

Photo courtesy of Myriota



## Enterprising NewSpace company

Myriota is an enterprising NewSpace Australian scale-up aiming to work with the Australian Space Agency's unique advantages in nurturing Australian space industries and honing their competitiveness on a global stage. Dr Alex Grant, Co-Founder of Myriota, explains how the company fits into Australia's NewSpace strategy.

*Laurence Russell, News & Social Editor, Satellite Evolution Group*

**Question: Why did Myriota choose Southern Australia as a base for its operations?**

**Dr Alex Grant:** South Australia has a long history of R&D in its academic institutions, and is home to Australia's defence, electronics, and space industries. Myriota was created off the back of this proud tradition of research being applied to solve real-world problems. Inspired by the challenges of providing connectivity in a vast country like Australia, myself and fellow co-founder, Dr David Haley, together with a team of thirty researchers at the University of South Australia, developed

breakthrough technologies delivering disruptively low-cost and long-battery-life Internet of Things (IoT). This was spun out in 2015 to form Myriota.

Adelaide is a focal point of the space industry in Australia and is home to the headquarters of the Australian Space Agency. Additionally, South Australia is located in an ideal place for rocket launches to polar orbits.

**Question: How do you think the growth of the space program in South Australia will also advance Myriota over time?**

**Dr Alex Grant:** The ecosystem that's being developed in South Australia will not only support the growth of the country's burgeoning industry by encouraging more space companies to set up operations here but will also

support Myriota by creating a network of space ready businesses that we could look to partner with.

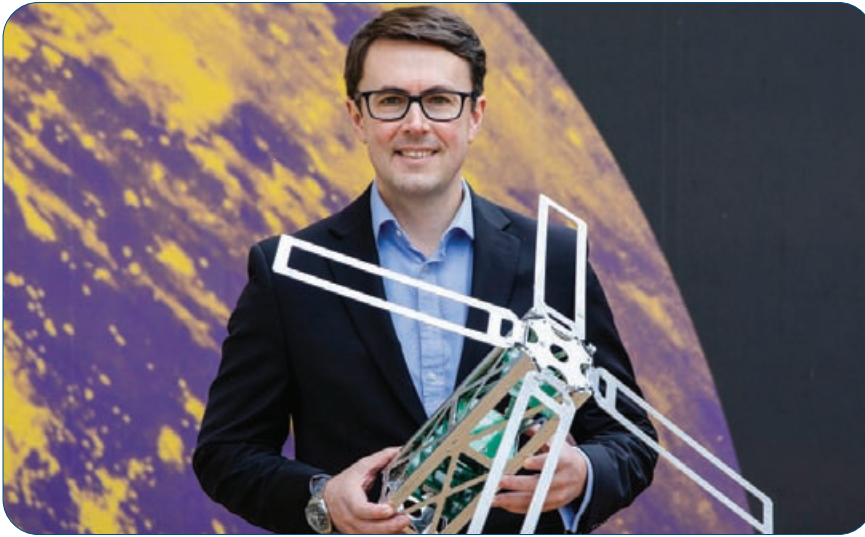
**Question: What impact is the space program having on the calibre of people (researchers, entrepreneurs etc) moving to South Australia?**

**Dr Alex Grant:** South Australia is seeing the growth of a strong and vibrant domestic space industry, with the state at the centre of developments for the region. This raised profile has seen growing private and public investment, including from notable global players such as Boeing who joined Myriota's Series A and B funding rounds.

The recently formed Australian Space Agency, which is headquartered at Adelaide's innovation precinct, Lot Fourteen, has been successfully attracting high calibre people, most recently Enrico Palermo, previously COO at Virgin Galactic. Lot Fourteen is seven hectares in size and is the country's first creation and innovation neighbourhood. Myriota was one of the first tenants to move to Lot Fourteen and has been joined by a number of other companies from the space and satellite industry since - such as Innovor Technologies, Neumann Space and Tyvak.

Lot Fourteen is also home to the Smart Sat Cooperative Research

Dr Alex Grant, Co-Founder of Myriota



Myriota. Motherson will be manufacturing millions of units of the Myriota Module over the next four years. The Myriota Module is an IoT connected device that securely transmits user data directly to our constellation of nanosatellites.

**Question: From an entrepreneur's perspective, why do you believe the South Australia industry is well placed to lead national space efforts?**

**Dr Alex Grant:** South Australia has a long and proud history of being associated with space innovation, which I believe places us in a good position to lead the country's national space efforts. Australia's first satellite was launched from Woomera in the 1960s, and our strong connection to space technology has continued to grow ever since.

The FedSat launch in 2002 is a particularly strong example of South Australian innovation and entrepreneurship across industry and research. Run by the University of South Australia, the project tested and refined new satellite technologies, and was a successful collaboration between the university and the Cooperative Research Centre for Satellite Systems. It was a project that kick-started the University's connection to space, with research developed at UniSA's Institute for Telecommunications Research eventually leading to the founding of Myriota as a spin-out company in 2015. ■

Centre; an international project which brings together close to 100 partners. The Centre secured \$245 million in investment in 2019 and is the biggest space industry research and development project in Australia's history, combining the power of industry research, educators, start-ups, and primes.

The University of South Australia's Innovation & Collaboration Centre (ICC) also runs a regular space accelerator program and has been able to attract a number of international applicants in recent years - a great sign for the industry.

**Question: What kind of spin-off industries and technologies are you**

**seeing emerge from this industry?**

**Dr Alex Grant:** As the industry grows and satellite technology becomes more accessible globally, there is the potential for more start-ups to become involved in the space sector and its periphery industries. Myriota welcomes this growth and the addition of new players as an opportunity to develop partnerships and collaborations that will benefit the state and broader technology development.

South Australia's manufacturing industry has been known for the production of cars, but since the growth of space companies and products, manufacturers like Motherson Innovations have begun adapting their capabilities to support companies like

leading in VSAT antenna innovation

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