



MEDIA RELEASE

Melbourne, VIC; 18 June 2012 8:00 AM

POO POWER TO UNLOCK AUSTRALIA'S POTENTIAL

Melbourne man Duncan Chew has a vision to generate sustainable energy from a resource now under everyone's nose - dog waste.

Mr Chew has received a \$45,000 Unlocking Australia's Potential grant, from the Australian government's Inspiring Australia program, to fund the design and installation of an anaerobic methane 'digester' in a Melbourne park.

The device will turn dog poo, deposited by the public, into biogas that could be put to uses including powering park lights or even a barbecue.

"When I talk to people about it they get excited, after initially laughing and saying 'are you serious?', " says Mr Chew, who is working in partnership with the Yarra Energy Foundation.

"It's about creating an energy source from what we traditionally regard as waste."

Mr Chew said Australia's dogs poop out 1,350 tonnes of feces daily – posing an all-to-familiar problem in a city's public spaces. A digester can turn 7kg of poo into almost 180 litres of biogas.

"This can be used as a lighting source or heating source ... as a kid I remember the barbecues at the park were gas fired, now they're electric, and I wonder if we could go back to the old way?" Mr Chew says.

"This project is to start a conversation, and we'll see where we can take it."

The digester would also produce a nutrient-rich fertiliser, for use to improve nearby soil quality.

ENDS

Media enquiries:

Duncan Chew | 0418 513 240 | duncan@greennation.com.au

Updates on **Poo Power!** will be posted on the website (www.poopower.com.au) and visitors are invited to sign up to the newsletters for details on forthcoming events, publications and educational resources. Expressions of interest for project participation are welcome and can be sent through the website.

About the grants

More than \$1 million (\$1,008,243) in funding was awarded to Victorian-based projects in the Unlocking Australia's Potential grants program.

A total of \$5 million has been awarded across the country in three levels of grant categories, small, medium and large, for projects to be delivered in 2012 and/or 2013 and/or 2014.

The prime objective of the program is to increase the engagement of Australians in science and it has prioritised projects that engage people who may not have had previous access to or interest in science-communication activities. Inspiring Australia is an initiative of the Australian Government.

For a complete list of grant recipients go online to www.scienceinpublic.com.au/inspiringaus.