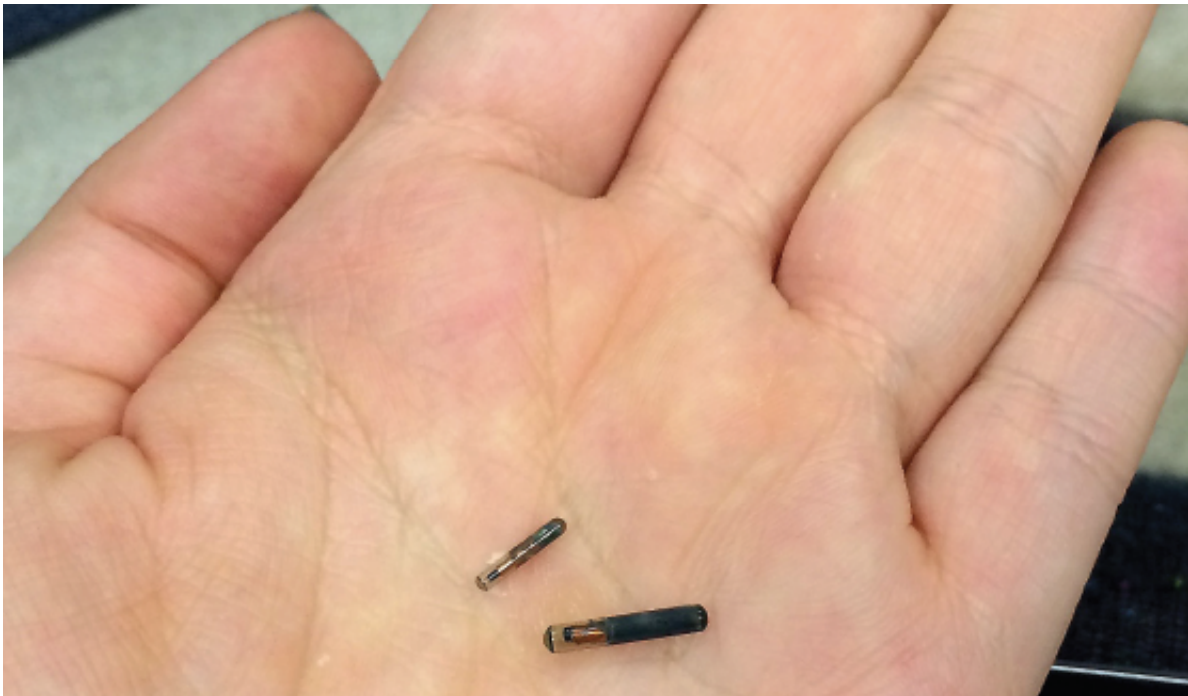


# No more keys or cards? Technology goes under the skin

February 15 2016, by Anne Rahilly

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Researchers at the University of Melbourne are investigating the growth in a new type of technology, inserted under the skin, and set to revolutionise the way we gain access to our homes, our bank accounts and use public transport.

PhD researcher Kayla J. Heffernan from the University's Department of Computing and Information Systems says these 'insertable technologies'

are no longer part of [science fiction](#).

"Digital devices have become more powerful and are now small enough to be inserted into the human body," Miss Heffernan said. Since 1998, people have been using insertable technology, similar to a pet microchip, to turn on lights, open doors and access computers." These inserted microchips are passive, meaning they only give off a signal when they are at close range to a home scanning point."

"While there are still many issues to discuss around this new technology, the devices can offer great convenience. An insertable [device](#) reflects an individual's personal choice that can allow us to open secure entrances, access our accounts without referring to passwords, grant us access to our work places and in future even take us home on a train," she said.

At present, there would be no legislation that prevents the use of insertable technologies except for the need to show you are over 18 years of age. Project supervisor, Professor Frank Vetere, says while increasing accessibility and convenience, insertable technologies also raise many social, ethical and technical challenges.

"What limits should be placed on insertable sensors? How do we interface with technology inside our bodies?" he said. "There is a small but growing group of people who are choosing to augment their human senses by voluntarily (and covertly) inserting devices inside their bodies. This research will help us to understand why people are doing this and the implications for human-[technology](#) interactions."

Miss Heffernan will continue to monitor the uptake and uses of such devices to follow the trends but is clear to reassure the public that the devices are not for tracking but for convenience and access.

Provided by University of Melbourne

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