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Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science



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Media Release

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Governor-General celebrates National Science Week with Questacon

Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) and Lady Cosgrove celebrated *National Science Week* today at Questacon's second Canberra facility, The Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre.

The Governor-General and Lady Cosgrove took the opportunity to explore The Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre's purpose built Maker Space. The Maker Space provides visiting students an opportunity to explore new and emerging technologies such as 3D printing as well as develop prototypes and inventions using everyday materials.

Each year, more than 5000 school students from across Australia visit The Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre to engage in hands-on workshops in the Maker Space.

Questacon Director, Professor Graham Durant said that Questacon was honoured to host Their Excellencies at The Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre for the first time.

"We're delighted to have this opportunity to showcase just some of the programmes Questacon delivers from The Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre to the Governor-General and Lady Cosgrove during *National Science Week*," Professor Durant said.

Their Excellencies engaged with a group of Year 5 and 6 students participating in a *Questacon Maker Project* Innovation Experience workshop. The students from the Pyrenees Cluster Schools—a cluster of seven small schools in Western Victoria—were set a challenge that aligned to the 2017 *National Science Week* school theme: Future Earth. During the workshop the students engaged with Their Excellencies, and together explored the technology used to generate sustainable sources of electricity.

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 (STEM), with more than 1.3 million people participating in more than 1800 events last year. This year more than 2000 events have been registered across the nation, so there is an opportunity for all Australians to get involved," Professor Durant said.

The *Questacon Maker Project* is delivered as part of the broader *Questacon Smart Skills Initiative*, a national initiative that engages young people in design thinking, technology, creativity and innovation through a range of programmes. The *Questacon Smart Skills Initiative* is jointly funded by the Australian Government and The Ian Potter Foundation.

National Science Week runs from 12–20 August 2017.

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