

Energy Hub To Accelerate WA's Alternative Fuels Industry

A new research intensive hub at Murdoch University will help fast track discoveries into alternative fuels and vehicle engine technologies to help Western Australia develop sustainable transport solutions.

Murdoch University Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), Jim Reynoldson, said the proposed Centre for Research into Energy for Sustainable Transport (CREST) will provide WA-specific research, education, testing and commercialisation services. He said the centre is expected to have an operating budget of more than \$15 million over five years, bringing together the state's leading researchers in transport fuels and technologies.

CREST is set to begin operating later this year, based at Murdoch University's Research Institute for Sustainable Energies. Curtin University will partner with Murdoch to provide major support and expertise for the project. Reynoldson said CREST was expected to generate new discoveries and processes in fuels, vehicle designs, better testing capacity and training.

"Increasing oil prices and the need to decrease greenhouse gas emissions means WA will need to reduce its reliance on petroleum products and one of the most important strategies for doing so will be to develop alternative transport fuels and systems as well as markets for those new fuels", Reynoldson said.

"CREST's programmes will increase the state's capacity to respond to the challenges facing the transport sector and the economy that depends on it." CREST director, David Harries, said the centre will enable accelerated growth of alternative fuel production companies in WA, boosting the state's economy and supporting regional development.

"Increasing the production of alternative fuels in the state, especially fuels produced from local feedstock such as biodiesel and ethanol, will reduce the state's future need to rely on imported oil", Harries said. "Switching to fuels with lower greenhouse gas and other emissions will have a positive effect on the environment."



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CREST's proposed partners include the Planning and Transport Research Centre, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, CSIRO and key energy industry members. ■