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\$1.9M SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS BOOST VICTORIA'S ICT INDUSTRY

Minister for Information and Communication Technology, Marsha Thomson, has announced a comprehensive ICT scholarship package aimed at arming university students with the skills needed to drive Victoria's ICT industry into a new era.

"This package of three pilot programs aims to boost students' awareness of ICT careers, promote training of specialised skills and develop 'job ready' graduates for our local industry," Ms Thomson said.

"It will also equip universities with the resources to grow their Industry Based Learning programs."

The \$1.9 million funding will provide new support for university scholarships through the *ICT Industry Skills Scholarships Program* and an extension of the *ICT Scholarships Program*, together with the *Industry and Universities Collaboration Pilot Program* that will assist universities to provide students with workplace learning opportunities under their Industry Based Learning initiatives.

"The new *ICT Industry Skills Scholarships Program* provides students with up to \$15,000 to undertake an industry project through a new workplace employment opportunity during their studies," Ms Thomson said.

"This aims to raise students' awareness of ICT careers while creating potential employment opportunities.

"The Bracks Government is listening to what the ICT industry and universities are saying. The new *ICT Industry Skills Scholarships Program* directly addresses one of the main workforce development issues facing our industry today – the need to produce business-minded ICT professionals with work-ready skills."

Ms Thomson also announced \$1.1 million of the funding extends the existing *ICT Scholarships Program*, which will be delivered in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training.

"This additional funding for postgraduate students undertaking ICT research programs will encourage further training in specialised skills and enable research that will benefit the ICT industry in the longer term.

"This scholarships package reinforces the benefits of closer collaboration between industry, the education sector and Victorian Government.

"The capacity for universities to deliver scholarships will be invigorated by the *Industry and Universities Collaboration Pilot Program* which provides up to \$30,000 to each Victorian university offering Industry Based Learning initiatives.

“This program will improve universities’ ability to recruit new industry partners and improve the overall delivery of such initiatives – critical for growing our industry as a whole.

“The Bracks Government is committed to implementing relevant programs that will encourage students to consider a career in ICT and create employment and training opportunities for Victorians in the ICT industry.”