

## NSSN celebrates fifth birthday

July 2021 marks the fifth anniversary of the NSW Smart Sensing Network (NSSN). The first of the three NSW Innovation Networks, the NSSN was established in July 2016 with funding from the NSW State Government through the Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer.

Led by the University of Sydney Nano Institute Director Professor Benjamin Eggleton and UNSW Sydney Scientia Professor Justin Gooding, the NSSN brings together academia with industry and government to translate world-class research in smart sensing into compelling solutions.

“Across its first five years, the NSSN has demonstrated the power of collaboration by delivering impactful smart sensing solutions across industries ranging from water utilities to defence,” said NSSN co-directors Professor Eggleton and Professor Gooding in a joint statement.

“The NSSN is totally stakeholder focussed and has harnessed the State’s smart sensing research expertise to not only deliver real-world market innovation and value, but contribute innovative solutions to some of the greatest global challenges.”

The Network has been recognised in the NSW Government’s recent *Accelerating R&D in NSW Action Plan* as an exemplar of enabling innovation by collaboration.

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In addition to its founding universities, the [NSSN membership](#) has grown over the past five years to include The Australian National University, University of Canberra, Macquarie University, University of Newcastle, University of Technology Sydney, and Western Sydney University.

## **Delivering real-world market innovation and value**

The Network has delivered impact for its members by activating and leading several multi-million dollar collaborative R&D programs to success.

Researchers from UNSW, ANU, University of Canberra, UTS and the University of Newcastle collaborated with Sydney Water and nine other water utilities on NSSN's flagship \$3.4 million project, *[Advanced Sensing to Reduce Leaks & Breaks](#)*.

A successful recipient of the federal government's Cooperative Research Centres Projects (CRCP) Grants, NSSN's \$1.5 million *[Increased Recycling of Plastics by Sensing and Treating Label Contamination](#)* program has convened scientists and major Australian businesses to boost Australia's recycling capability.

Researchers from the University of Sydney, UNSW and UTS are working with PEGRAS Asia Pacific, Labelmakers Group and a range of dairy companies to utilise sensing to remove label contaminants from HDPE milk bottles. The in-progress project has led to the development of world-first technologies and several academic publications.

Exclusive access to direct funding is available to NSSN members via the annual *[NSSN Grand Challenges Fund](#)*. The fund was established in 2021 to support



collaborative R&D projects that respond to NSSN Grand Challenges: bushfires, water, COVID-19, and ageing.

## Launch of NSSN Strategic Plan 2021-24

After an extensive consultation process, the NSSN has released its [Strategic Plan 2021-24](#). The plan guides the growth and development of the network over the coming three years and incorporates feedback from various stakeholders, including the NSSN staff, Board, and Members' Committee.

Emanating from the Network's successful establishment and growth phase, the Strategic Plan sets the framework for the Network to serve as an *Activator of Innovation* and re-sets the NSSN's Vision, Mission, Values, Objectives and Strategies. The ambitious plan is based on five core objectives:

1. Enhance the NSSN's role as an *Activator* of innovation.
2. Develop signature projects.
3. Deliver valuable services to our members.
4. Quantify and validate the NSSN's impact.
5. Strengthen research capacity and profile

The plan also lays out 17 strategies for meeting the network's objectives.

The Strategic Plan translates into the NSSN Business Plan, which is a series of actions with measurable targets that inform the operations of the Network over the coming years. The plan is officially launched at the NSSN fifth birthday celebration on 27 July 2021.



The fifth birthday of the NSSN marks the success of a pioneering organisation that embodies the triple-helix model of innovation.

We honour the hard work and contribution of each member of the NSSN, from PhD students and senior researchers that solve our "impossible" challenges, to NSSN staff and leadership that make sure we deliver on our promise.

The NSSN fifth birthday is also an opportunity to say thank you and farewell to one of our founding co-directors, Professor Justin Gooding, who leaves the Network in July 2021.

\* The NSSN fifth birthday celebration may be postponed due to the current COVID-19 outbreak in Sydney.

#ENDS#

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