

MEDIA RELEASE

IMCRC activate launches with innovative first approved project: rapid COVID-19 test

New funding initiative designed to accelerate and support Australian manufacturers through COVID recovery

Melbourne, November 10, 2020: [Innovative Manufacturing Cooperative Research Centre \(IMCRC\)](#) has launched its new funding initiative, *IMCRC activate*, with an Australian first — the development of a rapid COVID-19 test that uses optical technology.

Designed to provide a much-needed stimulus to Australian manufacturing businesses in the wake of COVID-19, *IMCRC activate* stimulates and fast-tracks R&D investment, offering access to valuable expertise and matched cash funding between \$50,000 and \$150,000.

The first approved project of the initiative is led by [Alcolizer](#), a Perth-based company developing a rapid saliva test for SARS-CoV-2 virus antigens using its existing drug testing technology.

Alcolizer's partnership with IMCRC and research collaboration with the [University of Technology Sydney \(UTS\)](#) will see the project accelerate quickly in the face of the global health pandemic, evolving from a proof of concept to secure Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) readiness in just four months.

As Australia emerges from the worst of the COVID-19 crisis, providing valuable and strategic support for shorter-term research projects in advanced manufacturing and digital technologies is a priority for IMCRC.

David Chuter, CEO and Managing Director of IMCRC, commented: "As the fourth largest industry in Australia, manufacturing is critical to rebuilding the health of our economy.

COVID-19 highlighted some serious capability gaps in the industry, and now we must focus on using our Australian resources and R&D strengths for future growth. The *IMCRC activate* funding initiative has been designed to do just that — provide funding and pathways for manufacturers to recover and thrive.

We're thrilled our first approved project has been so successful to date and has the potential to provide much needed health, social and economic benefits in the fight against COVID-19. We hope this new funding initiative will shine a light on the need for broader investment in Australian manufacturing R&D."

Alcolizer General Manager Roger Hunt added: "The *IMCRC activate* initiative has been absolutely instrumental in our progress developing the prototype for this test. We have been able to boost our manufacturing capabilities and accelerate the diversification of our business into a new area of opportunity."

Laboratory trials using the Alcolizer COVID-19 test prototype are expected to begin within two months. More information about the project is available at <https://www.uts.edu.au/news/health-science/spot-coronavirus-test-within-spitting-distance>.

About IMCRC activate

IMCRC activate is a new initiative designed to help Australian manufacturers take action and gain a competitive edge in the post COVID-19 world.

To be eligible for *IMCRC activate* funding, projects must:

- Be industry-led, deliver clear manufacturing outcomes and be completed within six to 15 months
- Be undertaken by one of IMCRC's partner research organisations
- Apply Industry 4.0 technologies and digital business models
- Move the project through ideally two Manufacturing Readiness Levels (MRLs)
- Ideally involve other Australian manufacturing SMEs as collaborators
- Address sustainability and/or national needs where possible.

More information is available at <https://www.imcrc.org/activate/>.

About IMCRC

IMCRC has a vision for Australian manufacturing to be thriving, relevant and globally integrated.

As a not-for-profit, independent cooperative research centre, it helps Australian companies increase their relevance through collaborative, market-driven research in manufacturing business models, products, processes, and services. Find out more at www.imcrc.org.

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