

National Industry Innovation Network Charter

2024 – 2027



Launched in 2020, the National Industry Innovation Network (NIIN) is a collaborative vehicle for digitally transforming industries and accelerating innovation to generate large-scale economic and societal impact.



Foreword

I have spent the past decade promoting the importance of university-industry collaboration in helping Australia accelerate digital innovation and improve its economic resilience. Digital innovation has a crucial role to play given it impacts all industries, companies large and small, and has the potential to deliver both immediate and long-term economic benefits.

The National Industry Innovation Network (NIIN) was formed to create a collaboration vehicle for industry, academia, and government to apply innovation at scale to industry challenges and high order economic and societal priorities. The NIIN is industry led collaboration with universities linked by a common goal: to increase the pace, scale, and impact from digital innovation in Australia. The NIIN's industry anchor is Cisco which was determined to change the way innovation through university collaboration was done in Australia. Our capacity to be competitive, productive and resilient is underpinned by effective and efficient industry-university collaboration.

The NIIN is also active in anticipating and responding to skill shortages and talent development. By providing opportunities for students to work with on industry projects we are not only helping industry solve problems, we are helping to prepare students for the jobs of the future.

The NIIN is only just getting started. We are looking forward to innovating differently and keeping industry at the centre of everything we do.



Reg Johnson
Director, Education & Strategic Industries, Cisco ANZ

NIIN Vision

The NIIN is a collective of universities and companies driven by one goal: to leverage the power of digital to create benefit for Australia.

Despite Australia's relatively high standing in science and research performance, Australia ranks last among OECD nations for industry-research collaboration. A major challenge for Australia is that the pathways for forming relationships necessary for successful industry-research collaboration are limited and inefficient.

Triple-helix collaboration between industry, universities and government is critical to capturing and distilling benefits from innovation. Collaboration accelerates knowledge spill over, ensures that all levers are being applied to innovation, and creates alignment between the supply of and

demand for applied research. But positive intent is not sufficient; Australia needs practical, efficient and accessible mechanisms to drive digital innovation at scale.

The NIIN represents a digital innovation ecosystem comprising companies (vendors and end user customers) and universities. Since 2020, we have evolved to become one of the largest industry-university innovation networks in Australia. We have also begun building ties with regional and global partners that can supply ideas, talent and access to networks that help us lift Australia's innovation performance while simultaneously supporting the broader region we live in.

1. OECD. 'Business innovation statistics and indicators (2021)'. OECD website, last accessed 24 November 2023

2. Department of Industry, Science and Resources. 'Barriers to collaboration and commercialisation'. 27 November 2023.

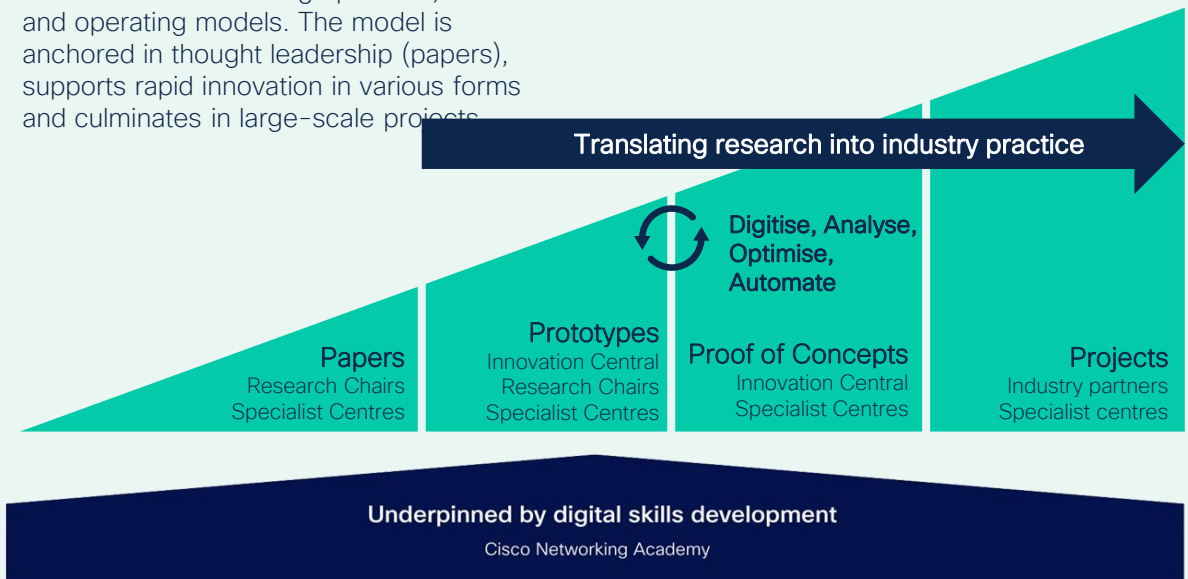
By 2027, our goal is to be recognised as:

- 1 Australia's leading industry-led digital innovation network
- 2 A scalable, repeatable model for delivering industry and student outcomes
- 3 A practical, affordable mechanism for industry to change practices, business and operating models
- 4 A regionally and globally-connected innovation ecosystem
- 5 Delivering on Australia's digital, industry and innovation policy commitments
- 6 Building digital skills, cyber resilience and accelerating Australia's role in key market transitions

NIIN Point of Difference

The NIIN focuses on solving problems of national significance through collaboration at a number of levels. What differentiates the NIIN from other models is its focus on creating industry-led large-scale digital solutions that can change practice, business and operating models. The model is anchored in thought leadership (papers), supports rapid innovation in various forms and culminates in large-scale projects.

The entire process is underpinned by a focus on digital skills that are required for Australia to maximise value from technology.



How we work:

Collaborative

We bring together universities, industries, and government to create a powerful network that drives innovation. By fostering collaboration across these sectors, NIIN breaks down silos and leverages diverse expertise to tackle complex national challenges.

Agile

We adapt quickly to emerging trends and technologies, enabling rapid responses to industry needs and government priorities. This agility allows NIIN to stay ahead of the curve and harness digital technology to address the challenges of the day.

Impactful

We focus on creating tangible outcomes that enhance productivity, sustainability, security, and social inclusion. Our projects are designed to deliver real-world benefits, ensuring that our efforts lead to meaningful and measurable improvements.

Connected

We have established a vast network of technology leaders and researchers across Australia. These connections allow us to access cutting-edge knowledge, resources, and opportunities, positioning NIIN at the forefront of Australia's innovation ecosystem.

Backed by leading technology

We are anchored by Cisco, a globally leading technology company that provides the NIIN with access to world-class technology, expertise and resources. This strengthens our ability to drive impactful innovation and stay at the forefront of technology advancements.

University Partners

The NIIN is anchored by specialist personnel responsible for program management, prioritisation, marketing and reporting. A network of Alliance Managers serve as the primary contact point between individual university partners, the Health / Cyber alliances and the NIIN. Alliance Managers are critical to coordination of joint projects, sharing of resources and dissemination of expertise. They also ensure alignment between industry, teaching and research objectives and the activities delivered by the NIIN.



The underpinning NIIN investments:

University partnerships

Partnerships are the heart of the NIIN. Staffed with university experts working with industry to pool assets and expertise, including research, administration, IT and teaching, all with matched funding commitments. Areas of current focus include the Trailblazer Program, advanced manufacturing, defence and healthcare.

Research Chairs

Research Chairs are provided with early access to next-generation technologies to pursue leading-edge innovations. Research Chairs have been established at six universities in the areas of Digital Health, IoT & AI, Critical Infrastructure, Next Generation AI, Retail & Logistics and Healthy Ageing.

Innovation Central

An Australia-wide network of Innovation Central facilities co-located on university campuses that focus on creating new models for universities and industry to collaborate on digital innovation at scale. Industry get to actually build prototypes and solutions, not just hear about what's possible, using a bank of talented staff, students and industry collaborators. Innovation Centrals are staffed by Alliance Managers that ensure dedicated project management and coordination.

Specialised Centres

A number of specialist centres have been established at partner universities. Typically they are grounded in either a specific technology or an industry application. The specialist centres currently cover domains such as digital health, IoT, next generation AI, and future networks.

Vertical Specialisations

The NIIN is accelerating progress in health and cyber security domains, priority areas for Australia. Two alliances have been formed to create natural coalitions around strategically important topics: The NIIN Health Alliance and the NIIN Cyber Security Alliance

Skills & Talent Development

The NIIN provides opportunities for students to work with emerging technologies as part of industry projects. Training hubs have been established to complement the more than 100 Cisco Networking Academy sites already operating across the nation. Working in conjunction with higher education institutions, more than 200,000 students have completed courses to-date with various internships awarded each year.

NIIN Priorities



Expanding into Asia (focus on Singapore and India)

The NIIN is establishing a regional presence, with a particular focus on healthcare investments and MedTech advancements. Expanding into Asia opens up new opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and partnerships.

Building the NIIN Health and Cyber Security Alliance

The NIIN has established Alliances in Cyber Security and Health. Priorities for the Cyber Alliance include linkages to an Insider Risk Centre of Excellence and a national network of Cisco-enabled Cyber Range Facilities. Priorities for the Health Alliance include fostering international collaborations and creating linkages into the MedTech commercialisation ecosystem.



Growing industry participation

The NIIN is committed to its mission of driving economic and social impact through industry-led innovation. The NIIN is focused on making all of its vehicles more available to industry, with the goal of practical, efficient and accessible mechanisms to drive digital innovation at scale.

Building out the ecosystem

The NIIN is actively expanding its ecosystem, with Intel recently announced as a new strategic partner. This partnership will focus on delivering POCs in areas such as defence and advanced manufacturing, as well as joint skills development initiatives in domains like AI.



Attracting more government funding

The NIIN aims to proactively increase the number of submissions to government for funding and support. By actively seeking government backing, the network aims to secure the resources necessary to drive its initiatives, support its partners, and deliver impactful outcomes aligned with national priorities.

Strengthening our governance

The NIIN is establishing an Industry Advisory Board to enhance linkages into priority sectors within Australia and ensure that the NIIN's work continues to be driven by the needs of industry.

The NIIN influence



Securing Australia's
Critical Infrastructure



Smart Zero: Using
advanced networks to
accelerate progress
towards Net Zero



Smart Base: Reimagining
Network Security in
Defence



Australia's
Semiconductor Moonshot



Higher Education Study
Tours



Using Digital to Create
Better Healthcare and
More Resilient
Communities



Driving adoption of
technology by industry



A vision for secure digital
precincts and regions

Australia has a unique position to influence major market shifts that we're seeing today, and we need a national industry innovation-led model to help capture these opportunities ahead. Technologically progressive economies outperform the average with investment in digital infrastructure delivering higher economic returns than investment in traditional infrastructure.

Australia's capacity to be competitive, productive, and economically resilient is underpinned by its world-class research and education. Our ability to adapt and harness technology innovation at scale and improve collaboration is a prerequisite for improved global competitiveness and differentiation.



Learn more about the NIIN and stay up to date on the latest thought leadership, resources, stories, and announcements

cisco.com/au/niin