

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Monday 27 April 2015

Innovative, creative students rally for Science and Engineering Challenge

This year's Tasmanian Science and Engineering Challenge series begins today (**Monday 27 April**) in Launceston.

"We have received entries from 45 schools throughout the state," the Tasmanian State Coordinator for the Science and Engineering Challenge, Susie Haley said.

Launceston's two days of competition has 14 school teams competing, then later in the week, eight schools will compete in Burnie.

The competition heads down to Hobart next week for three more days of Heats comprising 24 more teams.

The top eight teams will compete in the State final later in May.

The Science and Engineering Challenge is a nationwide outreach program aimed at changing students' perceptions of science and engineering. Through the Challenge, students from grades nine and 10 experience aspects of these disciplines which they would not usually see in their school environment.

The Challenge is designed to address the skills shortage in science and engineering by inspiring young people to study mathematics, physics and chemistry (the enabling sciences) in years 11 and 12. It provides students with an exhilarating day where they compete with other school groups in engaging and demanding engineering and science - based activities.

It also gives students an appreciation of what it would be like to work as a scientist or engineer and consider a future career in these disciplines.

"The students are looking forward to this year's competition. Each year the level of competition increases, with the students impressing us all with their abilities. Preparation is going particularly well and it is nothing short of inspiring to see the way the students attack some of the difficult problems devised by the University of Newcastle," Susie said.

"Students will have to be innovative and creative as well as being focused on their own tasks. The hands-on, competitive nature of the Challenge provides an experience that cannot be easily duplicated in the classroom. By participating in the Challenge, students see that

science and engineering involves creativity, innovation, problem solving and team work. The event continues to get better each year, with some new challenges set for the students this year.”

The Challenge is a regular part of many schools’ calendars, being highly valued by science and technology teachers as a means of raising the awareness of career opportunities in the sciences and engineering. It runs in every state and territory of Australia, with approximately 26,000 students participating last year.

The 2015 Tasmanian Challenge Series will be held on the following dates in these regions:

Launceston: Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 April, St Patricks’ College.

Burnie: Thursday 30 April, Marist Regional College.

Hobart: Monday 4 to Wednesday 6 May, University Sandy Bay Campus.

Launceston: Thursday 21 May: Tasmanian Super Challenge, University’s Newnham Campus.

There is a lot of effort, enthusiasm and time given to the Science and Engineering Challenge in Tasmania. Without the support from Tasmanian Rotarians, Engineers, University students and local businesses, the Challenge could not run. There are more than 25 volunteers assisting on each day of the competition. This year, well over 2000 hours will be given by volunteers to ensure the Challenge is a success.

The Tasmanian Science and Engineering Challenge is supported by the University of Tasmania, The Rotary Clubs of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Government, Engineers Australia Tasmania Division, and Spirit of Tasmania, and presented by the University of Newcastle.

Information released by:

University of Tasmania, Communications and Media Office
Phone: (03) 6226 2691 or 0447 537 375
Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au

