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CSIRO scoops the pool at prestigious research commercialisation awards

CSIRO has scooped the pool at the prestigious KCA Awards, for creating and commercialising a special X-ray to find gold and a varnish to preserve priceless artworks.

The Awards celebrate world-class research commercialisation that turns brilliant ideas into products and services to help humanity. They have the potential to save millions of lives and create thousands of jobs in our knowledge industries.

“Australian research is among the best in the world, but it takes skilled commercialisation professionals to translate it into valuable products to benefit society,” Chair of Knowledge Commercialisation Australia, Dr. Erin Rayment, says. “The KCA Awards recognise those who bridge the gap between research and industry.”

Among the finalists were The University of Queensland’s vaccine candidate and a high tech app for patients in pain, developed by Curtin University.

KCA Award for Best Research Commercialisation:

- **PhotonAssay**, which quickly and accurately X-rays ore to see how much gold is inside. This increases gold recovery by 1-3%, worth \$2 billion a year to this industry alone. There are no hazardous substances in this process, improving environmental impact and worker safety. Commercialised by Chryssos Corporation, this technology is returning equity to its creators at CSIRO to invest in more breakthrough science.

KCA Award for Best Research Contract/Collaboration:

- **MS3**, an Australian varnish created through ‘flow chemistry’, being used to preserve priceless masterpieces in art galleries around the world. Six years ago the world’s best varnish - developed in the UK in 1959 - went out of production. No one knew how to recreate it. The National Gallery of Victoria approached CSIRO, which used its expertise in chemical synthesis to make a new and improved varnish: MS3. Melbourne company Boron Molecular bought the licence and exported MS3 to the world.

People’s Choice Award winner

- **PainChek** app, derived from research by Curtin University, uses AI to recognise micro expressions to calculate the severity of pain in dementia patients, for carers to assess. PainChek Ltd was listed on the ASX in 2016, and a government grant has made the app available to 100,000 people. The company has now expanded to NZ, Singapore and the UK.

“Although a small proportion of the staff, technology transfer professionals are key to industry engagement and real-world impact,” Dr. Rayment says. “They facilitate the arduous journey from idea to reality, maximising social and economic benefits that result from billions of public dollars spent each year on research.”

Sponsored by Phillips Ormonde Fitzpatrick, the Awards were judged by commercial leaders of innovation:

- Ross McFarlane (Partner, Phillips Ormonde Fitzpatrick)
- Dr. Tim Boyle (Director, Innovation and Commercialisation, ANSTO)
- Natalie Chapman (MD, gemaker)

- Dr Peter Devine (CEO, Uniseed)
- Sally-Ann Williams (CEO, Cicada Innovations)

“As the world recovers from the damage of COVID-19, the role of KCA in helping deliver the benefits of public sector research to our economy, and more broadly to our society, is more important than ever,” Ross McFarlane says.

For more information and interviews, contact tracey@gemaker.com.au (0411) 281 854.

About Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia (KCA)

Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia (KCA) is the peak body for organisations and individuals associated with knowledge commercialisation and exchange between public sector research organisations and business and government entities. We seek to link, enable and inspire our members, and provide the necessary tools and opportunities to spur on greater translation of research for economic and community benefit, and create a more vibrant and productive Australian economy. www.techtransfer.org.au