

## Media Release

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### NORTHERN TERRITORY MANUFACTURES TO CLEAN UP WITH ACCESS TO NEW LASER TECHNOLOGY

- *The Northern Territory (NT) Government will co-invest in a locally owned, Indigenous services company that seeks to offer advanced laser surface cleaning technology to local manufacturers*
- *Faster, cleaner and more environmentally friendly than traditional media blasting services, Darwin-based Wurrba, will become the only company north of Brisbane to offer the technology*
- *The project links Wurrba with laser cleaning experts Pheonix Laser Cleaning and Restoration, alongside Darwin Innovation Hub who combined, will develop training, sustainment and business plans*
- *The \$1.7 million project is supported by \$410,733 in co-investment from the Northern Territory Government's AMEF, administered by the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC)*

The Northern Territory manufacturing ecosystem will soon be able to access the latest in surface cleaning technology for metal and other materials via Darwin-based services company, Wurrba (pronounced Wataba), with co-investment from the Northern Territory Government.

Wurrba's adoption and deployment of cutting-edge laser surface cleaning technology will signal the first-time technology of this calibre will be permanently available in-region, with companies previously requiring laser cleaning services engaging with interstate, or international suppliers.

In collaboration with laser cleaning experts, Wurrba will also seek to address the challenges presented with operating such equipment in the heat and humidity of the Northern Territory, while also upskilling local staff on operation, maintenance and sustainment of the precision equipment.

**Raphael Clarke, Founder of Wurrba** said "Laser cleaning will become a critical enabler for the NT's manufacturing and wider industrial ecosystem. Through the adoption and deployment of this advanced technology, Wurrba will be able to tackle everything from infrastructure remediation to equipment maintenance, remanufacturing and waste reduction faster, safer and more efficiently than ever before.

"In consultation with local customers and industry, we have identified a significant pipeline of work spanning the maritime, defence, and local government sectors. This includes tasks such as graffiti and lead paint removal, machinery servicing, and preventative maintenance for critical infrastructure. These opportunities ensure that more Territory dollars remain in the region to directly supporting local jobs", said Clarke.

Laser surface cleaning is superior to traditional methods cleaning methods such as media or ice blasting as it offers unparalleled precision, efficiency, and environmental benefits. Unlike abrasive techniques that rely on physical contact, laser cleaning uses focused light to vaporise contaminants without damaging the underlying material or heating the surface being treated, in turn making it ideal for delicate surfaces, critical infrastructure, aerospace components, and medical devices.

**Northern Territory Minister for Advanced Manufacturing, The Hon Robyn Cahill OAM said,** “Businesses having access to service providers utilising the latest technologies is crucial to the overall health of the Territory’s manufacturing ecosystem. By co-investing with Wurrba, the NT Government is unlocking new capabilities to support local industries, while generating local jobs and keeping more of the NT’s business activity in the Territory.” said Ms Cahill.

Laser surface cleaning surpasses traditional methods by removing contaminants through ablation (vaporisation), leaving surfaces undamaged and 100% clean. It vaporises waste instantly, with no secondary cleanup required, and captures particles via filtration. Ideal for welding, surface preparation, and precision applications, it ensures a smooth, white-clean finish on metals and other materials.

Wurrba’s technology will also support the circular economy by extending the service life of high-value parts and reducing waste. Its versatility suits tasks such as equipment maintenance, masonry cleaning, metal preparation, and lead paint removal. It also plays a crucial role in disaster remediation, including flood clean-up, mould removal, and infrastructure restoration.

**AMGC’s Northern Territory Director, Charmaine Phillips said:** “The Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Fund is focused on building a capable network of manufacturers, service providers, and researchers to solve problems in the Territory for local and global customers. Co-investment in Wurrba will enable the entire Territory manufacturing industry to become more self-sufficient and capable of producing higher-quality products faster, cleaner, and more efficiently than ever before.”

In collaboration with Phoenix Laser Cleaning and Restoration and the Darwin Innovation Hub, Wurrba will leverage Territory skills and equipment to train staff and optimise the laser technologies operational parameters for the local climate.

Wurrba’s \$1.7 million project, supported by \$410,733 in co-investment from the Northern Territory Government’s Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Fund (AMEF), is expected to generate \$28 million in revenue and create 30 new jobs across administrative, managerial, and skilled roles within its first five years.

Administered by the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC), Wurrba’s project is the thirteenth business to receive co-investment through the AMEF, which was launched in 2021. Across all projects to date, the AMEF has spurred manufacturing activity, which is expected to create over 230 new jobs and generate over \$121 million for the Territory’s economy in its first five years.

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### **About Wurrba**

Founded in 2020, Wurrba is an Indigenous-owned, managed, and operated project management business, delivering comprehensive end-to-end solutions in construction, remediation, and maintenance across the Northern Territory.

### **About Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC)**

The Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC) is an industry-led, not-for-profit organisation. AMGC’s vision is to transform Australian manufacturing to become an internationally competitive, dynamic, and thriving industry with advanced capabilities and skills at its core.

Through the delivery of its world-leading research, workshops, and ground-breaking projects, AMGC aims to develop a highly skilled and resilient local manufacturing industry that delivers high-value products – via the integration of innovative technology – to domestic and international markets. <http://www.amgc.org.au>

### ***About the Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Fund***

The Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem (AME) Fund of \$7.5 million seeks to build the advanced manufacturing ecosystem in the Northern Territory. The fund aims to grow advanced manufacturing capabilities and increase investment in and output of advanced manufacturing activity in the Northern Territory and grow the number of advanced manufacturing jobs located in the Northern Territory.

The AME fund will provide grants to industry led advanced manufacturing projects located in the Northern Territory across the Territory's priority sectors where those projects:

- Commercialise new products and processes, including transitioning a new product or process from prototype stage to full commercial operations
- Support early stage, fast fail, grants to support small scale and pilot research projects in advanced manufacturing

#### ***Media Contact***

**Tyson Bowen**

Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre

**M:** 0418 826 936

**E:** [Tyson.bowen@amgc.org.au](mailto:Tyson.bowen@amgc.org.au)