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TASMANIA

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\$50m grant to keep Tasmania at forefront of Antarctic research

The University of Tasmania welcomes the Australian Government's announcement that the University has been successful in its bid for \$50 million funding over the next 10 years for ongoing Antarctic research.

The University is working with core partners the Australian Antarctic Division, CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology to create the Australian Antarctic Program Partnership (AAPP), which will be funded through the Antarctic Science Collaboration Initiative.

The AAPP will also include contributions from Geoscience Australia, the Tasmanian Government, and Australia's Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS).

In announcing the grant, the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, Karen Andrews, said more than 1200 people are employed in Antarctic and climate research, contributing more than \$180 million to the Tasmanian economy each year.

Vice Chancellor Rufus Black said the new research partnership would maintain the State's role at the forefront of Antarctic and Southern Ocean science.

"Tasmania's research sector is a critical part of the State's economy and we are delighted that this funding will help us to grow that contribution over the next decade," Professor Black said.

"Our proximity to the Southern Ocean and the strong collaboration between the University and our core research partners at AAD, CSIRO and BoM makes us uniquely placed to carry out research of global importance.

"The new 10-year research program will particularly focus on Antarctica's influence on climate and sea-level, the nature and impacts of change in the Southern Ocean, and the future of Antarctic sea ice, krill and other marine ecosystems.

"This work will support improved projections of Australian and global climate change, sea level rise, and the impacts on marine living resources, providing decision-makers in Tasmania, Australia and globally with the knowledge needed to anticipate and manage the impacts of climate change.

“The new grant will allow us to build on the excellent research that has been carried out in Tasmania through programs such as ACE CRC and the ARC-funded Antarctic Gateway Partnership in recent years.

“In doing so we will deliver important social and economic benefits to Tasmania by further developing our local research sector and expertise.”

The key activities of the AAPP will contribute to:

- Quantification of climate variability and greenhouse gas forcing from the analysis of ice cores, including an unprecedented deep core extending the climate record back more than one million years;
- Investigation of ocean-ice shelf interactions and sea ice processes in previously inaccessible regions, using new remote sensing methods and voyages on Australia’s new icebreaker RSV Nuyina;
- Assessment of the impacts of environmental changes, such as sea ice conditions, acidification and iron availability, on krill and krill-dependent marine ecosystems;
- Improvement of climate models;
- Quantification of changes in climate, sea level, biogeochemical cycles and ecosystem health using innovative autonomous instruments and ship surveys to track physical and biogeochemical changes in the Southern Ocean; and
- Targeted delivery of research to decision-makers in government, industry and the community.

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