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Minister for Jobs and Innovation

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Senator for New South Wales

MEDIA RELEASE

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Six Hunter innovators awarded grants to go global

Six Hunter organisations are among 38 beneficiaries of grants across Australia to help build international relationships to commercialise ground-breaking research.

Local recipients are the Hunter Valley Coal Chain Co-ordinator (HVCCC) in Broadmeadow, the CSIRO Energy Centre in Mayfield West, Bee Innovative Pty Ltd from Branxton, BlueZone Group from Thonrton and two medical research programs based at University of Newcastle (UON).

Liberal Senator for New South Wales, Arthur Sinodinos, said support was coming from the latest round of the Turnbull Government's Priming Grant program for researchers and small-to-medium enterprises.

"The grants will allow the locals driving important projects to travel overseas and develop partnerships to take their ideas to market," Senator Sinodinos said.

The **HVCCC** project is focussed on enhancing automation and machine learning technology, leading to even more efficient coal movements.

It will collaborate with the Mathematical Optimization and Data Analysis Laboratories (MODAL) at Zuse Institute Berlin (ZIB), and the Centre for Optimal Planning and Operations (C-OPT) at UON.

The CSIRO Energy Centre's Dr Yanping Sun is developing high temperature thermal energy storage technology using molten salts and ceramics. She is working with Keanetech, LLC in the USA.

David Lyall of **Bee Innovative Pty Ltd** is working with the University of Dakota in the USA to use sensor technology and drones for real time, identification, tracking and reporting of bees.

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The company hopes to be better able to identify incursions of foreign bees and to measure honeybee activity for greater productivity.

BlueZone Group's David Burrowes is collaborating with IKT - Institute for Underground Infrastructure of Germany on a non-destructive method of detecting damage in conduit and underground pipes.

Dr Adjanie Patabendige from **UON** is working with Pharmidex Ltd in the UK to develop pharmaceutical agents that could reduce swelling within the skull after stroke.

Professor Christopher Grof of **UON** is looking to collaborate with Dutch company Bedrocan, the sole supplier of medicinal cannabis to that country's government.

Professor Grof is investigating the development of a novel strain of medical cannabis to export to a world market estimated to be worth \$56 billion by 2025.

Senator Sinodinos said the latest Priming Grants are worth a total of more than a quarter of a million dollars.

"Since 2016–17, the Turnbull Government has provided 114 Priming Grants worth approximately \$800,000 and I'm glad local researchers are benefitting from this new round," Senator Sinodinos said.

Minister for Jobs and Innovation, Senator Michaelia Cash, said Priming Grants showed how fostering industry-led innovation creates commercial benefits and inspires jobs growth.

"These Priming Grants are designed to empower researchers and businesses to work with overseas experts to commercialise their projects," Minister Cash said.

"This means more opportunities for Australians to grow their ideas by opening doors to foreign markets, which contributes positively to Australia's economy and job market."

The Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE) works with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science to deliver the Priming Grants under the Australian Government's Global Connections Fund (GCF).

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