



# AUSTRALIAN SOLAR INSTITUTE



## Bringing Australia to the forefront of solar energy research and development

### WHY ESTABLISH AN AUSTRALIAN SOLAR INSTITUTE?

The Australian Government is committed to developing a suite of cost-effective low-emission energy technologies and has set a renewable energy target of 20 per cent by 2020.

The Australian Government is investing heavily in renewable energy technologies and last year established the \$500 million Renewable Energy Fund and the \$150 million Energy Innovation Fund, \$100 million of which is allocated to the establishment of the Australian Solar Institute. The Institute's national headquarters will be located in Newcastle, New South Wales.

Inadequate funding for Australian research institutions and the lure of well funded overseas organisations has contributed to Australia losing solar research expertise throughout the past decade.

The Australian Solar Institute will provide much needed support for the Australian solar community, helping to retain Australian solar expertise and develop the next generation of Australian solar researchers. The Institute will foster greater collaboration between researchers in universities, research institutions, and industry and help forge strong links with peak overseas research organisations.

The Institute will make Australia a more attractive and productive location for solar researchers.

### WHO IS IT FOR?

The Australian Solar Institute will support Australian researchers in solar photovoltaic and concentrating solar thermal technologies.

The majority of the Institute's research funding will be allocated through a competitive grants program. A smaller proportion of research funding will be provided to core Institute projects and activities. This funding will lay the foundations for the Institute's participants to conduct world-leading solar research and development and provide the Australian solar research community with access to world-class facilities.

The Institute's competitive grants program will be designed to encourage any Australian researcher in solar photovoltaic and

concentrating solar thermal technologies to apply for funding. This includes researchers from the public and private sectors.

Guidelines for the competitive grants program will be developed over the coming months, with the allocation of these grants occurring through an open, competitive, and transparent process.

### WHAT WILL IT DO?

Establishing the Australian Solar Institute will:

- Advance and accelerate innovation in solar thermal and solar photovoltaic technologies in Australia;
- Drive research capable of improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of solar technologies;
- Increase the competitiveness of solar technologies;
- Retain local and attract international expertise in solar energy research; and
- Establish Australia as a key player in the development of solar energy technologies in the Asia-Pacific region.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

An Establishment Committee and an Interim Executive Director have been appointed to begin work on the Institute immediately. A governing board and permanent Executive Director will be appointed to allow the Institute to commence full operations by July 2009.

### Contacts

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