



# The PRIME iHub News

## Newsletter #4, May, 2018

### **iHub submission sent to ARENA**

Led by Dr Stephen White, F.AIRAH, the iHub team has been busy over the past few weeks completing the final iHub proposal. This has also included a number of discussions, both with our university supporters and with the federal government's Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA).

This has all resulted in the final proposal being submitted on Tuesday, May 22, and a meeting with the ARENA panel now scheduled for Thursday, June 7 in Sydney.

A big thank you to the 70 organisations who have demonstrated their support for iHub. In particular, those who have worked behind the scenes in preparation for this submission.

We look forward to a positive outcome, and will keep you informed as we progress to the next stage.

### **iHub Proposal – Summary**

The Affordable Heating and Cooling Innovation Hub (iHub) is an initiative born out of the "PRIME" industry-wide collaboration of peak bodies, aiming to drive innovation and industry transition towards a low-emissions future. PRIME is led by the Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating (AIRAH). AIRAH is an independent professional institute. It is the largest peak body in the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVAC&R) industry.

Championed by AIRAH and CSIRO, the iHub initiative addresses many of the market failures in this sector, and aims to deliver a step change in energy productivity by:

1. Leveraging Australian innovation to drive business growth
2. Creating an industry pathway to onsite renewables in Zero Energy Demand (ZED) buildings
3. Enabling buildings to participate in energy markets, and respond to solar intermittency
4. Building HVAC&R skills for the future.

Key iHub activities include:



- **Innovation grants** to incubate new ideas and help accelerate the commercialisation of new clean-energy products and services in the Australian HVAC&R sector. Targeted industry growth opportunities include (i) building integrated renewables and (ii) smart connected buildings.
- **Living laboratories/green proving grounds** to provide independent verification of technologies in real-life building applications to accelerate widespread technology adoption.
- Smart building data clearing house to enable both greater benchmarking of building performance, and an ecosystem of clean energy software-as-a-service innovators.
- **Integrated design studios** to overcome fragmentation of design specialisations and help engage industry in system-level innovation for ZED buildings and renewable energy integration.
- **Roadmaps, codes and standards** to systematically update codes, standards, guides and ratings relating to HVAC&R energy and renewable energy integration in buildings, and to establish a "National HVAC&R Energy and Carbon Model" to inform industry transition pathways.
- **Building industry capability** through education and training at vocational, undergraduate and postgraduate level, with the creation of HVAC&R Centres of Excellence. Despite representing almost 2 per cent of Australia's workforce, there is currently no undergraduate major in building services. (Note: included for completeness but not funded by ARENA).

Target outcomes of this work will include:

- New jobs and businesses in clean energy manufacturing and software-as-a-service solutions
- Decarbonisation of buildings (including supporting government with COAG NEPP Measure 12)
- Cultural transition and capability building for a low-carbon-emissions HVAC&R industry.

In addition to collaborative (common-good) activities, the iHub will run a competitive process for awarding grant funding to industry product development projects. Project IP will generally be owned by industry to accelerate commercialisation.

Work will be conducted by both industry and academic members of the consortium.

Collaborating iHub participants cover a wide cross-section of Australian industry innovators, including (i) suppliers of HVAC&R products and building information services, (ii) design consultants, (iii) facilities managers, (iv) building asset owners, (v) peak bodies, (vi) state and territory governments and (vii) public sector research institutions.

Universities inside the consortium include Queensland University of Technology, University of Melbourne, University of South Australia, University of Technology Sydney, and University of Wollongong. These leading universities are proposing to both support the

education and training needs of the HVAC&R industry and provide local centres of excellence.

Government (particularly state and territory) will be a vital part of the iHub's success. Government is a large building portfolio owner and tenant, with significant power to support supply-chain transformation. It is also responsible for both energy and buildings policy, with associated regulatory and incentive-based levers at its disposal.

Government has expressed its desire to "lead by example" by aiming for energy productivity in its own buildings (NEPP Measure #12), and it is a core objective of the iHub to support government in this endeavour. A network of government officials will be maintained as both a formal mechanism for informing the iHub board, and as an on-the-ground workforce for undertaking collaborative initiatives.

By pooling cash and in-kind contributions from these organisations, and leveraging funding from the Commonwealth (ARENA), the iHub is expecting to be an \$85m initiative over an initial six-year duration. After the initial six-year term, the iHub aims to be self-supporting.

The iHub will be established as a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee, with an independent skills-based board to provide strategic guidance, and to oversee distribution of funding in accordance with the mission of the iHub. The iHub will look for tax-exempt status as a Scientific Institution. This is an established successful model, used extensively by Cooperative Research Centres.



## Thank you to all our supporters

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Interested in being a founding member of iHub? Please contact Tony Gleeson, M.AIRAH at [tony.gleeson@airah.org.au](mailto:tony.gleeson@airah.org.au) or Dr Stephen White, F.AIRAH at [Stephen.D.White@csiro.au](mailto:Stephen.D.White@csiro.au).

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