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RMIT, Siemens and Festo partner to create a new Industrial Digital Innovation Hub

RMIT, Siemens and Festo have signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore major areas of cooperation to help drive workforce transformation for Industry 4.0 in the Australasian region, including the establishment of an Industrial Digital Innovation Hub at RMIT.

The hub will be designed to enable digital innovation at scale in a collaborative effort across different cultures, disciplines, geographical locations and industry environments, eventually linking RMIT in Australia with its Vietnam campuses.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor of RMIT's College of Science, Engineering and Health, and Vice President for Digital Innovation Professor Aleks Subic said the agreement represented a new model of public-private sector partnership based on collaborative systems leadership at a scale never seen before in Australia.

"It's time to think big with Industry 4.0," Subic said.

"An industrial revolution doesn't discriminate – it impacts every sector and therefore requires a multi-disciplinary approach with a holistic view across the entire continuum of education and training from TAFE through to Higher Education.

"We expect as many as 10,000 RMIT students across a range of disciplines in engineering, science, technology, health and design to access some of the most advanced industrial software available over the next three years," Subic said.

“It has never been more important to provide this type of industrial digital environment for the development of workforce of the future, that allows collaborative interdisciplinary teams to co-design and co-create remotely across borders and industry sectors.”

The Industrial Digital Innovation Hub will be established thanks to a significant hi-tech industrial software grant by Siemens and managed out of the RMIT Advanced Manufacturing Precinct, a key Industry 4.0 facility focused on digital manufacturing and design.

Siemens Australia Chairman and CEO, Jeff Connolly said he was excited by the possibilities of this announcement.

“The fourth industrial revolution describes the impact on manufacturing, but the reality is that it has significant implications for energy, healthcare, transport, building and construction, engineering, sustainability as well as advanced manufacturing – all part of the RMIT approach,” Connolly said.

“The announcement comes at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is fundamentally forcing Australians and Australian businesses to look for new ways to keep the engines of the economy running.

“It’s fitting to establish an Industrial Digital Innovation Hub because digitalization has no borders and we have to learn how our economy can participate in ways which won’t require us to be in a factory or an office or at a site, Connolly said

The new hub will be the cornerstone of a number of initiatives being explored as part of the MoU by the three organisations in a collaborative approach to education and training.

Festo Didactics’ Australian and New Zealand Manager, Damien Sinclair said digitalization and the integration of I4.0 technologies are opening a world of opportunity for the future workforce.

“As we encompass more Industry 4.0 and advanced manufacturing technologies, we also see an increase in cohesion and interlinking of learning. No longer is there such a divide within different areas of academia and in industry,” he said.

“COVID-19 has changed our mindset for how we work and what is possible.

“It has created a great transformation in our learning environment, showing how opportunities exist and how we may further embrace digitalization, virtual and mixed reality platforms and continuous digital learning as key parts of the future in education, manufacturing and broader workforce environments.”

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Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global technology powerhouse that has stood for engineering excellence, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality for more than 170 years. The company is active around the globe, focusing on the areas of power generation and distribution, intelligent infrastructure for buildings and distributed energy systems, and automation and digitalization in the process and manufacturing industries. Through the separately managed company Siemens Mobility, a leading supplier of smart mobility solutions for rail and road transport, Siemens is shaping the world market for passenger and freight services. Due to its majority stakes in the publicly listed companies Siemens Healthineers AG and Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy, Siemens is also a world-leading supplier of medical technology and digital healthcare services as well as environmentally friendly solutions for onshore and offshore wind power generation. In fiscal 2019, which ended on September 30, 2019, Siemens generated revenue of €86.8 billion and net income of €5.6 billion. At the end of September 2019, the company had around 385,000 employees worldwide. Further information is available on the Internet at www.siemens.com.

About RMIT

- RMIT is a global University of technology, design and enterprise and where teaching, research and engagement are central to achieving positive impact and creating life-changing student experiences.
- Founded in 1887, RMIT is a multi-sector university with more than 94,000 students and 12,000 staff globally. The University enjoys an international reputation for excellence in professional and vocational education, applied and innovative research, and engagement with industry and the community.
- With three campuses and two sites in Australia, two campuses in Vietnam and a research and industry collaboration centre in Barcelona, Spain, RMIT is a truly global university. RMIT also offers programs through partners in destinations including Singapore, China, Indonesia and Hong Kong, and has research and industry partnerships on every continent.
- [See the latest RMIT rankings](#)

About Festo

Founded in Esslingen in 1925, Festo is a world leading German company specialising in industrial control, Factory and Process automation. With 250 office locations in 61 countries and employing more than 21,000 employees, we service more than 300,000 customers in over 176 countries. We have a turnover of 3.2 billion Euro and from this, returning 8% of our turnover back into R&D with over 100 patents, with separate facets encompassing Industrial Automation from Festo, technical education with Festo Didactic incorporating LabVolt, medical innovations with LifeTech and AI competencies with Resolto Informatik GmbH.

To help shape important issues surrounding Industry 4.0, such as consistent communication and service-oriented architecture, and to pick up impetus for its own products, Festo is a member of various networks such as the Industry 4.0 platform, Labs Network Industry 4.0, Automation ML e. V. and the OPC Foundation. Festo Automation equipment is found in any industry where automation is used; in manufacturing, food and beverage, agriculture, mining and water just to name a few.

Festo Didactic supports areas of technical training in factory and process automation, including I4.0 and emerging technologies, pneumatics, hydraulics, electrical engineering, power systems, renewable energies, production technology,

mechanical engineering, mechatronics, CNC, HVAC and telecommunications. We are also the major supporter of WorldSkill program in Mechatronics. Further information is available on the Internet www.festo.com and www.festo-didactic.com