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MEDIA RELEASE

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INNOVATION BOOST IN THE HUNTER WITH \$1M GRANT

The NSW Government will boost innovation and jobs growth in the Hunter with a new \$1 million, two-year partnership with the University of Newcastle.

Minister for Regional Development John Barilaro said the funding will support four innovation hubs – the Newcastle CBD Innovation Hub; the Upper Hunter Innovation Hub in Muswellbrook; the Innovation Defence Hub in Williamstown; and the Dantia Smart Hub in Lake Macquarie.

“Collaboration and sharing ideas is a key driver of innovation in small business, and this program will make sure that start-ups and entrepreneurs in the Hunter have access to the same opportunities as those in Sydney,” Mr Barilaro said.

“Small business is the engine room of the NSW economy so we are hoping this partnership with the University of Newcastle will create new business ideas, new job opportunities and new industries for the Hunter region.”

The CBD Innovation Hub and the Upper Hunter Innovation Hub in Muswellbrook will provide co-working spaces for university-industry engagement while the Innovation Defence Hub in Williamstown will offer space for startups working on innovative defence technologies.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter, Scot MacDonald welcomed the funding, which will also support the Dantia Smart Hub in Lake Macquarie to facilitate the growth of University research tailored to the needs of local businesses in key industries.

“This funding will help the University of Newcastle further promote its research capabilities, accelerate industry development and create better local business networks throughout the Hunter and beyond,” Mr MacDonald said.

Professor Kevin Hall, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) at the University of Newcastle said the best innovation ecosystems are those where new industries and opportunities are delivered through collaboration between research, industry, business, community and government partners.

“This grant allows us to fast-track our plans for an Integrated Innovation Network in the Hunter, providing some of the key physical pieces of the enabling infrastructure our region needs to support and nurture an ideas boom,” Mr Hall said.

For more information visit: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/