



Ambassador John Berry – Ambassador's Innovation

**Ambassador Berry's Remarks at the
Ambassador's Innovation Roundtable in Perth**

(As prepared for delivery, December 7, 2015)

Innovation is about change. It is about seeking out the new and different instead of the tried and true. American founding father (and inventor) Benjamin Franklin once said "When you're finished changing, you're finished." By this measure, the United States and Australia are just getting started.

We have brought all of you together today for our sixth roundtable in a series that has taken us on the road to cities across Australia. Every roundtable has been a little different. Here in Perth, for example, we are joining forces with West Tech Fest to highlight the role of technology in the ever-evolving "innovation conversation" between the United States and Australia.

At the ongoing UN climate conference in Paris, President Obama announced a new initiative to accelerate energy innovation on a global scale: Mission Innovation. This public-private partnership will help deliver affordable clean energy and new jobs and opportunities to people around the world for decades to come.

A critical component of Mission Innovation is investment in new technologies and bringing those technologies to the market. The private sector is the key to success.

I am proud that American companies have helped drive two decades of rapid progress in Western Australia. Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Cisco, and General Electric are just a few of the U.S. companies that brought investment, equipment, and know-how to the state's mining boom. And, as the WA economy evolves, U.S. companies are critical partners in the transition.

That is why American innovators such as Bill Tai and other friends have joined us today from Silicon Valley. It is exciting to see in action the growing connections between American venture capitalists and Australian and regional innovators.

It is no accident that OzApp and West Tech Fest take place in Western Australia. WA is an innovative place. It has to be. The state is positioned to expand from an economy dominated by mining into the knowledge economy. World-class research in radio astronomy, cyber security, renewable energy, and biomedicine is taking place at its universities, including the University of Western Australia and Curtin University – these educational institutions are centers of innovation.

Can all the educators in the room please raise your hands? Thank you for the work you are doing in your labs and lecture halls. I want to recognize Professor Rohan McDougall, Curtin



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University's "innovation guru." He has helped to put the university on the map when it comes to the commercialization of new technologies. He and his colleagues are making those critical links between the classroom and the boardroom.

Australian colleges and universities are producing the next generation of innovators, but you are not doing it alone.

U.S. companies all over the world are stepping up to give students more hands on experience. Right here in Perth, U.S. company Cisco and Curtin University are joining forces to launch the Internet of Everything Innovation Centre – a hub for start-ups, industry experts, developers, and researchers in Western Australia. General Electric is teaching primary school students coding at its technology and learning complex at Jandakot.

Entrepreneurs face the challenge of getting their ideas funded so projects can make the leap from the drawing board to the market. KPMG, OzApp, and Curtin Accelerate are giving entrepreneurs funding, facilities, networks, and mentoring. We all know that today's entrepreneurs are tomorrow's Fortune 500 companies.

So, keep an eye on the five OzApp Awards finalists – Airlinc, BLRT, Hike, Simply Wall Street, and Swift. It is also students all over the world and all over WA driving innovation. We have students here with us today from the Student Edge and Just Start IT programs, and also participants from the U.S. embassy's entrepreneurship boot camp. The boot camp finalists will be pitching their projects to the judges – including yours truly – tomorrow.

Can all the student entrepreneurs in the room please raise your hands? Thank you. Not only are these students our future, they are our present as well. They have the knowledge, ingenuity, and dedication to change our world. I want to recognize the Just Start IT 2015 trophy winners from Como Secondary College. These students are changing the face of retail and gift-giving with GETCHA – just in time for the holidays. The GETCHA team and four teams of high school students from Perth Modern are participating in the Student West Tech Pitch Offs, good luck to you and all of OzApp's young innovators!

All our Ambassador's Innovation Roundtables are exciting because they put everyone – students, business leaders, academics, scientists, researchers, government officials, venture capitalists, and entrepreneurs – in the same room to discuss best practices and ideas for expanding cooperation – and then put those ideas into action.

When we join efforts, there is nothing in the universe beyond our reach! Space exploration is one thrilling aspect of the U.S.-Australian innovation partnership. Here in Western Australia, the Carnarvon Tracking Station was used by NASA for the Gemini program. The people of Perth turned on their lights to salute John Glenn when he passed overhead during his orbit of Earth in



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1962. When NASA Administrator Charles Bolden visited Australia last year to celebrate 50 years of NASA's Deep Space Network, he told me that it was a call from Australia – from the Deep Space Communication Complex at Tidbinbilla – that told him the rover had landed on Mars.

Together, we put men on the moon. We put rovers on Mars. We sent New Horizons to Pluto. And, when astronauts blast off for Mars, their mission will be backed by the best American and Australian scientists. This is innovation at its finest!

We are always better together. Exploring the cosmos. Sharing ideas, technology, and research. Devising creative solutions to global challenges. Making both of our countries stronger and more productive. The United States is Australia's ally in innovating for the 21st century.

Let's see where today's discussion takes us!