

Cambridge helps Australian motor makers set sights on future For immediate release

Cambridge University is playing a role in helping the Australian automotive industry define its long-term future.

The University's Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) was asked by the Australian Government and Victorian State Government to help create a strategic plan for the country's car industry.

A team from the IfM and its consultative arm Education Consultancy Services carried out the strategic review.

Working with the Australian Auto Co-operative Research Centre, The Australian National University, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and the Victorian government, it looked at current and future trends in the global car industry.

The results have just been published in a new report, ***Automotive Australia 2020 Vision***. It aims to map the technology and manufacturing capabilities and development opportunities for the country's automotive industry from the present day to 2025 and beyond.

The report is just the first part of a six phase project to develop a roadmap for the industry. The first phase aims to establish a firm vision as to the future direction of the industry with subsequent stages looking at issues such as domestic and global market needs and identifying strategic opportunities.

It is hoped the work will lead to the provision of hundreds of new jobs and an increased role for manufacturing in the economy.

Currently the industry employs more than 64,000, boasting three major vehicle producers and more than 200 smaller firms supplying components and related products and services. Like many of the world's leading car manufacturers it had seen a decline in sales and it was felt a new direction was needed in order to boost the chances of long-term recovery and growth.

The work forms part of the Australian Government's New Car Plan for a Greener Future, which is to provide AUS\$6.2 billion of investment to reshape the country's car industry.

Among some of the early suggestions is the possibility that Australia could become a world leader in green low-emission vehicles – such as electric or hydrogen-powered cars. The report states that Australia could become:

“... one of the world's leading designers and producers of large sized, powerful, zero emission passenger vehicles; Australia will own a greater portfolio of IP and become the industry of choice for design, engineering and testing of globally desirable fuel efficient and environmentally responsible niche products.”

Dominic Oughton, a Senior Industrial Fellow at the IfM, said the Institute was delighted to support the development of the AA2020 Vision. “We were asked to come on board to bring our experience of developing strategies at the sector and national levels using IfM's well-developed roadmapping approach and experienced facilitators.

“The support from stakeholders across the industry has been hugely encouraging and has been delivered with a real spirit of collaboration.”

Government officials hope the work will enable them to take advantage of a “paradigm shift is looming in the automotive market”.

Victor Pantano of The Australian National University said "working together with Cambridge has been beneficial to the development of a robust methodology for developing the roadmap - their skills and experience have been invaluable"

Notes to Editors

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1. The Institute for Manufacturing

The University of Cambridge's Institute for Manufacturing (IfM), is a division of the Department of Engineering. The IfM brings together expertise in management, economics and technology to address the full spectrum of industrial issues. Its activities integrate research and education with practical application in companies, providing a unique environment for the creation of new ideas and approaches to modern industrial practice. The IfM works closely with industry, at a regional, national and international level, providing strategic, technical and operational expertise to help companies to grow and to become more competitive.

2. The Australian National University

The Australian National University (ANU) is an education-intensive research institute of international distinction, established by an Act of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. As Australia's national university, ANU sets the standard in research, education and community engagement on issues of national and international importance.

3. Automotive Australia 2020

For a copy of the vision report and more information on *Automotive Australia 2020* visit www.autocrc.com/2020.htm