

## ***MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE USE***

**Top US philosopher, cognitive scientist and writer (who has received two Guggenheim Fellowships and delivered the prestigious John Locke lecture at Oxford University) to visit Australia.**

**Professor Daniel Dennett is a controversial atheist who has been called one of the “four horsemen of new atheism” (along with Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Christopher Hutchins). He has written countless successful books and over 300 scholarly articles on everything from artificial intelligence, the brain and more and he has questioned “intelligent design” highlighting it’s “one of the most ingenious hoaxes in the history of science”.**

**The American Humanist Association has made him Humanist of the Year. Dr. Dennett will be at Creative Innovation 2011, a major 3 day event looking at the challenges of doing business and governing in a super-connected digital world. Over 35 world class international and Australian speakers are involved.**

Leading controversial US philosopher, writer and scientist Dr Daniel Dennett is coming to Australia for Creative Innovation 2011 in November. He has been referred to as one of the “four horsemen of new atheism” (along with Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Christopher Hutchins). He’s an outspoken firm atheist and a secularist.

The top philosopher has authored many major books including “Darwin’s Dangerous Idea, “Freedom Evolves” and “Breaking the Spell”. He has lectured all around the world in everywhere from Paris, London, New York, Yale University, Cambridge University and countless other venues. He was educated at Harvard University and obtained his Doctor of Philosophy at Oxford.

He has given the prestigious John Locke lecture at Oxford, has received two Guggenheim fellowships as well as a Fulbright fellowship and has been elected to the American Academy of arts and sciences. He has written a number of books and over 300 scholarly articles on various aspects of the mind. The topics range from artificial intelligence and brain sciences to poetry and art.

He will be in Melbourne in November for Creative Innovation 2011, an international 3 day event that will look at the challenges of doing business and governing in a super-connected digital world.

Over 35 world class international and Australian speakers will address the event – Creative Innovation 2011 – which is being produced by award winning social entrepreneur Tania de Jong AM.

A percentage of any profits from the event will be put towards Creativity Australia's "With One Voice" program, which supports disadvantaged people and inspires people to find their voice. Tania de Jong says the event will emphasise the fact that creativity is the strategic tool of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Daniel Dennett is originally from Boston – spent part of his childhood in Lebanon. His father died when he was 5 in an unexplained plane crash. His countless awards include the Richard Dawkins Prize, a fellow by the American Association for the advancement of science and Bertrand Russell Society Award.

Daniel Dennett has produced 16 books. He has publicly questioned the notion of "intelligent design". He has said "is intelligent design a legitimate school of scientific thought? Is there something to it, or have these people been taken in by one of the most ingenious hoaxes in the history of science? Wouldn't such a hoax be impossible? No. the proponents of intelligent design use a ploy. You misuse or misdescribe some scientists' work. Then you get an angry rebuttal. Then you cite the rebuttal as evidence that there is a "controversy" to teach. The trick is content-free. You can use it on any topic."

Tania de Jong said, *"Having Daniel Dennett at this event is a fantastic. He was named 2004 Humanist of the Year by the American Humanist Association. He is recognised as one of the world's great philosophers. He's also been very controversial. Some of his work involves looking at the philosophy of the mind and empirical research. Professor Dennett's speech 'Prospective gains and losses from the information explosion' will be featured at the event and he will take part in a 'Deep Conversation' session. For anyone in business, science or involved in thinking about the future this is a huge opportunity to hear first-hand one of the world's brightest minds."*

*"This event isn't just for CEOs and directors. Small and medium business will benefit. If you are in finance, health, government, banking, the arts, education or the not-for-profit sector, there's much to be learnt."*

Creative Universe and ANZ are presenting the event. Other business identities involved include legendary thinker Edward de Bono, global inventor and founder of The Singularity Raymond Kurzweil, British education technology guru Stephen Heppell, IDEO partner and Stanford Design Thinking expert Brendan Boyle and Dr Paddy Miller from Spain, who works with multi-nationals on change. He taught leadership at the Harvard Business School and has worked with everyone from the World Bank and Boeing to Ericsson.

Tania de Jong added: *"Creativity helps find hidden patterns. It's more important than Australia's natural resources. Innovation is now a pre-requisite for business survival."*

The event – Creative Innovation 2011 – is being held at the Sofitel Melbourne on Collins from November 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011. To find out more and register, just go to [www.ci2011.com.au](http://www.ci2011.com.au)

You can also contact Baldwin Consulting Group on 03 9645 9858 or ring Creative Universe on 03 8679 6000.

**Media enquiries to: Media Key on 03 9769 6488 – ask for either Homira Samadi or Ross Woodward**