

WORLD SCIENCE FESTIVAL BRISBANE

MEDIA RELEASE

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City to come to life for second World Science Festival Brisbane

Some of the world's greatest scientific minds have descended on Brisbane to take part in the second World Science Festival Brisbane, which officially opened today.

The five-day spectacular takes science from the labs to the streets with 115 performances of 80 individual events and two-days of hands-on fun at *Street Science!*

Premier and Arts Minister Annastacia Palaszczuk said Brisbane sits at the centre of scientific discovery in the Asia Pacific this week with the return of World Science Festival Brisbane.

"Some of the best and brightest minds from across the globe are now in Brisbane, poised to reveal the scientific and technological breakthroughs, innovations and projects that are changing our world.

"Among them are science superstars like: France Cordova, NASA's youngest and first woman Chief Scientist; Andy Thomas, the Australian-born astronaut; Barry Barish, American experimental physicist and one of the world's leading experts on gravitational waves; and Brian Schmidt, winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics.

"Last year's festival exceeded all expectations, drawing more than 120,000 visitors from across the world and injecting over \$5 million into the Queensland economy. This year's festival is on track to be even more successful. "

Queensland Museum Network CEO and Director Professor Suzanne Miller said the World Science Festival Brisbane was truly an event for everyone.

"No matter what your age, the World Science Festival Brisbane makes science accessible for all. From witnessing the beauty of turtles hatching before your eyes to discovering more about gravitational waves and particle physics to learning about how we can protect our most precious resources, the program covers many facets of science," she said.

"The program of events includes performances, demonstrations, debates, talks, displays and exhibitions, showcasing a wide range of scientific fields and extraordinarily talented people."

In a nod to World Water Day, the Festival opening was held in The Hatchery, a new custom-built facility featuring baby flatback turtles, hatching loggerhead turtles and a smack of jellyfish. This is in addition to a full program of events designed to highlight real world water issues with panel discussions from world-renowned experts.

"Water is one of the main themes of the 2017 World Science Festival Brisbane as well as physics and space, robotics and energy," Professor Miller said.

World Science Festival Co-founder and Physicist Professor Brian Greene said the Festival aimed to foster a general public informed by science, inspired by its wonder, convinced of its value, and prepared to engage with its implications for the future.

“As the pace of scientific discovery and technological innovation accelerates, science increasingly impacts every aspect of our lives – from how we work, play and communicate to our health and lifestyle,” Professor Greene said.

“With some of the most complicated and urgent public policy debates centered on science, it is imperative that scientists working at the forefront of scientific exploration share their work and their passion with the public.

“The Festival allows people of all ages to expand their understanding of the science that impacts their lives, and to immerse themselves in the profound, beautiful and vital stories of science.”

Brisbane Lord Mayor Graham Quirk said the Festival complements the city’s calendar of international sporting fixtures, blockbuster shows and exclusive cultural events throughout 2017. “The World Science Festival Brisbane demonstrates our position as an education, research, discovery, science and technology hub and I look forward to witnessing the impressive array of events that will be rolled out across the city,” he said.

“As well as playing host to one of the largest scientific festivals in the Southern Hemisphere, I am proud to witness the city continuously leading the way in world-leading innovation and scientific endeavours.”

Brisbane is the only city in the Asia-Pacific region to offer this amazing event, which will be hosted by Queensland Museum until 2021.

The World Science Festival Brisbane runs from 22 to 26 March:

<http://www.worldsciencefestival.com.au/>

World Science Festival Brisbane is presented by Queensland Museum with generous support of our partners Tourism and Events Queensland, Brisbane Marketing, Griffith University, QUT, The University of Queensland, BHP Billiton Foundation, Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation, QPAC, Channel 7, ABC Brisbane, Radio National, JC Decaux, QGC, Inspiring Australia, Arup, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Google, ANSTO, C&K, QAGOMA, QIMR Berghofer, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Theatre, South Bank Parklands, State Library of Queensland, Translational Research Institute and The Mantra Group.

To see the full program and purchase tickets to other exciting World Science Festival Brisbane events visit www.worldsciencefestival.com.au.

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