

MEDIA RELEASE

Ai-Media Welcomes Launch of NDIS

14 May 2012

Disability services innovator Ai-Media has welcomed the significant commitment in this month's Federal Budget to transform Australia's disability system through the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and the Coalition's declared support for the funding. Ai-Media and other disability organisations have been advocating for the NDIS many years.

Ai-Media CEO, Tony Abrahams, said: "Australia is currently ranked 27th out of 29 OECD countries in terms of outcomes for people with disabilities. The \$1.03 billion provided by the Australian Government over the next four years in a tight fiscal environment is a credible commitment to this critical social and economic reform. We are hopeful that this will be supplemented by State and Territory funding.

"Although the start-up funding is less than the additional funding recommended by the Productivity Commission, 10,000 people with disability will get access to the NDIS a year earlier than forecast. It is now time to get some quick wins on the board that can pave the way for a quicker rollout.

"The NDIS is a long term reform that will deliver substantial benefits to the economy. It is terrific that we now have a bipartisan commitment to fund the scheme. It is hoped that subsequent negotiations between State and Territory Governments and the Australian Government will see more funding released, as well as ensuring existing resources are better directed and targeted to meet the individual needs of people with disability, their families and carers."

Ai-Media remains focused on developing innovations that assist people with a disability to gain an education and skilled employment.

Mr Abrahams said: "Too many Australians are jobless because they don't have access to the simple and cost-effective tools they need to participate. The NDIS can change this and in so doing help the Budget bottom line with fewer outlays for disability support pensions, higher tax receipts, and improved labour participation."

Further information: Tony Abrahams, Ai-Media CEO – 0405 369 652

About Ai-Media:

Ai-Media is a social enterprise founded in 2003 and dedicated to ending the social, educational and vocational exclusion that people with disability face.

Ai-Media provides television captioning and web accessibility services. In 2010, Ai-Media launched Ai-Live™, a breakthrough internet-based captioning service that enables deaf and hearing impaired students to participate easily in mainstream classrooms. Ai-Live™ is now available in the workplace and tertiary education institutions to assist people with disabilities to learn and communicate, and is supported by Commercialisation Australia.

More information: www.ai-media.tv