

Media Release

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Questacon tour extends hand of friendship to Japan

Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre today announced they will take their popular Science Circus outreach programme to Japan next month.

The five-week tour will take 30 interactive science exhibits to four tsunami-recovering communities in the Tōhoku region of north-eastern Japan after an official launch in Tokyo on 24 April.

A team of six Australian and Japanese science communicators will present engaging science shows at local schools during the week and run a free public exhibition for families on weekends.

Questacon Director Professor Graham Durant said, “The Questacon Science Circus tour of Japan is an expression of friendship and gratitude for Japan’s contribution to Questacon’s establishment as the National Science and Technology Centre in 1988.

“We’re honoured to be able to give something back to the Japanese community and to contribute to the rebuilding efforts in places such as Minamisanriku – amongst Japan’s worst affected areas by the 2011 natural disaster and the focus of Australian post-disaster recovery efforts.

“By taking our portable science exhibits to these communities, we are helping to re-establish the capacity of local science museums. We’ll be working with local science communicators and science centre professionals in each location, providing mutual exchange of expertise,” said Professor Durant.

The tour is modelled on Questacon’s flagship outreach programme, the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*, which has toured regional and remote Australia for the past 29 years. The exhibits will feature translated explanations and will be gifted to Japan at the conclusion of the tour.

The tour is collaboration between Questacon and Japan’s National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan). The tour is supported by the Australia-Japan Foundation (AJF), which is part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

“The Australia-Japan Foundation is delighted to support this exciting tour to Japan, which will be particularly welcome in communities such as Minamisanriku that were so badly devastated by the 2011 tsunami/earthquake” said AJF Chair, Mr Murray McLean AO.

Questacon is currently celebrating its 25th anniversary year as Australia’s National Science and Technology Centre. The Government of Japan and Keidanren (Japanese Business Federation) supported half the cost of the building as a Bicentennial gift to the people and Government of Australia.

Today, Questacon is Australia’s largest science centre and is prominent among the world’s leading science centres.

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