



## Media Release

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### Young innovators unleash their imaginations in Darwin

High school students from the Darwin region are set to unleash their ideas and creativity at the *Questacon Invention Convention* during the July school holidays.

The *Invention Convention* is a free three-day programme for students aged 14–18. Developed by Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre, the *Invention Convention* gives students a practical insight into innovation and entrepreneurship.

Local industry mentor Dr Sue Samuelsson will lead participants in prototyping unique solutions to real-world problems using existing and emerging technology. Dr Samuelsson is the CEO of i-Vet, a global veterinary service delivered through video conference.

Questacon’s Innovation Mentor Lara Ghaly said, “A major feature of the *Invention Convention* is mentoring by local industry leaders and innovators.

“Dr Samuelsson will mentor participants and share her valuable knowledge and experiences, to give students an insight into the world of innovation, design and technology. By creating networks of local industry mentors the *Invention Convention* can have a lasting impact long after the programme has left,” said Ms Ghaly.

During the three-day *Invention Convention* programme participants will create prototypes using high-tech equipment like modular electronics and robotics, as well as simple materials and tools. The programme includes activities focused on innovation, prototyping, and communication.

“Students don’t need to have ever prototyped an idea before, they just need to have loads of enthusiasm, a willingness to learn, and recognise their own potential,” said Ms Ghaly.

At the end of the *Invention Convention*, students will share the knowledge and skills gained from the programme with local industry mentors, fellow participants, and their families.

The *Invention Convention* is part of the \$14.5 million *Questacon Smart Skills Initiative* funded by the Australian Government in partnership with Principal Partner, The Ian Potter Foundation.

Building on *Questacon Smart Skills* in-school workshops, the *Invention Convention* takes participants deeper into the process of innovation, and offers a significant skill development pathway. *Questacon Smart Skills*, supported by Technology Partner Samsung, recently toured the Darwin and Katherine regions, delivering 96 workshops to 2184 secondary school students.

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