



Media Release

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Youth unleash ideas at *Questacon Invention Convention*

Young Australians have been given the power to unleash their imagination and turn their ideas into reality this week at a national convention run by Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre, supported by IP Australia.

The five-day *Questacon Invention Convention* is part of the *Questacon Smart Skills Initiative*, has brought together 24 selected young people to build prototypes of their ideas under the guidance of specialist innovation professionals.

“The delegates have attended workshops and training sessions where the emphasis has been on assistive technologies, which are devices that can help make tasks faster and easier,” Questacon Director Professor Graham Durant said.

“Delegates have heard from a number of speakers who have provided students with a framework for developing new ideas. This has helped them further advance their own prototypes and improved their communication and presentation skills,” Professor Durant said.

The convention, which started on Monday, concludes today with a gala dinner, attended by the delegates, parents and invited guests, including the innovation professionals who provided guidance throughout the week.

The \$14.5 million *Questacon Smart Skills Initiative* is funded by the Australian Government in partnership with The Ian Potter Foundation and IP Australia. It engages young people in design thinking, technology, creativity and innovation.

Assistant Minister for Innovation Wyatt Roy, Invention Convention Champion, attended the final day of the convention. He said the programme’s goals strongly aligned with the Government’s recently announced National Innovation and Science Agenda, which promotes the culture of an ‘ideas boom’.

“This programme is giving the students a great opportunity to put their creative ideas into reality, so they can become the innovators of the future,” Mr Roy said.

“We want to see the youth of Australia fully equipped with the skills to succeed in a 21st Century economy and enable them to reap the rewards of taking risks, learning from failure and embracing opportunity.

“I am sure the skills the students have developed over the last week will hold them in good stead as they face challenges like this in the years ahead.”

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