

## Food Collaboration Workshop

Australian businesses do not collaborate well – we are near the bottom of the OECD rankings on collaboration. Since effective collaboration can provide significant new business growth and productivity opportunities, many Australian businesses are missing out simply because they don't know how to work effectively with other businesses or research organisations.

The Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) is facilitating a series of workshops to assist businesses collaborate with other businesses and with research organisations, for competitive advantage. These workshops are sponsored by the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts (DSITIA).

**Businesses that work with research organisations report increased productivity and profitability over those that don't.**

Australian Innovation System Report

The first workshop focused on food producers and manufacturers. This full-day workshop was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013 at the Health and Food Sciences Precinct at Coopers Plains, Brisbane. Participants travelled to the Brisbane workshop from as far north as Gympie and as far west as Dalby.

The workshop explored the benefits of collaboration for a business, including accessing additional capability and capacity to solve business problems, accessing new technologies to give products a competitive edge, utilising equipment and testing facilities and opening up new market opportunities.

Many business owners are wary of collaborating and the workshop discussed how this can work and how collaboration with other companies including those along the supply chain can help diversify a business. Participants learned how to become ready to collaborate and how to collaborate – its challenges and the steps you need to take to overcome these challenges and make it a success.

Ross Naidoo, Liaison Manager, Health & Food Sciences Precinct, explained the ways that businesses can engage with services at the Precinct and outlined some of the current research projects. Lloyd Simons from CSIRO's Animal, Food & Health Sciences division talked about CSIRO's world-class pilot plant for food processing at Werribee, Victoria, which operates large commercial projects and early market testing of new food products.

The workshop included a site tour of the state-of-the-art facilities at Coopers Plains covering the food processing areas and the consumer sensory testing laboratory. Staff at the Precinct regularly work with small and medium-sized manufacturing business to develop product prototypes, reformulate products, market test and optimise processing of value-added products. The tour was of keen interest to several of the businesses attending the workshop.

As a result of participating in the workshop five small and medium sized food manufacturers engaged with the Precinct to help progress their food projects.

The AIC will facilitate another [Collaboration workshop](#) at the Health & Food Sciences Precinct, Coopers Plains on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014. Register at [www.ausicom.com/events](http://www.ausicom.com/events).

For further information about other collaborative opportunities and events, email [info@ausicom.com](mailto:info@ausicom.com) or call us on 07 3364 0700.