

Mr Simon Walter Hackett

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you an outstanding candidate for admission to the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*): Mr Simon Walter Hackett.

Simon has helped fuel transformational change in how we all live and work. His advancement of the internet at its earliest stages enabled an evolution in communication between individuals and entities, sparking changes at every level of society and how it connects.

After graduating from the University of Adelaide in 1987, Simon was a part of the national university team that created the Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet) (*pronunciation: R-Net*). Created to connect the best and brightest in universities across the country with each other and with research colleagues in the United States, AARNet pioneered the Internet in Australia. In 1995, the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee transferred AARNet as a going concern to Telstra, who then operated it as the initial Telstra Internet.

In 1991 Simon founded his company, Internode. His early experience with AARNet had inspired him to bring the future potential of an internet connected Australia into reality, beyond the research and education sectors. In 1995, Internode commenced commercial delivery of Internet services to the South Australian Government and in 2005 became the first internet service provider in Australia to deliver ADSL2+ broadband services.

Simon subsequently grew Internode into one of Australia's largest privately held Australian broadband companies. By 2011, Internode employed around 450 staff, had 260,000 active services including 190,000 broadband customer links across Australia and an annual turnover of more than \$180 million.

Simon sold Internode to iiNet Limited in December 2011, and subsequently joined the iiNet board as a non-executive director. He also served on the board of the Australian Government's National Broadband Network from 2013 to 2016.

Simon is an active investor in Australian technology and 'cleantech' companies including AvSoft (*pronunciation: Avv-soft*), UltraCommerce, VAF Research (*pronounce the acronym like a word - vaff*), Clevertar and Redflow Limited.

A leading proponent of electric vehicles, in 2009 Simon drove the first Tesla Roadster in Australia from Darwin to Adelaide, including an at the time world distance record of 501km on a single charge.

He recently founded "Energy Autopilot", a software company devoted to reducing the energy footprint of homes and commercial premises by dynamically optimising the interaction between energy generation, energy storage, and energy consumption.

Simon is a fellow of the Australian Computer Society and a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He has also held board positions with the Adelaide Fringe, m.Net Corporation (*pronunciation: Em-net*) and the Australian Network for Art and Technology.

He was a founding director of the Internet Society of Australia and the founding president of the South Australian Internet Association. He received the Charles Todd Medal for contributions to Australian Telecommunications in 2014 and was the recipient of a Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Adelaide in 2017.

The Hackett Foundation he formed with his wife Anna undertakes targeted philanthropy work in support of community endeavours. The Hackett Foundation's largest community contribution is its long-term 'Presenting Partnership' of the WOMADelaide event, held annually in Adelaide each March.

A substantial donation in 2015 funded the aeromedical fit out of a Royal Flying Doctor Service aircraft.

The foundation is also a key supporter of SA Veterinary Emergency Management, a non-profit that supports the welfare of animals in natural disasters.

Chancellor, I am pleased to present to you Mr Simon Walter Hackett, Bachelor of Science, Fellow of the Australian Computer Society, Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, to the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*).