



Media Release

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Apollo 11 lands at Questacon

Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission with the launch of a new exhibition.

The *Apollo 11 50th Anniversary* exhibition celebrates the achievement of the first Moon landing. It explores the engineering, computing and mathematics principles which supported and enabled this amazing feat.

Three interactive exhibits have visitors launching pinball rockets to the Moon, balancing spacecraft to avoid a crash landing and seeing what milk would weigh on the Moon.

The exhibition highlights some of the individuals in pivotal science roles, and elevates key mathematical equations that took us to the Moon as the works of art they truly are.

The exhibition prominently features the achievements of women in STEM. These include a life-sized portrait of MIT programmer Margaret Hamilton, a pivotal equation from NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson (the central character in the 2016 film *Hidden Figures*) and stories of NASA's female human computers.

Artefacts from the era, kindly on loan from NASA's Canberra Deep Space Communication Complex (CDSCC), show early computer technologies used to build the Apollo 11 spacecraft, plot trajectories and communicate with the crew through the vacuum of space.

Questacon Exhibition Content Manager Anita Beck said "The exhibition showcases to visitors how concepts like maths and engineering were important to the Apollo missions, and how they are still impactful in space missions."

"From exploring the engineering challenges NASA had to overcome to the mathematical formulas produced by Katherine Johnson and the computer equipment used for the missions, visitors are taken on a journey through the history of the Apollo 11 mission," Ms Beck added.

Australia's national science and research agency, CSIRO, supports the exhibition. Acting Chief Executive and Head of CSIRO's Space Programs, Dr Dave Williams, said "It's great to see Questacon showcasing the STEM skills that inspired a generation, making it possible to not just reach for the Moon, but walk on it".

"CSIRO is proud to have a long history of solving the greatest challenges – from receiving the first images from the Moon in 1969, to supporting the growth of the Australian space industry and creating job opportunities for today's students".

"By working closely across the sector, we're unlocking a future for Australians in space, as bright as the Moon itself."

The *Apollo 11 50th Anniversary* exhibition will be on display during Questacon's *Moon Month* running throughout July.

More information about *Moon Month* can be found on the website www.questacon.edu.au

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