

24 MARCH 2021

Ready, set, science! It's time to get curious at World Science Festival Brisbane

Big ideas and daring conversations take centre stage in Brisbane from 24 to 28 March, as the best and boldest from Australia and around the world come together at this year's World Science Festival Brisbane, which opens today.

Now in its sixth year and hosted by Queensland Museum, the program offers more than 120 events across 10 venues spanning deep science, in depth conversations, high energy science experiments, discoveries, exploration and innovation, education programs, music and interactive workshops.

Leading the charge on opening night is World Science Festival New York co-founder Professor Brian Greene, with the world premiere of his new film, *Until the End of Time*, followed by Q&A live from New York.

The 2021 program also includes a stellar line-up of audience favourites and industry leaders, including Australia's favourite science communicator **Dr Karl** who will share science's most *Extreme Moments*, explore some of the most burning scientific questions in *A Night at the Museum* and lead a panel of trustworthy scientists, historians and communicators to examine how we arrived at this place of mistrust and how we can do our bit to stand up for science in *Why Trust a Scientist?*

Professor of Global Biosecurity **Raina MacIntyre** from the Kirby Institute and **Wendy Zukerman**, creator and host of the internationally acclaimed podcast *Science Vs*, who will take to the stage in *The Pulse of the Pandemic*, as they draw out the lessons of the past in order to pandemic-proof the future.

First Nations Scientists will also bring their expertise to the festival program this year including **Corey Tutt**, a proud Kamilaroi man and CEO and founder of *Deadly Science*, who will join other brilliant young minds and global-influencers to share their visions of a brighter future and how we can all play our part in *How to Change the World*.

Sasha Purcell, a Torres Strait Islander human rights lawyer, Fulbright Scholar and NYU Human Rights Scholar in the climate change program, who will take part in a discussion about the *Rising Tides, Searing Heat: Indigenous Australians and the Climate Crisis*.

And Indigenous writer, filmmaker, musician **Victor Steffensen**, a descendant of the Tagalaka people in north Queensland and co-founder of the Firesticks Alliance and the National Indigenous Fire Workshop, will join a panel of environmental experts look to the past, present and future for ways to survive the current 'Pyrocene' in *Disrupting Bushfires*. Can we truly disrupt the battle of the blazes?

The year is 2030 and space tourism is now a thriving reality. But one company is setting its sights slightly further afield with a mission to mine the Moon. But who owns the Moon? This question will be debated in a lively panel discussion featuring international guest, **Richard Garriott** whose explorations have taken him across all 7 continents, to both poles, the deepest seas and outer space as a private astronaut.

Queensland Museum CEO Dr Jim Thompson said the festival, an annual event since 2016, has built a reputation for developing and delivering world-class events, and is a cornerstone of STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) engagement.

"Science has the potential to unlock many of today's global challenges, from combating pandemics to natural disasters; tackling climate change and navigating the future of the universe," Dr Thompson said.

“The festival provides a valuable opportunity for visitors to hear from some of Australia’s and the world’s leading scientists, discuss hot topics, get involved in science and celebrate what we’ve achieved.

“It also allows us to connect with people of all ages and enables the next generation to take a leap into science learning, how to program robots, take part in science experiments, and be curious about the world around us.”

Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch said the Palaszczuk Government was investing \$3 million to bring World Science Festival to Queensland, which is the only festival of its kind held outside of New York.

“The innovative new format of this year’s festival will see 86 exciting events in 10 locations across Brisbane that will inspire conversations, engage audiences through performances and get people excited about science,” Minister Enoch said.

“The Festival is also going to make its way around the rest of the state throughout the year, with science experiences planned for Chinchilla, Gladstone, Toowoomba, Townsville and Ipswich.

“Festivals like this are vital for our state as we recover from the pandemic. The arts are key to delivering the Queensland Government’s plan for economic recovery, each year injecting \$8.5 billion into the state’s economy and supporting more than 92,000 jobs for Queenslanders.”

Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner said residents and visitors would revel at the return of World Science Festival Brisbane, which would bring an out of this world program to venues across the city.

“We turn to science when we need answers to the unknown, and the coronavirus pandemic has certainly renewed interest in people wanting to understand more about the wonders of our changing world,” Cr Schrinner said.

“Brisbane is the only host of the World Science Festival in the Asia-Pacific region and I encourage everyone to put their thinking hats on and take part in the five-day celebration of everything weird, wacky and wonderful in the world of science.”

World Science Festival Co-founder Professor Brian Greene has said that at the heart of science lies a deep curiosity to explain the unknown. However, because of COVID-19 he is unable to attend the Festival in person, but says he looks forward to guiding Festival attendees on virtual journeys that span the cosmos and dive deeply into some of the greatest discoveries of our time.

“Every year, it’s exciting to come to Brisbane to be part of this celebration highlighting cutting edge science, ideas and theories,” said Professor Greene. “This year, I’ll be joining virtually in an array of innovative programs that grapple with some of the biggest questions and most pressing issues in science today. The astonishing milestones that this Festival celebrates are an opportunity for us all to recognise the enormous capacity of humankind to achieve the seemingly impossible.”

In addition to the opening night program, Professor Greene will guide intrepid explorers through a series of interactive virtual reality experiences in ***Exploring Hyperspace***.

Complementing the 2021 program highlights are four key signature events including a cosmic journey into the unknown in ***Hunting the Cosmic Dawn*** featuring **Nobel Laureates Andrea Ghez** and **Brian Schmidt**, who will join **Professor Tamara Davis** and other renowned scientists in shining light on the early cosmos, and the nature of dark energy.

Cities 2060 will focus on cities of the future and what they might look like. How can technology be used to create a better place to live? And will the COVID pandemic leave a lasting impression on our future city blueprints?

Running the Planet Without Costing the Earth takes a look at how the world can successfully transition away from traditional energy sources to renewable sources.

And on the first anniversary of social distancing and large-scale lock downs in Australia, **The Pulse of the Pandemic** panel will review what was a devastating year, assess the state of play in 2021, and draw out the lessons of the past in order to pandemic-proof our future.

From Wednesday 24 March to Sunday 28 March **City of Science** will make the festival accessible across 10 Brisbane precincts with 86 events, including live performances, conversations and experiences bubbling away across suburbs from Mount Coot-tha to the Queen Street Mall, Kingston to Carindale, West End to Fortitude Valley, the Queensland Cultural Centre and more.

And while the festival itself has grown to cover suburban Brisbane, the Cultural Precinct and Queensland Museum, will continue to be the epicentre of World Science Festival Brisbane with **The Nucleus**, located on Sisters Green, set to be a central hub bursting with fun-science themed activities, discussions and trivia.

Another festival highlight returning is the ever-popular attraction **The Hatchery: Turtle Conservation Experience**, which showcases and supports turtle conservation, as well as giving visitors the opportunity to view baby loggerhead turtles hatching from eggs. This year, audiences will be able to tune into a round the clock 24-hour live stream of turtles hatching.

In 2021 World Science Festival Brisbane will also continue its journey towards implementing a new plan to improve its environmental sustainability.

Dr Thompson said the festival has big goals – and everyone is taking steps to make sure we deliver an engaging event that is safe, healthy and fun, without compromising the needs of future generations.

“Some of the changes we are making include reducing single use plastics, using solar power at City of Science, installing recycling and organic waste bins and providing free water refill stations; even the slime is called edible science... so environmentally friendly!

“There has never been a more important time to be engaged with science and to ask how we can all make a difference in our world, so I encourage everyone to have a look at the program online, be curious and explore the wonders of science.”

View the full festival program, participants list and purchase tickets at www.worldsciencefestival.com.au

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World Science Festival Brisbane 2021 is presented by Queensland Museum with generous support from Queensland Government and **Strategic Partners** Tourism Events Queensland and Brisbane Economic Development Agency **City of Science Partner** BHP **Academic Partners** Griffith University, QUT and The University of Queensland **Community Partner** QGC Shell Project **Media Partners** ABC Radio National and The Weekend Edition **Principal Partners** BHP Foundation and Queensland Performing Arts Centre **Futures Partner** PwC Australia **Program Partners** Brisbane City Council, C&K, Folklore Sound, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art,

QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, State Library of Queensland and West Village **Official Suppliers** AARNet, Mantra South Bank, Romeo Digital and South Bank Parklands.

ABOUT WORLD SCIENCE FESTIVAL BRISBANE | 24 - 28 March, 2021 | worldsciencefestival.com.au

World Science Festival Brisbane explores and celebrates the entanglement of science and art through a curated program of thought-provoking conversations, inspiring theatrical and cinematic experiences, interactive workshops and engaging demonstrations. Originating in New York, Queensland Museum Network secured an exclusive licence to host World Science Festival in the Asia Pacific from 2016–21. The only global extension of this hugely popular initiative, World Science Festival Brisbane reinforces Queensland Museum's position as a leader in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and engagement.

ABOUT CURIOCITY BRISBANE | 12 – 28 March 2021 | curiocitybrisbane.com

Curiosity Brisbane builds on Queensland's reputation as a leader in innovation, technology and the future through a creative mix of events, music, conversations and hands-on CurioCities—fun and engaging interactive physical and digital installations in public spaces.

ABOUT WORLD SCIENCE FESTIVAL QUEENSLAND | various dates, 2021 | worldsciencefestival.com.au

World Science Festival Queensland explores and celebrates the entanglement of science and art at regional locations around Queensland.

EVENT	DATE
World Science Festival Brisbane	24 - 28 March 2021
Regional Program	
World Science Festival Queensland Townsville	7 – 8 May 18 September – 4 October (School holiday program)
World Science Festival Queensland Chinchilla	6 and 7 June
World Science Festival Queensland Gladstone	29 and 30 August
World Science Festival Queensland Toowoomba	10 and 11 October 26 June – 11 July (School holiday program)
World Science Festival Queensland Ipswich	7 and 8 November 18 September- 4 October (School holiday program)