

Investment in Artificial Intelligence positions Australia as a global leader in Accessibility technology

Melbourne AI Company wins \$1M grant to assist blind people

A Melbourne-based technology developer has been awarded \$1m of funding by the Australian Government to accelerate its growth in developing Artificial Intelligence solutions for Blind and partially sighted people, worldwide.

RealThing Ai has developed a unique human dialogue and intelligent reasoning product, called RealSAM, for people living with low vision and blindness. It is delivered exclusively through voice activation, and used to control every day technology such as mobile phones and smart speakers. RealThing has partnered with leading sight loss organisations including Vision Australia, the US Library of Congress National Library Service, and the UK's Royal National Institute for Blind People.

Minister for Industry, Science and Technology Karen Andrews said Australian businesses are among the most innovative in the world and the Government was pleased to help scale-up their ideas.

"The Accelerating Commercialisation grants are all about investing in the growth of great Australian business ideas that will ultimately change our lives for the better," Minister Andrews said.

"Not only do these business ideas strengthen our economy, they are examples of Australian ingenuity helping make the world a better place."

RealThing's RealSAM platform and voice interface has changed the lives of vision impaired users around the world. The funding will be used to further their solution and create a world first - installing the AI onto a mobile phone, so it can operate untethered to the internet. This will overcome the shortcomings of other assistants such as Apple's Siri, which can only operate when connected to the cloud.

Commenting on receiving the Accelerating Commercialisation Grant, RealThing Ai CEO Nick Howden said:

"We are thrilled to be recognised by the Australian Government as recipients of the Entrepreneurs' Programme. This funding will lead to significant Australian revenues and the creation of jobs in the high value areas of Artificial Intelligence and MedTech, while, most importantly, improving the quality of life of people living with sight loss".

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About RealThing Ai

Founded in Melbourne, Australia, RealThing Ai is a global business specialising in accessible AI technology. RealThing AI technology is powered by voice, making complex technology products accessible to anyone with visual impairments or sight loss. Users who are blind or have little vision are given the ability to search for audio books from a variety of libraries, talking newspaper collections, podcasts, talking magazines and radio stations using a voice activated smartphone or smart speaker.

The business was established in 2008, with the founding partners' background in developing smart tech for defence, aviation and research. For more information visit www.realthing.com.au or www.inyourpocket.net.

About the Accelerating Commercialisation Grant

Accelerating Commercialisation is part of the Australian Government's Entrepreneurs' Programme, which has provided 519 grants worth \$251 million to Australian businesses since its establishment in 2014.

More information on the grant recipients is available at www.business.gov.au/ac-funding-offers.

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