



Media Release

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Governor-General launches into National Science Week

Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) and Lady Cosgrove celebrated *National Science Week* today at Government House.

Their Excellencies launched The *2018 Governor-General's Design Challenge*, a new initiative in partnership with the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General and Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre. The *2018 Governor-General's Design Challenge* provides valuable experience for students to use design thinking in a hands-on and highly interactive way for deeper learning about science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Questacon Director, Professor Graham Durant said that Questacon was honoured to partner with the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General for this new event and hoped that it may become an annual activity during *National Science Week* each year.

Their Excellencies engaged with more than 100 Year 5 and 6 students from the Canberra region participating in The *2018 Governor-General's Design Challenge*.

The students, from 28 schools, were set a challenge to design and build their own paper rockets. Using pressurised air, each student filled their rocket with vibrant coloured chalk, and launched it, resulting in a spectacular display of colour on the lawns of Government House.

"We're delighted to have this opportunity to showcase the innovation Canberra's students can achieve through the creation of these rockets. Questacon is excited to deliver this event with the Governor-General and Lady Cosgrove during *National Science Week*," Professor Durant said.

Students had to think, make, try and refine their designs in an attempt to get their team's rocket to fly the furthest. To develop their rockets, students explored the principles of flight, propulsion and rocket design, while also developing their creativity, critical thinking and collaboration skills.

The *2018 Governor-General's Design Challenge* is supported by The Australian National University's (ANU) Mount Stromlo Observatory, Canberra Deep Space Communication Complex, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority, Research School of Physics and Engineering at the ANU, Geospatial Intelligence, and UNSW Canberra Space. Staff from each organisation worked with Questacon to facilitate the student design and build workshops.

Professor Durant said that *National Science Week* brings Australians together to learn, discuss, engage and participate in what science has on offer to improve and enrich our lives.

"*National Science Week* provides an opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with science, technology, engineering and mathematics, with more than 1.3 million people participating in more than 2000 events each year. With so many events across the country there is an opportunity for all Australians to get involved," Professor Durant said.

National Science Week runs from 11–19 August 2018, <https://www.scienceweek.net.au/>.

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