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## **Leading universities join Uniseed venture fund to invest in future of Australian innovation**

- Monash University joins as partner, along with the University of Newcastle, UTS, Western Sydney University, and Macquarie University.
- This move, which doubles the number of research partners in the fund from five to 10, expands Uniseed's investible innovation universe and provides access to the majority of commercial output from Australian Research Organisations.

Uniseed, Australia's longest-running venture fund, today announced a significant expansion of research partners, with Monash University joining as a full partner, alongside a new collaboration of NSW universities, comprising the University of Newcastle, the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Western Sydney University and Macquarie University.

The five new partners join the Universities of Queensland, New South Wales, Melbourne, and Sydney, and Australia's national science agency CSIRO as partners, each of whom currently spend over \$1 billion a year on research. The newly expanded set of partners, who all rank within the top 25 Australian universities for research expenditure, collectively spend around \$7.7b on research annually, making up ~60% of the total research spend by all research organisations in Australia.

With this expansion, Uniseed will grow from representing<sup>1</sup> 43% to 60% of expenditure on research in Australia; from 46% to 57% of annual invention disclosures; from 48% to 62% of patent applications filed; from 50% to 68% of active patent families; from 45% to 77% of new start-ups formed; and from 42% to 53% of active start-ups.

Uniseed's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Peter Devine, said that the expanded partner set demonstrates the important role Uniseed can play in investing in researchers, technologies and businesses that will change the world for the better. "Since the foundation of Uniseed in 2000, we have helped fund 66 start-ups, each born from Australian research and ingenuity. Seventeen of these have achieved commercial deals with international companies, which is a very high conversion rate. Notable examples include the sale of Spinifex Pharmaceuticals to Novartis AG in 2015, Fibrotech Therapeutics sale to Shire plc in 2014, Aurtra's sale to Schneider Electric in 2022 and Kinoxis Therapeutics' collaborative deal with Boehringer Ingelheim in 2023.

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### **References**

Figures representative of data from 2022 SCOPR® (the Survey of Commercialisation Outcomes from Public Research), which is conducted annually by Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia (KCA), the peak body representing technology transfer professionals and their organisations in Australia and New Zealand.

<https://techtransfer.org.au/metrics-data/>



“The existing partners and I are proud to welcome five new universities to the Uniseed partnership - Monash University, the University of Newcastle, UTS, the Western Sydney University and Macquarie University. Each university represented in the partnership is of excellent quality and reputation – each ranked within the top 25 of Australian universities, and joined by CSIRO, Australia’s preeminent scientific institution.

“This is a very significant partnership expansion as it considerably expands the reach we can offer in funding new startups and commercialising technologies developed by Australian research institutions. Where previously we had the ability to support 42% of spin outs from research organisations in Australia, our partners will now cover more than half of all commercial research output generated by Australian institutions.”

More than 1,000 people have been employed through funding from Uniseed start-ups, either directly or by Uniseed research partners via contract research agreements with our companies. More than \$1.2 billion has been raised by the 66 start-ups supported by Uniseed, reflecting their significance to the Australian economy.

Dr Alastair Hick, Monash University's Chief Commercialisation Officer and the university's nominee to join the Uniseed Board, commented: “Ensuring that research has the best potential for commercial success possible is of vital importance. Through this partnership, we look forward to working with Uniseed to develop investable opportunities from researchers at Monash University and in doing so support the advancement of many new ideas and technologies with global potential.”

Mr Warwick Dawson, Pro Vice-Chancellor Industry and Engagement for University of Newcastle, who will be joining the Uniseed Board of Directors as nominee of the four new NSW universities, said: “Innovation is the bridge that enables the translation of research to economic and social impact. Through making this commitment to joining the Uniseed venture fund, we're bringing new investment potential to researchers at the forefront of the many transformative ideas discovered within our diverse university landscape. We're also reinforcing our dedication to nurturing a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within Australia's academic community.”

Both new partners, Monash University and the collective of four new NSW universities, will match the remaining commitments of Uniseed’s existing members, providing an additional \$6.75 million to the Uniseed Fund-3, taking the total fund size to \$56.75 million. With the new funds injected and taking into account prior Fund-3 investments, a total of \$23.63 million remains investible under Uniseed’s Fund-3.

This funding will add to UniSuper’s \$75 million commitment to Uniseed (made in 2022), with the goal of supporting exciting new developments across industries of the future such as biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, quantum computing and green energy. With a strong heritage managing retirement savings for people employed in the higher education and research sector and now open to all Australians, UniSuper currently invests approximately \$124 billion on behalf of over 615,000 members.

UniSuper’s Chief Investment Officer, Mr John Pearce, said “As Uniseed’s exclusive institutional investment partner, we’re proud to champion Australian innovation while focusing on returns for our members over the long term. These new partnerships represent a significant moment for Uniseed, UniSuper, and for research and development commercialisation in Australia.”



In order to manage the new opportunities delivered under the expanded partnership, Uniseed will also appoint two new Investment Managers.

Dr Devine concluded: “By welcoming five new partners and expanding our portfolio team, Uniseed is significantly expanding its potential and reach. This is a watershed moment for the fund and incredibly exciting for Australian innovation.”

#### **MEDIA**

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#### **About Uniseed**

Uniseed is Australia’s longest running early-stage commercialisation fund that makes investments in research emanating from five of Australia’s leading research organisations – The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney, The University of New South Wales, The University of Melbourne and the CSIRO. The fund facilitates the commercialisation of its research partners’ most promising intellectual property and secures targeted investment in resulting products and technologies. Several of Uniseed’s investee companies have gone on to become successful and profitable commercial enterprises. For more information, visit [www.uniseed.com](http://www.uniseed.com)