

Joint Statement:

Premier
The Honourable Anna Bligh

Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry
The Honourable Desley Boyle
17/08/2008

Bligh kickstarts work on \$1B 'Australian-1st' Ecosciences centrepiece

Work on a \$280 million Australian-first centre dedicated to solving some of our biggest environmental issues, including climate change, is now underway in Brisbane.

Premier Anna Bligh today attended a start-of-construction event for the Ecosciences Precinct centrepiece which is to be built within the Boggo Road Urban Village redevelopment at Dutton Park.

"The Queensland of the future faces great challenges and that's why I want us to have the world's best research facilities," said the Premier.

"This is an extraordinary project. It will be our scientific cerebral cortex. It will bring more than 1000 scientists and researchers together," Ms Bligh said.

"This centre for Queensland's best scientific minds will be dedicated to addressing major challenges such as climate change, water and the sustainable growth of the State's industries.

"It will give us the scientific tools to plan for the future and enhance our growing reputation for scientific research and innovation."

Ms Bligh said that Boggo Road precinct, along with the Health and Food Sciences Precinct at Coopers Plains, was a collaborative project between the State, which was contributing \$290 million to both projects, and the CSIRO, which was putting almost \$88 million into them.

"The precinct's past might have a gloomy prison link, but this inner-city redevelopment with its research focus and incorporating retail and residential will be exciting and vibrant."

Once complete (2011) it will house scientists from the CSIRO, the Queensland Climate Change Centre of Excellence, and Queensland Government departments Natural Resources and Water, Primary Industries and Fisheries, Mines and Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

"The end result will see greater collaborations and coordination between State and Federal Government researchers, along with new partnerships research projects and world-class facilities," Ms Bligh said.

The Ecosciences Precinct is a key component of Government's Smart State Strategy.

"There's currently more than \$1 billion worth of construction planned for the area and on completion it'll be Australia's biggest and most advanced health and ecosciences research facility.

It will be part of 109 Central - a concept integrating four new and existing science and education themed precincts into a world leading environmental and biomedical research community.

109 Central is named after the 109 bus route that connects all of the research facilities.

Ms Bligh said that 109 Central also includes the Princess Alexandra Hospital Health Science and Education Precinct; the University of Queensland Precinct and the Mater Hospital Precinct.

"109 Central is crucial to our vision for Queensland's scientific advancement," Ms Bligh said.

"It links industry, universities and the community in a way that is absolutely guaranteed to produce some very exciting results."

Tourism, Regional Development and Industry Minister Desley Boyle said that the Ecosciences Precinct was the latest in a long list of science infrastructure funded by the State Government.

"We've invested \$3.4 billion in research and development in Queensland since 1998 which has resulted in 36 new research institutes and around 60,000 new jobs in science, engineering, technology and health," Ms Boyle said.

"For example, we committed \$142.5 million to the establishment and operational costs of the Queensland Bioscience Precinct Building at the University of Queensland (UQ), which includes the world-renowned Institute for Molecular Bioscience (IMB).

"Elsewhere, we have committed \$100 million to the construction of the Smart Therapies Institute within the site of the Princess Alexandra Hospital Campus.

"Construction begins next year and its focus will be on a wide range of health and medical research areas including cervical cancer, breast cancer, melanoma, liver and kidney disease, malaria, HIV, osteoporosis, obesity, arthritis and diabetes."

Ms Boyle added that other funding recipients included the Institute of Glycomics at Griffith University (\$19 million), the Queensland Brain Institute at UQ (\$45 million) and the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation at the Queensland University of Technology (\$22.5 million)

"Earlier this year we also provided \$8 million to help establish the Australian Tropical Forest Institute at James Cook University in Cairns," Ms Boyle said.

"There is more to come too. The Health and Food Services Precinct will open at Coopers Plains in 2010 on the existing Queensland Health Forensic and Scientific Services Campus.

"It will be a base for around 200 scientists working on animal bio-security, health and food issues."

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