, visit our website at <http://research.curtin.edu.au> or call the Office of R&D on ext 7863.

OFFICE OF R&D NEWS

Research Management Plan Endorsed by URDC

The University's *Research Management Plan: 2001-2005* has been endorsed by both the University Research and Development Committee (URDC) and the Planning and Management Committee. Once the plan has been approved by Academic Senate, it will be available on the web.

Curtin Professor Heads Housing Body

Professor Jean Hillier has been appointed Director of the new WA Node of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI). The WA Node, WAHURI, is a joint initiative between Curtin and Murdoch University. For more information or to apply for research funding, contact Professor Hillier on ext 7259.

RPI Under Review

Close to 100 Curtin staff attended the April open forum to discuss the proposed review of the Research Performance Index system. The Office of R&D received good feedback and will have a draft report ready for circulation in July.

New Grants and Fellowships Assistant

Chester Cutinha has been appointed to the newly created position of Research Grants and

Fellowships Assistant. Chester will work closely with Carla Nosworthy, Research Grants Officer, to provide additional support to the research community in this area. He can be contacted on ext 4248.

Funding for New Strategic Initiatives

The URDC announced the allocation of \$500,000 to several new research initiatives including:

- Commercialisation of the LNG Micro-Cell Technology
- Technology Development and Early Stage Commercialisation of Endocrine Mimetics
- Ultra Clean Lab Facility
- Transport and Planning Research Centre
- Sustainable Tourism CRC
- Sustainable Mine Lakes
- Centre of Excellence in Cleaner Production.

New Institutes Established

Institute status has been approved by the URDC for the Nanochemistry Research Institute and the Science and Mathematics Education Centre. This brings to six the total number of University Research Institutes. In addition, Curtin's Geodesy Group will become the WA Centre for Geodesy.

RECOGNITION FOR AN OUTSTANDING SCIENTIST

In a special ceremony in early April, the Minister for State Development, the Hon Clive Brown, MLA, officially renamed the Centre of Excellence in Mass Spectrometry (CEMS) the John de Laeter Centre of Mass Spectrometry and opened the Western Australian Argon Isotope Facility as part of the Centre.

The renaming of the CEMS honours the impressive contribution Emeritus Professor of Physics John de Laeter has made to the advancement of science research and education. He has been associated with Curtin (WAIT) since 1968, holding significant positions in the Division of Engineering and Science as well as being Acting Vice-Chancellor from 1987-1988 and Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research and Development from 1987 to 1995.

In addition to his groundbreaking research in dating ancient rocks in WA, Professor de Laeter played a key role in the development of Technology Park and the SciTech Discovery Centre.



DVC ACTIVITIES

Much of my external role lies in strengthening the position of the university as the partner of choice in our many R&D activities. In recent months I have been putting considerable effort into supporting Curtin's image as being innovative and entrepreneurial.

Part of this activity has been the organisation of InnoVisions, a major international conference on innovation and entrepreneurship to be held later this year at Burswood on 13-15 November (see below for more details). It is taking a lot of planning to finalise the program of international speakers, gain the necessary sponsorship and implement an effective marketing



strategy. I am very grateful to colleagues at Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce (AICC), Zernike Australia, UWA and Curtin for their invaluable assistance. I have also negotiated Curtin's sponsorship and co-branding of the AICC Innovation luncheon series, alongside Zernike Australia. These luncheons are attended by a large cross-section of the Perth business community and the third in the series will be

integrated with the InnoVisions conference.

Another aspect of this work is my role on the Technology Precinct Board. This group has devised an exciting strategy for development of the Precinct, recognising that the innovative culture that characterises the businesses at Tech Park (and Curtin) could make an invaluable contribution to other activities within the Precinct, such as education and aged care. The Board is now working on a marketing plan to roll it out to the community.

Through each of these activities we are strengthening the association of the Curtin brand with innovation and entrepreneurship.

Over the past few months I have also represented some of Curtin's R&D interests as follows:

- Attended the AVCC national meeting of the Deputy/Pro Vice-Chancellors, Research, in Canberra.
- Attended a two-day Board Meeting of the Predictive Mineral Discovery CRC.
- Took part in the CSIRO Energy Review, by invitation of the Chief Executive of CSIRO.
- Participated in the Australian Partnership for Advanced Computing (APAC) review of the Interactive Virtual Environments Centre (IVEC).

PAUL ROSSITER
DVC, R&D

GRADUATE STUDIES NEWS

- » In accordance with Academic Senate guidelines, the position of Dean, Graduate Studies, will be reviewed over the next three months. Professor Lesley Johnson, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research, at the University of Technology, Sydney will conduct the review.
- » The Dean has released for comment a working draft of the *Best Practice Framework for Research Training 2002-2003*. The Framework provides a blueprint for the implementation of quality procedures in the management of research training for postgraduate students.
- » The University Graduate Studies Committee has approved the *Guidelines for the Register of Supervisors of Higher Degree by Research Students* and the Application for Entry to the Register of Supervisors of Higher Degree by Research Students form. These documents have been endorsed by Academic Senate.
- » The Office of R&D – together with LIS and LSN – has developed a seminar series, *Enriching Postgraduate Teaching and Learning*. The series focuses on the essentials of postgraduate research and supervision and is open to all postgraduate researchers.
To find out more or to book a place in a seminar, go to <http://cea.curtin.edu.au/seminar>



UPCOMING EVENTS

INNOVISIONS

International Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship 2002
12-15 November 2002
Burswood International Convention Centre, Perth

COMMERCIALISATION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SEMINAR

Presented by Curtin Women's Program with the Office of R&D
4 June 2002, 12.00 - 2.00pm
Building 100, Level 3, Meeting Room 1

GRADUATE STUDIES SEMINARS FOR SEMESTER 2

Preparing the Candidacy Application and Research Proposal
Writing Grant Applications
Supervising Postgraduate Research Students
Helping Your Postgraduate Students to Write Better

Dates to be announced.

For more information on any of the above, contact the Office of R&D on ext 7863.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The March 2002 issue of Curtin's Magazine of R&D, *Curtin Now*, is available from the Office of R&D. *Curtin Now* promotes emerging and current research from across the University. It is distributed to the business, government and tertiary education sectors. To request a copy or to be placed on the mailing list, call ext 7863. To view *Curtin Now* on the web, go to <http://research.curtin.edu.au>.

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

Virtual Centre a Reality

The Interactive Virtual Environments Centre (IVEC) - a new high-performance computer visualisation centre - opened in May at the Australian Resources Research Centre in Technology Park.

IVEC now links fast computers and exciting virtual reality devices at three Perth nodes and connects IVEC researchers to Australia's fastest super computer, the Australian Partnership for Advanced Computing National Facility, in Canberra.

IVEC is a joint venture between CSIRO, Curtin, Central TAFE and The University of WA and is directed by Curtin's Dr Rodney Thiele.

VC Comments on Minister's Report

In response to Federal Education Minister Brendan Nelson's report, *Higher Education at the Crossroads*, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Lance Twomey said that while he was

encouraged by the report's positive references to diversification, collaborations and deregulation, the report also needed to recognise research output, rather than just financial inputs, to identify the progress of modern universities.

"The document creates the impression that there has been little change in the higher education sector for some time, and that universities are inflexible structures unable to adjust to the demands of the twenty-first century," said Professor Twomey.

"The Australian Technology Network has shown it is able to develop research outcomes into commercial prospects at more than double the usual Australian and international rate, and it is surely more useful to focus on output-based statistics such as these than simply on research inputs," he said.

Biomedical Scholarships Awarded

Four honours biomedical science students received scholarships from the Western Australian Biomedical Research Institute (WABRI). The scholarships will be funded by the Macquarie Bank Foundation.

"These young scientists demonstrated terrific achievement through their university studies and have undertaken a year of research that should prepare them for postgraduate studies in any of Australia's best universities," said Professor Simon Carroll, Director of WABRI.

Over the next four years, the \$500,000 Macquarie Bank Fellowship Program – funded jointly by WABRI partners Curtin, Murdoch University and the Macquarie Bank Foundation – will support a Senior Research Fellow, three postgraduate scholars and additional honours scholars.

IN THE NEWS

Some of Curtin's research that received recent media attention:

Health Sciences Executive Dean Charles Watson's Chicken Brain Atlas received wide TV and print media coverage.

The Australian featured Curtin's geodesy group, led by Will Featherstone, and its wide-scale GPS survey across WA to further understand earthquake activity in the State.

The West Australian covered Psychology Professor Sven Silburn's research on the role of the media in youth suicide.



Professor Charles Watson and his research partner, Professor George Paxinos.