

Manufacturing Industry Innovation Precinct Core Partner and Collaboration Partner Interest Form

The Manufacturing Industry Innovation Precinct (the Manufacturing Precinct) was announced on 17 February 2013 as part of the Australian Government's Industry and Innovation Statement, *A Plan for Australian Jobs*.

The Manufacturing Precinct will be headquartered in south east Melbourne which will leverage from the region's strong resources in advanced manufacturing. It will also have a base in Adelaide which will focus on defence manufacturing. However, all Manufacturing Precinct activities will be available Australia-wide.

The Manufacturing Precinct will be governed by an industry-led board chaired by Mr Albert Goller and include experts and leaders from businesses, the research sector and other stakeholders. It is the role of the Manufacturing Precinct Board to develop a Precinct strategy and determine the activities to support the implementation of that strategy. It is expected that the Precinct would be established as a not for profit incorporated company limited by guarantee.

Over the past few weeks, Mr Goller and officers from the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education have been undertaking consultations across Australia with the purpose of raising awareness and to help form a consortium of core partners and collaboration partners to establish the Manufacturing Precinct.

Core Partners

As per the Draft Program Guidelines for the Industry Innovation Precinct program, eligibility requirements (40 – 42) state that

At any one time a Precinct must have among its Core Partners:

- a) at least one Australian business; and*
- b) at least one Australian research organisation.*

An industry association may also participate as a core partner.

Core Partners must act in the interest of the sector or industry. As such, Core Partners must demonstrate their collaborative capacity within and beyond their sector and the ability to create areas of critical mass.

It is expected that the Core Partners will bring leadership, expertise and a national focus to the Precinct. They will also have experience in collaborating with other organisations or working with productive supply chains to achieve a common goal and have an understanding of and experience in the innovation landscape. Core Partners are expected to demonstrate their commitment to the Precinct through contributions which could include cash or in-kind support such as availability of staff, networks or linkages.

Over the next few months it is anticipated that Core Partners will be quite active until the Precinct is established. In particular, the Core Partners will be a member of the Precinct for incorporation purposes and will provide support and advice to the Manufacturing Precinct Board on:

- the company's constitution;
- core activities and a business plan;
- key performance indicators;
- possible projects for the *Innovation Collaboration Fund*; and
- business requirements for the proposed *Industry Innovation network* (an IT platform) to service the Precinct.

Collaboration Partners

The Manufacturing Precinct is also seeking Collaboration Partners who either individually or as part of a group will link into the Precinct.

It is expected that Collaboration Partners will come into the Precinct having identified a problem affecting the Australian manufacturing industry and can demonstrate that if addressed would have national benefit. Collaboration Partners are expected to demonstrate they have the resources to contribute to addressing the problem.

Collaboration Partners could then work with the Precinct to develop and, if approved, support the implementation of a project through the Industry Collaboration Fund or similar funding opportunities.

If you would like to identify your organisation as a Core Partner or Collaboration Partner, please complete the relevant Interest Form below (no more than 2 pages) and forward them to manufacturingprecinct@innovation.gov.au by COB 10 April 2013.

For more information on the Manufacturing Industry Innovation Precinct please visit <http://www.aussiejobs.innovation.gov.au/manufacturing-precinct>

COMMERCIAL-IN-CONFIDENCE (once completed)

Core Partner Interest Form

Name of Organisation	Australian Furniture Association Inc.
Primary Contact Person Name and Position	Patrizia Torelli
Address	Level 1, 376 Heidelberg Rd, Fairfield Victoria
Contact Phone Number/s	03 9856 1600
Contact Email Address	ptorelli@australianfurniture.org.au
Is your organisation – business, research, education, industry body, other (please specify)	Furniture Manufacturing Industry Association
Please provide a brief summary of your organisation including experience, skills, size, networks/collaborations, supply chains etc.	
<p><i>The Australian Furniture Association Inc. (AFA) is the peak representative body established to promote the profitable growth, competitiveness, innovation and export readiness of all Furnishing and Allied Industry participants in Australia. AFA is recognised as the voice of the Furnishing Industry by the government, media, supply chain partner and the wider community. Membership covers manufacturers of both residential and commercial furniture as well as suppliers to the industry and key stakeholders (such as testing and training organisations). The AFA has over 350 nationally based members.</i></p> <p><i>The purposes of the Association are:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. to encourage, protect and promote the furniture and furnishing industry -;</i><i>2. to encourage and support local manufacture of furniture and furnishings;</i><i>3. to disseminate trading and other information of interest to -members;</i><i>4. to promote and protect industrial design;</i><i>5. to adopt grading rules, standards of manufacture and conditions of delivery of furniture and furnishings, and generally to improve the standard of product produced by local industry;</i><i>6. to disseminate among members information on all matters affecting the furnishing industry and undertakings relating to technical and general knowledge of persons engaged in the furnishing industry ;</i><i>7. to promote the legitimate interests of those engaged in the furnishing industry including protecting them by concerted action in accordance with law relating to the settlement of industrial and other disputes and all matters affecting the furnishing industry.</i>	
Why are you interested in becoming a Core Partner of the Manufacturing Precinct?	
<p><i>This Project is designed to engage with all our stakeholders to develop strategies to foster increased productivity and international competitiveness of the sector across Australia and globally thereby benefit our member organisations, their employees and the industry itself.</i></p> <p><i>Our involvement as a Core Partner would contribute to the current development of our new Furniture Industry Strategic Plan, with a specific focus to identify strategies to foster business growth for each member company, we hope to have a framework to engage with members</i></p>	

and stakeholders to improve management practices and business skills, enhance supply chain partnerships and value added services and product differentiation and encourage innovation.

The AFA will achieve the desired outcomes by:

- consulting as widely as possible with a wide cross-section of the industry, ranging from small to large companies, and with companies utilising the different material inputs (such as timber, leather, foam, glues and other component parts) and targeting different markets (local, regional and national and export; residential sectors and commercial/government)
- conducting a survey of all companies in the industry to develop a base-line report and identifying the full gamut of challenges and opportunities that may exist
- canvassing key supply chain partners (both suppliers and customers) to identify the industry's core strengths and weaknesses and prime areas for improvement, and potential scope for future collaboration
- identifying world's best practice in the areas of most critical importance to the industry's future development and viability
- highlighting learning's for the industry in a series of presentations by well regarded, proven practitioners in the relevant fields (eg design and innovation, supply chain management, financial management, and export and marketing)
- conducting industry and member workshops to brainstorm relevant strategies and implementation steps towards the Victorian furniture industry achieving best practice standards and become a globally renowned player in the design, manufacture and supply of furniture and furnishing products. Presentations on critical success areas would be presented at the start of the workshops, and be followed by facilitated round table discussions and break-out working groups, challenging the participants to "think outside the square".

How can your organisation contribute to the manufacturing industry on a national basis?

The project is designed to enable greater efficiencies, and hence improved productivity, within the AFA Member businesses and provides a clear focus on opportunities for long-term maintenance and improvement of market share. The project encompasses an opportunity to be a major contributor to the collaborative approach, fully engaging with all industry players and relevant stakeholders, to ensure both optimal input and understanding in the development of the plan, and full ownership of (and commitment to) the final plan by all parties.

What could your organisation bring to the Manufacturing Precinct? For example, cash contributions, in-kind contributions, skills, networks, linkages etc.

The AFA is currently undertaking the development of the AFA Strategic Plan 2013-2018; Planning for Growth. During the implementation phase AFA will achieve the desired outcomes by:

- consulting as widely as possible with a wide cross-section of the industry, ranging from small to large companies, and with companies utilising the different material inputs (such as timber, leather, foam, glues and other component parts) and targeting different markets

(local, regional and national and export; residential sectors and commercial/government)

- *conducting a survey of all companies in the industry to develop a base-line report and identifying the full gamut of challenges and opportunities that may exist*
- *canvassing key supply chain partners (both suppliers and customers) to identify the industry's core strengths and weaknesses and prime areas for improvement, and potential scope for future collaboration*
- *identifying world's best practice in the areas of most critical importance to the industry's future development and viability*
- *highlighting learning's for the industry in a series of presentations by well regarded, proven practitioners in the relevant fields (eg design and innovation, supply chain management, financial management, and export and marketing)*
- *conducting industry and member workshops to brainstorm relevant strategies and implementation steps towards the Australian furniture industry achieving best practice standards and become a globally renowned player in the design, manufacture and supply of furniture and furnishing products.*
- *Presentations on critical success areas would be presented at the start of the workshops, and be followed by facilitated round table discussions and break-out working groups, challenging the participants to "think outside the square".*

AFA believes that this initiative, including the resources that are being invested to implement the development of the strategic plan, would make a significant contribution to the Manufacturing Precinct Project.