

## Media Release

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### REGIONAL TEXTILE MANUFACTURER ACCELERATES EXPORT POTENTIAL WITH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

- *Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre gives financial boost to regional business for manufacturing exports*
- *Award-winning textiles business to seize new product opportunities, automate processes, offer new solutions to infrastructure customers*

Australia's largest manufacturer of geosynthetics, a critical ingredient for infrastructure projects, will increase its product range and contribution to the regional economy of Albury with the assistance of \$322,000 in co-investment from the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC).

Geofabrics Australasia's products are used in civil engineering applications, providing ground stabilisation and drainage capabilities.

Today, Geofabrics is announcing a collaborative project with RMIT and two local engineering firms. The outcome will be a new automated line to create thermally bonded laminated geocomposite products, which are currently imported, thereby, boosting the regional economy. Adding a thermally bonded geocomposite offering, which is increasingly specified by civil engineering firms, will open up more opportunities both at home and abroad.

As explained by Dr Jens Goennemann, Managing Director, AMGC, "This joint project allows Geofabrics to fully transform its operations by introducing automation and robotics, and to seize the opportunity from increased global demand for geocomposites technology."

"Importantly, Geofabrics is showing that other regional manufacturers can grow their revenues and employment by focussing on value-added activities in areas of R&D, advanced processes and collaboration, rather than trying to compete on cost."

There is no capability to produce thermally bonded geocomposites within Australia, meaning such products are currently imported. Geocomposites combine geotextile and geonet bonded together. These offer superior performance in sloped environments.

"The co-funded project with AMGC gives us the ability to manufacture bonded products with vastly superior strength and drainage properties, and produce to specific project requirements, like bespoke lengths and bespoke widths, as well as at a more competitive cost than currently available," said Geofabrics Director Dennis Grech.

"We do see opportunities for growth as a result of this product. But we also, and most importantly, see this as being another opportunity to cement our manufacturing presence in our Albury plant."

Geofabrics employs 45 at its Albury site, which has been producing geotextiles and other products since 1987, and a total of 198 workers across Australia.

The project combines testing and analysis plus performance validation from RMIT University. In addition, Wodonga-based companies of QEDS and RMR Engineering contribute automation, software and integration knowhow.

As an industry benefit, this project is expected to strengthen RMR's capabilities and in turn enable it to offer improved automation and other engineering expertise to local businesses.

Geofabrics is a successful regional business which has won awards including the 2018 Australian Export Awards 'Exporter of the Year' (Environmental Solutions category) and operates factories at Albury and Ormeau, on the Gold Coast.

To learn more about AMGC and its projects, visit the AMGC website: [www.amgc.org.au](http://www.amgc.org.au)

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## Notes to editors

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

The Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre is an industry-led organisation established through the Australian Government's Industry Growth Centres initiative. The vision for the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre is to develop an internationally competitive, dynamic and thriving Australian advanced manufacturing sector that is critical to the long-term health of the economy and the nation.

<http://www.amgc.org.au>

### *Industry Growth Centres*

The Industry Growth Centres Initiative is an industry-led approach driving innovation, productivity and competitiveness by focusing on areas of competitive strength and strategic priority. This will help Australia transition into smart, high value and export focused industries.

The Initiative enables national action on key issues such as collaboration, commercialisation, international engagement, skills and regulation reform. It drives excellence, not dependence, and will create an economy that ensures Australia's ongoing prosperity. For more information: [www.industry.gov.au/industrygrowthcentres](http://www.industry.gov.au/industrygrowthcentres)

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