

Media Statement

Strengthening industry-academic collaboration for a more innovative and sustainable industry future: Accord proud to enter Innovation Partnership with Monash University

Sydney, Tuesday, 3 September 2019. Sustainability opportunities, green chemistry innovations and future industry pathways for STEM graduates are part of the agenda via a just finalised partnership agreement between the peak body for Australia's growing hygiene, personal care and specialty products industry and Monash University.

Accord Executive Director Ms Bronwyn Capanna said Accord and Monash University had a history of regular but informal collaboration over the last decade and it was therefore great news to advance this into the future via an Innovation Partnership Agreement.

"Monash University is one of Australia's top-tier universities, with research outputs of world class standard in many subjects including chemical sciences and engineering. We are very excited to enter into a formal partnership with Monash," Ms Capanna said.

"Since the establishment of the state-of-the-art Green Chemicals Future facilities in 2015, Monash has been steadily carving out a leadership position in sustainable and green chemistry and engineering research and developments. All of which could become important springboards for novel and better performing industry products and for building a stronger Australian industry.

"Accord's last innovation survey of member businesses in 2017 revealed that nearly 60 percent of responding companies engaged in novel innovation on products, processes and management systems.

"Industry products in the hygiene, personal care and specialty products sector must keep evolving, in terms of their consumer benefits and by use of more sustainable technologies and ingredients.

"Already there are some exciting research outcomes in potential classes of new and more sustainable surfactants arising from Monash University's green chemistry and engineering work.

"Fostering greater industry dialogue with Monash research scientists and engineers will help ensure the direction of the university's research aligns better with industry practicalities and commercialisation realities.

"The deeper level of engagement made possible by the Innovation Partnership Agreement will also help build greater mutual cultural understanding between industry and academia. Such understanding can hopefully resolve some areas that may be impeding uptake of more joint company/university projects, such as issues relating to IP ownership arrangements.

"One particularly exciting opportunity opened by the Innovation Partnership Agreement lies in building career paths within industry for STEM graduates. Ensuring our industry has a quality science and engineering graduate skills pool into the future is vital, so that the industry can grow and prosper.

"Links with industry over the course of a degree can provide more meaningful problem-solving for students, which enhances their learning experiences as well as opening the door for post-degree employment or further research.

"The many opportunities created by the Accord-Monash Innovation Partnership Agreement offer mutual benefits for our member businesses and the staff and students of Monash University," Ms Capanna said.

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