



Corporate Development Office

Telephone: 61 7 3365 4037

Facsimile: 61 7 3365 4433

E-mail: [l.wywill@uniquet.com.au](mailto:l.wywill@uniquet.com.au)

Web: [www.uniquet.com.au](http://www.uniquet.com.au)

## MEDIA RELEASE

# Investment Powers Up Clean Technology Start-Up

Tuesday 31 March 2009

UniQuest start-up company, **Lightanate Pty Ltd**, has secured a major, confidential seven-figure investment to commercialise titanium-based technologies developed at the ARC Centre for Excellence in Functional Nanomaterials (based at The University of Queensland).

**Uniseed**, which supports the commercialisation of university research through pre-seed and seed stage venture capital investment, has joined **Cleantech Ventures Pty Ltd**, a specialist water, energy and environmental investor based in Melbourne in providing a financial boost to the new company.

Lightanate's technologies aim to address global environmental and energy challenges. In the fields of low-cost solar cells and water treatment Lightanate is developing innovations that are more energy efficient and less reliant on hazardous chemicals.

The capital from Uniseed and Cleantech will focus on developing and demonstrating a revolutionary platform of titanium-based technologies, including:

- **Titanate:** a photocatalyst which is highly active in visible light
- **Single Crystal:** a highly reactive titanium oxide for low-cost solar energy applications

World-renowned researcher Professor Max Lu and his team at the ARC Centre for Excellence in Functional Nanomaterials are developing Lightanate's recyclable, potentially renewable, non-toxic and versatile materials platform, which enables the harvesting of both visible and ultraviolet light for solar and water purification applications.

UniQuest's Managing Director, David Henderson, said the investment will give Lightanate a significant boost towards becoming a major player in the cleantech economy.

"This funding will support Lightanate reaching several key development milestones along a strategic pathway for translating the technology into real outcomes for industry and consumers," Mr Henderson said.

"The investment is a vote of confidence in university-based research and commercial enterprises."

Dr Peter Devine, CEO of Uniseed Management Pty Ltd, said the company was excited about the investment potential of Lightanate's clean technology applications.

"The promise of using much more of the energy available from natural light to clean water or generate electricity has profound implications. This family of materials represents a new way to approach these applications, and if Lightanate can demonstrate them commercially it will not only be a profitable investment for us, but also a great outcome for the environment.

"We are thrilled to launch this latest investment based on the ingenuity of our university partners," Dr Devine said.

For Cleantech Ventures' Investment Manager, Mark Bonnar, adding Lightanate to its current portfolio of investments has helped to achieve one of the company's key objectives in backing technologies with the potential for step-change impact.

"The Centre for Energy and Greenhouse Technologies (CEGT) fund focuses on companies that are commercialising technologies and which have the potential to generate superior commercial benefits to shareholders, whilst simultaneously addressing significant environmental concerns," Dr Bonnar said.

"Cleantech Ventures, through the CEGT fund, is pleased to co-invest with Uniseed and work with UniQuest to turn these Australian innovations into value-add products for the global market."

Lightanate was brought to the investors' attention by Astute Nanotechnology, a UniQuest enterprise which creates opportunities for industry partners to access the expertise and resources of scientists at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Functional Nanomaterials. Lightanate recently hired its first CEO, Dr Steve Davis, to manage future commercial activities with industry partners. Dr Calin Ciolacu has also joined Lightanate, bringing his many years of experience in product development to the company.

#### **About UniQuest**

Established by The University of Queensland in 1984, UniQuest is widely recognised as one of Australia's largest and most successful university commercialisation groups, benchmarking in the top tier of technology transfer worldwide. The company's charter is to identify, package and commercialise research-based technologies, expertise and facilities to the community, industry, business and government. It has created more than 60 companies, and since 2000 UniQuest and its start-ups have raised a quarter of a billion dollars to take UQ technologies to market. Sales of products using UQ technology and licensed by UniQuest are now running at \$5.2 billion per year. UniQuest now commercialises research, expertise and technologies developed at The University of Queensland, University of Wollongong, University of Technology Sydney, James Cook University and the Mater Medical Research Institute. For more information about UniQuest, please visit [www.uniquet.com.au](http://www.uniquet.com.au)

#### **About Uniseed**

Uniseed began as a \$20 million fund, founded by the Universities of Queensland and Melbourne. Since then, through investment commitment from Westscheme, Western Australia's largest non-government superannuation fund, the University of New South Wales and further investment from the founding Universities, the fund has grown to over \$60 million. Its unique commercial partnerships with Melbourne Ventures, UniQuest, and New South Innovations enable Uniseed to invest with confidence in a number of investee ventures and to develop them into investible ventures. For more information about Uniseed, please visit [www.uniseed.com.au](http://www.uniseed.com.au)

#### **About Cleantech Ventures**

Cleantech Ventures is a venture capital company with \$80 Million funds under management, focusing exclusively on emerging technologies in the cleantech sector. Cleantech Ventures manages the IIF Cleantech Australia Fund and the Victorian Government-funded CEGT Fund with a total of 12 investee companies. For more information about Cleantech Ventures, please visit [www.cleantechventures.com.au](http://www.cleantechventures.com.au)

#### **About the ARC Centre of Excellence for Functional Nanomaterials.**

ARC CFN, supported by the Australian Research Council, is a partnership of The University of Queensland, the University of NSW, the Australian National University and the University of Western Sydney. Co-located at the Australian Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology, ARC CFN conducts a wide range of basic and applied research projects, giving industry partners and clients a competitive advantage with product R & D. [www.arccfn.org.au](http://www.arccfn.org.au)

**Media inquiries: UniQuest - Leanne Wyvill (07 3365 4037, 0409 767 199); Uniseed – Richard Marshall (0411 600 314); Cleantech Ventures - Mark Bonnar (03 9607 7105, 0408 848 341)**