

## Media Release

### ATTENTION ALL SCHOOL LEAVERS:

#### **\$50m of IT Opportunities & more than \$300,000 of Scholarships Await You**

**14<sup>th</sup> December 2007** – Still undecided what career path you want to take? Looking for a job that is dynamic and well paying, in an industry that will offer you exciting life-long opportunities?

With more than \$50 million worth of Australian jobs and \$300,000 worth of scholarships available to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) graduates each year, the Australian Computer Society (ACS) Foundation recommends school leavers consider entering into a course in ICT.

John Ridge, Executive Director, ACS Foundation, explains “This is Australia’s most progressive and pervasive industry – and the industry shaping our whole economic future. School leavers looking for a career that’s fast paced, stimulating and rewarding - both financially and intellectually - should consider the myriad of ICT job opportunities available with Australia’s leading companies and study an ICT degree or course.

“Many ICT courses offer on-the-job training and good job prospects once students complete the degrees - that is what makes them some of the most popular courses in the country. ICT skills are the new universal language – having these skills will provide you with currency throughout your working career, no matter which job you enter. ICT professionals and ICT skills are valuable to every industry,” said Mr Ridge.

“Careers in ICT provide good opportunities for travel and working - both domestically and internationally - as ICT is really a universal language.

For those considering an ICT course at University, who cannot afford the course fees, the ACS Foundation is offering more than **\$300,000** worth of *‘Innovation Creativity and Transformation Scholarships’* (ICT Scholarships) at 20 major universities around the country.

ACS Foundation scholarship recipient, Neisha Hitchcock, a Curtin University student from Applecross, said that Information Communications Technology was not a career she had considered when she was at school, as she had imagined that ICT people worked on computers all day in the back rooms of offices. She didn't realise ICT professionals played such a pivotal role in the success of a company - that their place wasn't in the back rooms, they actually held some of the highest positions in any corporation. and the really fantastic job opportunities that are available. "To any school leaver looking for an exciting and rewarding future, I would say to them enroll in an ICT course - you won't regret learning ICT skills - they are invaluable. ICT skills are not only crucial for ICT professionals, but everyone these days need to be ICT proficient and literate".

Professor Steve Elliot, Head, Business Information Systems, The University of Sydney explains, "The opportunity of work experience and job placement offered by various ICT courses is a definite attraction to many undergraduates. The combination of the skills gained from coursework and on the job training is invaluable to employers and of course is beneficial to the students. The popularity of our Business Information Systems major is incredible,. My advice to anyone considering studying ICT is to look for courses that are relevant to industry and includes work experience, and for those who are unsure about ICT, consider doing at double degree – combining ICT skills with another discipline is the smartest decision for your future".

The universities supporting the new ACS Foundation scholarships include the following:

- Australian National University
- Charles Sturt University
- Curtin University of Technology
- Edith Cowen University
- Deakin University
- La Trobe University
- Macquarie University
- Monash University
- Murdoch University
- Queensland University of Technology
- RMIT University
- Swinburne University of Technology
- The University of Queensland
- University of Canberra
- University of Newcastle
- University of South Australia
- University of Sydney
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of Western Australia
- University of Wollongong

Information and applications for these scholarships can be completed via the relevant University web sites, and information regarding them can also be gained via the ACS Foundation web site.

A guide to university courses, job opportunities and occupations that are available can be found at the ACS (Australian Computer Society) Careers Portal - <http://www.acs.org.au/ictcareers/>. ICT careers that are currently in demand include:

- E-commerce
- Website design
- Project Management
- Fashion design
- Product design
- New forms of entertainment
- Leisure industry

The ACS Foundation recently held a 'Great IT Jobs Debate', where a consortium of some of the world's top ICT industry leaders including **IBM, Microsoft, CSC, Tripoint and KPMG** detailed the number of job opportunities available to Australian ICT graduates.

"It is an exciting time for Australia's ICT industry and we are encouraging more young Australians to consider studying ICT, to play a part in determining our nation's position on the world stage", said Mr Ridge.

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**About the ACS Foundation:** An initiative of the Australian Computer Society (ACS) the ACS Foundation was established in August 2001 to encourage both private and public sponsorship of ICT scholarships, higher education and research projects.

The ACS Foundation receives funding from more than 200 sponsors – including ICT companies, industry associations, Government bodies, individuals and the ACS itself.

Since the ACS Foundation's inception, it has raised over \$12 million in cash and in-kind sponsorship for scholarships and research, awarding more than 650 scholarships to high achievers and people who are disadvantaged in some way.

#### **About the ACS:**

The ACS (Australian Computer Society) is the recognised professional association for those working in Information and Communications Technology, seeking to raise the standing of ICT professionals and represent their views to government, industry and the community. A member of the Australian Council of Professions, the ACS is the guardian of professional ethics and standards in the ICT sector, committed to ensuring the beneficial use of ICT for all Australians. It provides both members and non-members with opportunities for professional education, networking and certification, as well as enabling them to contribute to the development of their profession. Visit [www.acs.org.au](http://www.acs.org.au) for more information.