

MEDIA RELEASE

22 March 2023

We have lift off! Launch into science, art, and creativity at World Science Festival Brisbane

Science is launching into Brisbane today with the opening of World Science Festival Brisbane offering five days of events and activities from 22-26 March.

Now in its eighth year, **World Science Festival Brisbane** – presented by Queensland Museum Network – asks visitors to **open their minds** to the wonders of science and arts, exploring themes including space travel and exoplanets, ancient worlds and creatures from our prehistoric past, the formation of memories and future proofing planet earth amongst others.

As a key pillar of the festival, *Curiosity Brisbane* will run until 2 April, featuring public art installations and bringing a creative synergy to the conversations, events and workshops spread throughout Brisbane's cultural precinct.

This year's program, ranging from free perennial favourites to signature conversations, brings together the best minds in science and is expected to attract 200,000 visitors across more than 130 events and activities, adding to the nearly one million science lovers the festival has reached since its inception in 2016.

For the first time since 2019, international guests will return in person, including NASA's outgoing head scientist **Thomas Zurbuchen**, award-winning human origins researcher, explorer and author **Lee Berger**, Argentinian Patagonia dinosaur expert **Ignacio Escapa**, and Australia's very own NASA astrophysicist, **Jessie L. Christensen**.

World Science Festival New York co-founder **Brian Greene** also makes his return to Brisbane, headlining four conversations including *The Golden Age of Space Exploration* tonight.

Queensland Museum Network CEO Dr Jim Thompson said this year's program will transform Brisbane's cultural heart into a supercharged celebration of science and art.

"Tonight's premier event *The Golden Age of Space Exploration* at QPAC, featuring Professor Brian Greene and a superstar science line-up, kicks off the festival by opening visitors' minds to the future of science," Dr Thompson said.

"You can also wander around South Bank and be mesmerized by awe-inspiring *Curiosity Brisbane* artworks. These interactive installations, designed by high-profile artists, will capture the imagination of many over the next two weeks.

"With so many events on offer, from debates, talks, and exhibitions, a film program, fan favourite *The Hatchery*, and the addition of Queensland Museum's night-time program *Social Science* along with the *City of Science*, visitors of all ages will be spoilt for choice."

Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch said the 2023 World Science Festival Brisbane would once again delight and inspire locals and visitors alike.

“Science and the arts enable individuals and communities to better understand and respond to some of the big issues and concerns we face.

“This year’s World Science Festival Brisbane will present creative solutions for our planet’s challenges, both now and into the future, and will give people the chance to see some of the world’s greatest thought leaders, right here on our doorstep,” Minister Enoch said.

“Since its introduction in 2016, the World Science Festival Brisbane has generated an economic impact of more than \$39 million to Queensland.

“The Queensland Government continues to support this unique event with annual funding of \$3 million to host the World Science Festival Brisbane and World Science Festival Queensland, providing opportunities for discovery to be passed on to our younger generations.

“Signature festivals are essential to growing Brisbane’s reputation as an international destination with a rich knowledge economy in preparation for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.”

World Science Festival co-founders Professor Brian Greene and Tracy Day said they are thrilled to return to Brisbane for the first time since 2019, and are looking forward to the next five days of extraordinary science and arts events, as the festival fans out across the city.

“The festival brings together the world’s greatest minds so the public can engage with the very innovators and researchers who are pushing the frontiers of discovery and grappling with the most critical issues facing us today,” Ms Day said.

“It’s never been more important to celebrate the power of science. This year, we’re joined by leading scientists who are at the forefront of the next great age of space exploration. We’ll peer back at the earliest light in the universe. And we’ll journey along with the ground-breaking expeditions that are changing our understanding of human origins,” Professor Greene said.

“We’ll dive into the workings of the mind and the structure of the cosmos. The festival’s wide range of exciting programs are designed to engage audiences of all ages to embrace science as a vital engine of innovation, progress and inspiration.”

Tourism and Innovation Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said the World Science Festival Brisbane and *Curiosity Brisbane* were a winning combination for the visitor economy.

“These two iconic events are predicted to generate almost \$13 million for our visitor economy and that’s great news for Brisbane accommodation and hospitality providers, and tourism operators,” Mr Hinchliffe said.

“We’ve made the World Science Festival Brisbane and Curiosity Brisbane a highlight of the 2023 *It’s Live! in Queensland* events calendar.

"It's a perfect opportunity for visitors to discover our city's many world-class tourism experiences and enjoy more of Queensland's great lifestyle."

Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner said the World Science Festival Brisbane is a popular fixture on the city's jam-packed major events calendar.

"As the only city outside of New York to host this event, Brisbane is proud to bring together the world's brightest minds for an unforgettable celebration of art, science and technology," Cr Schrinner said.

"This year is set to bring a \$12 million boost to local businesses with thousands of visitors flowing into our hotels, restaurants, shops and cafes to enjoy the best of Brisbane.

"Brisbane is the perfect place for world class events and as we prepare for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we invite visitors to come and see the many incredible things our city has to offer."

This year's festival is packed with family-friendly entertainment, from learning about our unique animals in **Wild Rangers Wildlife Encounters** at Queensland Museum, to walking in the wilderness of a distant era with dinosaurs in **Erth's Prehistoric Picnic** at South Bank's Piazza, there's something scien-terrific for the whole family to enjoy!

It's not all about the kids though! Over Friday and Saturday night, the festival's new night-time program, **Social Science** is set to transform Queensland Museum into a hub of science, music, show and comedy.

With a cocktail in hand from the pop-up bar, try your hand at the ultimate truth and dare with **Counterpilot's** award winning **TRUTHMACHINE**, explore the science of sex or the good of the metaverse, or catch **The Hatchery** after dark - the only available tickets left for the sold-out favourite!

LGBTQIA+ representation will be front and centre as **Queerstories** makes its World Science Festival Brisbane debut, an evening of celebrating unexpected tales of pride, prejudice and resilience with **Maeve Marsden** hosting a line-up of incredible storytellers including award-winning science writer and presenter **Bernie Hobbs**.

Join **Fran Kelly** and respected business leaders and activists to investigate the coalition of science, technology and big investment in **Net Zero: Investing in the Future**.

City of Science will stimulate your mind with a program of tours, hands-on showcases and surprising pop ups including **Lunchtime Labs** in the Queen Street Mall featuring **Mythbusting on the Mall**, **Library Labs: All Creatures Great and Small**, free activities and performances around South Bank Piazza and **City of Science @ The Cube**.

Explore the mind-blowing temporary outdoor and physical installations from artists across the world for **Curiosity Brisbane** and let your imagination roam free as you take in the beauty and grandeur of 14 artistic installations throughout South Bank and the Cultural Precinct.

World Science Festival Brisbane represents the first stop touring throughout the state, with World Science Festival Queensland being held at Toowoomba, Chinchilla, Townsville, Gladstone, and Ipswich later this year.

To view the full festival program, participants list and to purchase your tickets, visit worldsciencefestival.com.au

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Media accreditation is now open via www.worldsciencefestival.com.au

World Science Festival Brisbane 2023 is presented by Queensland Museum Network with support from Queensland Government and Strategic Partners Tourism Events Queensland and Brisbane Economic Development Agency.

PARTNERS:

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ABOUT WORLD SCIENCE FESTIVAL BRISBANE | 22- 26 March 2023 | worldsciencefestival.com.au

Queensland Museum Network holds exclusive licence to host World Science Festival in the Asia Pacific – the only global extension of this initiative. WSFB has attracted more than 800,000 attendances, and added \$36 million to the Queensland economy, since 2016. World Science Festival Brisbane reinforces Queensland's position as a knowledge economy and ignites new and challenging discussions about Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) so that more and more people experience the value, impacts and wonder of science.

ABOUT CURIOCITY BRISBANE | 22 March – 2 April 2023 | worldsciencefestival.com.au

Since 2019, *Curiosity Brisbane* has sparked inspiration and innovation, transforming our city into an interactive place to “explore, create and play”. During March, *Curiosity Brisbane* invites visitors to let their imaginations roam free, with installations, workshops and talks from high-profile artists that celebrate the connection between art, science and technology. In 2023, *Curiosity Brisbane* will be delivered as part of World Science Festival Brisbane, presented by Queensland Museum Network.

ABOUT WORLD SCIENCE FESTIVAL QUEENSLAND | various dates, 2023 | worldsciencefestival.com.au

World Science Festival Queensland explores and celebrates the connection of science and art at five regional locations around Queensland, including Toowoomba, Townsville, Ipswich, Chinchilla and Gladstone.

WSFB and WSFQ 2023 dates

World Science Festival Brisbane	Wednesday 22 – 26 March
Curiosity Brisbane	Wednesday 22 March – 2 April
World Science Festival Queensland Toowoomba	Sunday 21 May Monday 22 May (Schools Program) 24 June – 9 July (School Holiday Program)
World Science Festival Queensland Chinchilla	Friday 2 June (Schools Program) Saturday 3 June
World Science Festival Queensland Townsville	Friday 23 June (Schools Programs) Saturday 24 June 24 June – 9 July (School Holiday Program)
World Science Festival Queensland Gladstone	Friday 28 July (Schools Program) Saturday 29 July
World Science Festival Queensland Ipswich	1 – 16 April (School Holiday Program) Friday 11 August (Schools Program) Saturday 12 August