



NEW INFRASTRUCTURE BOOSTS RESEARCH CAPABILITIES

The John de Laeter Centre of Mass Spectrometry will benefit from \$10 million worth of new infrastructure, officially opened in February by Federal Member for Curtin the Hon Julie Bishop. The Centre has built and installed an Advanced ultra-Clean Environment (ACE) Facility and a second Sensitive High Resolution Ion MicroProbe (SHRIMP) confirming the Centre's position of leadership in mass spectrometry and enabling innovative research in geochronology, climate change and pollution studies, forensic

science, chemical metrology and extra-terrestrial research.

The ACE Facility provides the capacity to prepare samples free from contamination for mass spectrometry enhancing the capability of sensitive instrumentation used by the Centre and its collaborators. The SHRIMP allows in-situ isotopic analysis of chemically complex materials with a spatial resolution of 5 to 20 micrometres. A Thermal Ionisation Mass Spectrometer will also be acquired later this year.



L to R: John de Laeter Centre of Mass Spectrometry Chair of the Board of Management Dr Jim Ross, Emeritus Professor John de Laeter, the Hon Julie Bishop, The University of Western Australia Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor Doug McEachern and Curtin Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Lesley Parker.

APRIL 2004

OFFICE OF R&D NEWS

Staff changes at the Office of R&D

The Office of R&D welcomes the following staff to their new positions:

Professor Barney Glover commenced as Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Development, in January 2004. Barney was previously Curtin's Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor, R&D, prior to which he had been Director, Research and Development, for six years.

Linda Teasdale was appointed as the Assistant, Scholarships and Thesis Examinations, late last year. Linda comes from the Department of Agriculture WA, one of Curtin's major research clients. This new position reflects the rapid growth in this area, particularly in thesis examinations.

Conrad Crisafulli was appointed as Director, IP Commercialisation late in 2003. Conrad comes from technology commercialisation company TechStart Australia. The new position reflects the importance of Intellectual Property and commercialisation to Curtin and the higher education sector in general.

Tony Tate was appointed as Director, R&D Strategic Projects, late in 2003. Tony was previously based in the Vice-Chancellory, where he was the Executive Director of the Australian Technology Network. This position manages a number of large initiatives in which

Curtin's research community is presently involved.

Sarena Osman commenced in January 2004 in the new Research Grants, Contracts and Consultancy Unit. This unit has been formed on Level 2 of Building 100 and includes the University Central Consultancy Unit. Sarena has joined us from Curtin Consultancy Services.

Sin ad Darley begins at the Office of R&D this month as Ethics and Graduate Studies Officer. She will be filling in for Tania Lerch who is on leave. Sin ad is on secondment from Student Services.

Consultancy

Since 1 January, new consultancy activities are being operated through the University's Divisions with the support of the Office of R&D, rather than through Curtin Consultancy Services Ltd. To support this change, there is a new Consultancy Policy, new costing and pricing templates and, most importantly, new Divisional Consultancy Officers who can assist staff members to prepare and manage consultancy contracts. Staff members are encouraged to be familiar with the new Consultancy Policy and have regular contact with their Divisional Officer. Full details are available at <http://consultancy.curtin.edu.au/>.

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PVC ACTIVITIES

I am very pleased to take up my appointment as Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Development, and am looking forward to another year of improvement and consolidation within a rapidly changing research environment. The beginning of 2004 has opened at a frenetic pace within the Office of Research and Development, both across the University and at state and national levels in relation to issues in research and innovation.

The most important issues facing Curtin in 2004 relate to the forthcoming announcement by the Federal Government of the outcomes from extensive reviews into research and research training that were undertaken during 2003. Given that 2004 will be an election year, we can anticipate some delays in details regarding key initiatives. There is, nevertheless, a high level of anticipation across the sector regarding

the likely investment of resources in the next phase of Backing Australia's Ability. At present, we expect a further substantial increase in funding for research through BAA-2 with increased block grant allocations (although possibly with some caveats and a more competitive mechanism), greater collaboration between the sector and CSIRO, a State-based focus on commercialisation of intellectual property and a new round of major infrastructure funding. We eagerly await the details and, of course, the alternative approach that will emerge during the election campaign from the Federal Opposition. In all respects, this will be a very important year for establishing baseline funding parameters for the next decade. I anticipate widespread discussion within the University over the next few months as the major initiatives become clearer and

as we move to position the University to capitalise on the increased allocation of resources.

In many ways, the key steps are already in place, particularly with regard to our expanding strategic alliance with CSIRO. Recent key initiatives – including the expansion of the CSIRO Minerals research facility in Waterford, the establishment of the WA Energy Research Alliance with UWA and CSIRO Petroleum, and the re-location of a major CSIRO mass spectrometry group from Sydney to Curtin – all illustrate a growing relationship, which is recognised widely in Canberra. This augurs well for exploiting future collaborative research opportunities.

In addition to this very dynamic national research agenda, we have critical State initiatives that are gaining momentum and that are central to the future development of the University in areas

such as applied chemistry (with the relocation of the Chemistry Centre of WA to Curtin), through the establishment of the Integrated Agricultural Research Institute and in the WA Major Research Facility investment by the State Government.

Clearly 2004 will be a busy and exciting year for the University.



PROFESSOR BARNEY GLOVER
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Development

OFFICE OF R&D NEWS

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New Research and Development Offices

The Curtin Consultancy Services Ltd offices on Level 2, Building 100 are now also home to the University's central coordination unit for consultancy. Matt Saunders, Sarena Osman and Janet Allan are part of the team. Several other R&D staff

members have also relocated to the Level 2 offices, which will become the Research Grants, Contracts and Consultancy Unit. These staff members include Carla Nosworthy and Stuart Clarke (Grants), Ruth Preston (Cost Recovery) and Tony Tate (Strategic Projects). Their phone numbers remain unchanged.

IN THE NEWS

- » The presentation of the Premier's Research Fellowships to Professors Julian Gale and John Mackenzie was featured in *The West Australian* on Thursday, March 11.
- » The Planning and Transport Research Centre (PaTReC) released the findings of its environmental and economic impact study into the South West Metropolitan Railway in February. The study showed the railway would provide substantial benefits to the WA community, with a return investment of more than 16 per cent per year over its first four decades. PaTReC is a joint collaboration between WA's four public universities.

GRADUATE STUDIES NEWS

- » An orientation session for doctoral and masters students was held on 26 February as part of O-Week. The highly successful session informed students about the people and processes available to assist them during their postgraduate study.
- » The Enriching Postgraduate Teaching and Learning Seminar Series for students and supervisors began last month with two seminars. The seminars were entitled Research Involving Humans: What You Need to Know About Ethics and Preparing the Candidacy Application and Research Proposal. For more information about the series and online registration details, go to www.research.curtin.edu.au/graduate/development.html.
- » The ATN-LEAP (Australian Technology Network Learning Employment Aptitudes Program) project modules began in March, with further modules to begin in May. Global Sustainability, Project Management and Entrepreneurship are among the topics. Please visit www.research.curtin.edu.au/graduate/atnleap.html for full details.
- » The R&D website was recently renovated, with the Graduate Studies section being updated to provide clearer and more easily accessible information. Please visit www.research.curtin.edu.au/graduate/index.html to view the new-look website. Feedback on the changes can be sent to Leah Dowsett at L.Dowsett@curtin.edu.au
- » CUPSA website was recently updated. Visit www.cupsa.curtin.edu.au/ for information about student representation and assistance, social events, news, advice and more.
- » A new Postgraduate Students' Reading Room is now located on Level 4 (Room12) of the TL Robertson Library. The room was established in partnership with CUPSA in response to student requests. Two computers will be available along with work areas for group work. All postgraduate students have access to the room and can call Ed Willis on extension 3004 or email at E.Willis@curtin.edu.au for details on availability and use.

UPCOMING EVENTS

THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AT CURTIN

30 April 2004

The Office of R&D will host this topical open forum later this month. The forum will be held in the wake of last year's Nelson reforms and in the lead up to the release of Commonwealth initiatives under Backing Australia's Ability (2). The Pro Vice-Chancellor, R&D, Professor Barney Glover will give a presentation at the forum relating to the research funding and infrastructure environment and how it may be affected by these initiatives. Call the Office of R&D on 7863 for details.

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

Nanochemistry success

An application for funding under the ARC Linkage Infrastructure - Equipment and Facilities (LIEF) program has been awarded after previously being on the 2004 reserve list. A grant of \$546,352 will support the project, An Integrated Nano-scale Fabrication, Manipulation and Characterisation Facility, being undertaken by Professor Gordon Parkinson, Dr Mark Ogden, Professor Julian Gale, and their UWA, Murdoch and ECU collaborators. Congratulations to these researchers.

Woodside agreement strengthened

Curtin and Woodside Energy Ltd confirmed their support for hydrocarbon research with the signing of a new agreement in February. The agreement extends the funding of the Woodside Hydrocarbon Research Facility for another two years. The move will see a broadening of the scope of the agreement to further research links with other areas of the University. The new agreement is also expected to complement the WA Energy Research Alliance between Curtin, UWA and CSIRO.



Woodside acting chief executive Keith Spence and Curtin Chancellor Dr Eric Tan.

Human rights and the peace process

Professor Johan Galtung presented the 2004 Haydn Williams Research Fellow Lecture in February. The lecture was titled Global Governance, Global Citizenship: on the Future of Human Rights. Professor Galtung also held a two-day peace journalism workshop, examining the way in which international conflicts are reported. Professor Galtung is based at the Centre for Human Rights Education for the duration of his fellowship.

John Curtin Postgraduate Scholarship

Hannah McGlade is the 2004 John Curtin Postgraduate Scholar. Hannah is based at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies and has also consulted with the Centre for Human Rights Education in the development of her thesis: "The development of indigenous legal models – can they better protect the needs of Indigenous women and children victims of violence?" The scholarship provides a tax free income of \$25,000.

New forum for Life Writing

The first edition of auto/biography journal *Life Writing* was officially launched in February. The journal will be co-edited by Maureen Perkins and Mary Besemeres and is the first Australian publication devoted to the genres of biography and autobiography. Published by the Australian Public Intellectual Network, *Life Writing* will publish scholarly articles, memoirs, reflective pieces and book reviews relating to the genre.

PUBLICATIONS

A brochure on the John de Laeter Centre of Mass Spectrometry is now available, including details on the ACE, SHRIMP and TIMS facilities.

