



COMMERCIALISATION

18-20 June 2006 EXPO 2006
Exhibition and Conference

TODAY'S KNOWLEDGE IS
TOMORROW'S INNOVATION

Melbourne Convention
and Exhibition Centre

Media Release

19 June 2006, Melbourne Australia
Embargoed until 10pm 19th June 2006

INNOVATION PAYS OFF

The nation's most valuable prize for innovation, the \$100,000 Peter Doherty Prize will be awarded tonight at the Commercialisation Expo 2006 in Melbourne at 10.00pm AEST.

Named after Australia's 1996 Nobel Laureate in Medicine, Professor Peter Doherty, the prize will go to the most outstanding commercialisation and investment opportunity among the 200 technologies featured at the Commercialisation Expo.

The entries were submitted by Australia's leading universities and research organisations and are considered market-ready and highly innovative. Judging concluded today, and the Expo organisers are pleased to announce the winner as Faster Optical Communications, a Monash University Technology.

Faster Optical Communications was chosen based on the potential of the technology, the realism of the business opportunity, understanding of the market, commercial expertise in the team and investment plans.

Rapidly increasing bandwidth demands have put pressure on telecoms operators, and one way to ease this pressure is to better utilise the installed optical fibre. With a range of existing optical fibre technologies already being in service, communication equipment has to fit many different requirements.

Faster Optical Communications automatically configures itself to extract the optimum bandwidth from each fibre without prior knowledge of the fibre's characteristics. This technology is the "ADSL of optical communications", as higher data rates can be achieved over longer distances simply by plugging in new transmitters and receivers into an existing fibre.



The Peter Doherty Prize is worth \$100,000 and consists of a blend of cash and in-kind services designed to assist the winner bring their technology to market. The cash component has been provided by the Department of Education, Science and Training and the in-kind services have been provided by Spruson and Ferguson, patent and trade mark attorneys and lawyers, and Offspring Ventures, an active commercialisation partner.

Steve Telburn, the General Manager of Offspring Ventures, said today: "There is a big difference between 'inventions' and true innovation. Innovation is about the commercialisation of great ideas, but it's a process that is often slow and frustrating. There are two keys to successful commercialisation, which is the creative approach to commercialisation in the first instance, and a commercially minded team behind an innovation. We chose to be part of this prize to enable one of these great innovations become a commercial success."

Commercialisation Expo 2006 also offers a series of Sector and State prizes.

- **The Peter Doherty Prize, ANZA Technology Award, ICT Sector Award:** Faster Optical Communications, Monash University
- **Life Sciences Sector Award, Victoria State Award:** Novel Technology for Controlling Pest Species, Hatchtech Pty Ltd
- **Advanced Engineering / Materials Sector Award, Licensing Prize:** Hydrexia - Hydrogen Storage Solutions, UniQuest Pty Ltd
- **New South Wales State Prize:** Durable Tissue Bulking, Elastagen Pty Ltd
- **Queensland State Prize:** Pepfactants - Reversibly Switchable Peptides, UniQuest Pty Ltd
- **Partnering Prize:** PolyACI - Therapy for Cartilage Repair, CSIRO
- **Western Australia State Prize:** MillMapper - More Efficient Mining Operations, Scanalyse Pty Ltd
- **South Australia State Prize:** Novel Anti-Infective Agents, Adelaide Research & Innovation Pty Ltd
- **Australian Capital Territory Prize:** SIMPRESS - Automotive Manufacturing Software, Similie Systems Pty Ltd

Peter Doherty said today: "I'm delighted to support any effort that builds innovation and builds capacity in Australia, and so being associated with that's very gratifying for me. Commercialising science is very complex - there are whole other sets of issues and challenges that require very different types of expertise. The award helps the scientist to access those other types of expertise that you need to commercialise. In Australia we're gradually building that capacity and I hope that this prize helps push people in that direction."



Peter Doherty – bio details

Peter Doherty works in the general area of immunity to viruses and shared the 1996 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine with his Swiss Colleague, Rolf Zinkernagel, for discovering “the nature of the cellular immune defence”. He was Australian of the Year in 1997, and has (since 1998) been commuting between St Jude Children’s Research Hospital (SJCRH) in Memphis, Tennessee, and the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Melbourne. He recently returned to Australia, holding appointments as Laureate Professor at Melbourne and Burnet Fellow of the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Doherty’s trained in veterinary science at the University of Queensland, and is the first veterinary scientist to win a Nobel Prize. He worked as a vet in the Queensland Department of Primary Industries, then completed a Ph.D. in pathology at the University of Edinburgh Medical School. The discovery that won the Nobel Award was made during his tenure as a Research Fellow at the John Curtin School of Medical Research (JCSMR), Canberra.

Commercialisation Expo 2006

Commercialisation Expo 2006 is the peak industry event connecting research organisations to industry, ensuring the commercial success of Australia’s leading innovations. The Expo is the gateway to the prestigious \$100,000 Peter Doherty Prize for Innovation and showcases research and technology across ICT, engineering and life sciences. Leading speakers from Australia and overseas will discuss the ways in which businesses and researchers can collaborate more closely to bring enduring economic benefits to Australia.