

Mr Thomas John Forgan

The degree of Doctor of Engineering (honoris causa) was conferred upon Thomas John Forgan at the ceremony held at 5.30pm on 29 March 1996.

Citation

Presented by the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Ken Eltis

Chancellor,

I have the honour to present to you Tom Forgan, Executive Director of the Australian Technology Park, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Engineering (honoris causa).

Close by the University is the site of the old Railways Workshop. In 1989 the University decided that the site, which had become derelict and an eyesore, would be an excellent place for a technology park. There, university scientists and engineers would join with industrial scientists and engineers to make better and faster use of university research ideas to create new products and processes of production and improve our competitive position in an increasingly competitive world economy.

There was some strong initial opposition to the original idea. The NSW Government made the land and the buildings available to the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales and the University of Technology, Sydney on very generous terms which made possible an early start. The Technology Park is now flourishing. The Railway Workshops were built at a time when railways were a leading edge technology, and it proved possible to adapt many of the buildings for the development of the leading edges of our technologies. Already the Technology Park is attracting strong interest from our local and overseas business enterprises.

There is no longer opposition to the use of the land for a technology park. Buildings which had been neglected for years have been made ready in a most imaginative way for their new uses. The landscape has been transformed, in part with the use of a large grant from the Commonwealth Government's Better Cities project. Already university activities such as the Australian Graduate School of Engineering Innovation and the Optical Fibre Technology Centre are housed there and justifying the basic concept.

Tom Forgan is known as Mr Australian Technology Park. He was employed by the University as a consultant after he had completed his outstanding management and delivery of the Darling Harbour Project. Once the decision was made to proceed, he became executive director. During the past six years, Mr Forgan's vision and commitment to the project have been remarkable. These qualities have enabled him to be a great persuader of government, business interests, university groups and the general community.

By patient and astute explanation of the benefits of the scale of development of the proposal, he turned opposition into support and he has used that support to create what many of us thought would not be possible in the remaining years of this century. To him the impossible is simply a challenge to further achievement.

Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting Tom Forgan for admission to the degree of Doctor of Engineering (honoris causa).