



ANU News

Media Releases

Supercomputer boost to Australian research

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The door to the petascale era is being opened for critical Australian research in climate change, the environment, and a host of other areas. This transformational change comes with ANU signing an agreement with Fujitsu to build and install a 1.2 Petaflop supercomputer—the most powerful computer in Australia and amongst the largest in the world—and capable of performing 170,000 calculations per second for each of the seven billion people on the planet.

The new petascale supercomputer, to be installed at the National Computational Infrastructure (NCI) at ANU, will have the computing power, memory and storage of about 30,000 dual-processor computers working in tandem.

ANU Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Young said: “The new supercomputer will provide Australia with a much-needed capability to meet national challenges, particularly in areas of research where deeper insights rely upon higher performance computation.

“ANU is pleased to be playing its national leadership role by building research infrastructure shaped to meet future challenges, and by fostering the intellectual capital upon which this much-needed capability rests. The development is particularly pleasing in that it extends the University’s 25-year commitment to this national role,” he said.

Mike Foster, Chief Executive Officer of Fujitsu Australia and New Zealand said: “We are proud to be able to assist ANU in playing its vital role as one of the leaders in Australian research. When completed, the NCI supercomputer will be one of the largest and fastest computers in the world. Our engagement with ANU on this important project is a great example of how Fujitsu is able to leverage its global resources, technology and expertise at a local level.”

CSIRO Chief Executive Dr Megan Clark said the new computer would take Australia’s research capacity to a new level.

“This is a truly Australian partnership, aiming to boost Australian research and to tackle the big questions. The supercomputer will revolutionise Australia’s research capability through advanced technology and apply that to areas of critical national priority,” Dr Clark said.

NCI Director Professor Lindsay Botten said: “This state-of-the-art facility will support Australia through an internationally-competitive capability which raises Australia’s position in high-impact research and innovation. Research in climate modelling, advanced materials, astronomy and medicine is critically dependent on high performance computational modelling and data analysis, and researchers in these areas are among the outstanding teams poised to benefit from the new facility as soon as NCI can make it available later this year.”

NCI Chair Professor Mark Wainwright said: “This development is a most significant outcome of the Commonwealth, national agencies and ANU working together to create vital infrastructure for Australia’s researchers. We cannot hope to meet our national challenges without access to an international-class facility of the kind being developed, and Australia cannot hope to create such a facility without the cooperative efforts and advances that ANU, CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology, Geoscience Australia, the Australian Research Council and six leading research intensive universities have made in reaching this agreement. This is a unique partnership.”

Dr Rob Vertessy, Acting Director of the Bureau of Meteorology said the supercomputer will provide Bureau scientists with the ability to conduct research on complex weather and climate models in support of the Bureau’s warning and information services.

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