



Australian Institute
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→ Case Study:
Copeland Industries



- Fast Facts**
- Copeland engaged with the AIC to access the Australian Government's RiB program
 - Collaboration with Flinders University led to the development of a specialised polymer substance required for Copeland's portable water pipe project
 - Based on the success of Copeland-Flinders partnership, the model will be applied in future industry-research sector collaborations



The Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) is a leading service organisation helping innovators achieve commercial success. Around Australia, the AIC helps business, research organisations and governments convert their ideas into successful outcomes.

The Company

Copeland Industries is an innovative and progressive plastic injection moulding business based in South Australia.

Established in 2001, the company was bought by Managing Director Peter Mew in 2008.

Copeland is a market leader in plastic product development and manufacturing and services the construction and plumbing supply, infrastructure, industrial fabrication, mining and defence industries.

Copeland supplies retailers including Mitre 10, Reece Plumbing and Hills Industries.

The ISO 9001 quality-accredited company prides itself on being a family-run business providing high quality products, combined with friendly and efficient customer service.

Copeland's 7,000m² premises at Lonsdale, South Australia is home to its 38 staff.

Key Issue
Navigating the grant and commercialisation process

For the past 18 months Copeland Industries has been working on the Research and Development phase of a project which will see the upgrade of ageing potable water pipes without the need to dig out of existing infrastructure. The commercialisation process began in 2010.

There have been several challenges faced by Copeland surrounding navigating the product commercialisation and research and development processes involved in this project.

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Key Outcomes

Collaboration and linkages to aid commercialisation

The assistance provided by the Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) enabled the company to access the Australian Government's Enterprise Connect Researcher in Business (RiB) program to collaborate with Flinders University in the product development phase.

The program provides up to \$50,000 to small and medium size businesses to help cover the costs of accessing a researcher to assist them develop and commercialise new processes, products and services.

Other services provided by Innovate SA have included an Enterprise Connect Network review as well as assistance from The Executive Connection Group (TEC).

Feedback

According to Copeland's Managing Director Peter Mew, the collaboration with Flinders University as well as with worldwide partners including European machine design manufacturers has been invaluable.

"The assistance we received meant we were able to successfully identify a research partner through the Researchers in Business Grant. Flinders University has been invaluable in developing the specialised polymer substance required for our potable water pipe project.

Innovate SA and the AIC have been instrumental in navigating the grant process.

The Business Advisors we have worked with have also been a wonderful resource in helping to navigate the commercialisation process" Peter explained.

www.copeland.com.au

Professor David Lewis, of Flinders University said: *"The AIC's assistance to access the Researchers in Business (RiB) program was the first tangible step in enabling Flinders University to provide technical support for Copeland, resulting in a highly effective and potentially productive collaboration with the potential of significant benefits for both organisations.*

One of the unique outcomes, as a result of the trust and confidence established via the RiB, is that Copeland has offered broad access to industrial equipment and premises which will provide University researchers and Copeland with the capability to create a range of new products, which would not be possible for either organisation individually.

Furthermore, the RiB program also enabled University researchers to operate within a commercial environment, which proved invaluable additional understanding of how commercial entities need to operate.

The University aims to apply the Flinders-Copeland partnership model to future collaborations with industry to enhance the impact of its research across the wider community."

If you are interested in finding out more about the RiB program or other AIC programs in South Australia please contact Simon Williams on (08) 8113 0709 or simon.williams@ausicom.com



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