

# Young brainy students create world first

September 6 2006

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A new 3D brain model is at the centre of a project created by a group of postgraduate students based at the Howard Florey Institute.

The team, known as BRAINYak scanned a fellow members' brain using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology to construct their model.

They have literally put their brains into their new entry in this year's Biotechnology Entrepreneur Program, an initiative of Young Achievement Australia.

As a group of young neuroscientists grappling with brain anatomy, the BRAINYak team endeavoured to design a unique way to understand where regions are in the brain and how they inter-relate.

Scott Kolbe, the BRAINYak member who donated his brain for the scan said powerful new neuroimaging technologies such as magnetic resonance have opened up a new window in understanding the organisation and inner workings of the body's most mysterious organ, the brain.

"Using this technology we have created the perfect tool to understand neuroanatomy as easily and as efficiently as possible so we can instead focus on curing brain diseases and disorders that impact enormously on society," he said.

Their product, the NeuroSlice model consists of MR images of Scott's brain, which the group has colour-coded so different areas of the brain

can be identified easily.

The NeuroSlice model will be of use to students and postgraduates new to the neuroscience field and to clinicians as a prop for diagnostic explanations to patients. BRAINYak's invention is the first 3D brain model using MRI images and provides a representation of the brain in space, something not found when using software programs and brain atlases.

Participants in Biotechnology Entrepreneur Program are guided through a 24-week intensive program by industry mentors during which they develop a product, taking it through the commercialisation process from concept to market.

Source: Research Australia

Citation: Young brainy students create world first (2006, September 6) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-09-young-brainy-students-world.html>

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