

Research sails into real world

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Flinders University vice-chancellor Colin Stirling and BAE systems director Sharon Wilson at Tonsley Innovation District. Picture: Emma Brasier

AN advanced manufacturing accelerator will be established at the Tonsley Innovation District following a \$5m commitment in last week's State Budget.

The State Government funding will support the initiative over the next six years and will be matched by a \$5m co-investment from Flinders University.

Known as Line Zero – Factory of the Future, the accelerator program will be used to test advanced manufacturing technologies for potential deployment at the digital shipyard in

Osborne.

Flinders University and founding partner ASC Shipbuilding – a subsidiary of BAE Systems Australia – will work with a range of companies to test the technologies.

ASC Shipbuilding will

kick off the prototyping phase of its \$35bn Hunter-class Frigate Program next month.

Flinders University vice-chancellor Colin Stirling said the Line Zero initiative represented an opportunity for the frigates supply chain to test

– in a controlled environment

– the commercial potential of new technologies.

“A crucial element in research that makes an impact is taking research out of the lab and applying it in the real world, and this facility will do exactly that,” Professor Stirling said.

“The Line Zero – Factory of the Future enables our students and researchers to interact with business to transform manufacturing processes.

“This announcement reinforces Flinders University’s growing contribution towards placing Australia right at the cutting edge of Industry 4.0 and will support the application of new technologies in advanced manufacturing.”

ASC Shipbuilding managing director Craig Lockhart said the technologies tested at Line Zero would contribute to the development of one of the most modern and digitally advanced shipyards in the world at Osborne.

“Line Zero provides us with the exceptional opportunity to work with Flinders University researchers and academics, as well as industry partners, to test and trial advanced manufacturing technologies and techniques in a factory environment, before adapting them to the shipyard,” he said.

‘Placing Australia right at the cutting edge’

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