

## Commissioner's Space to Dream Exhibition opens at Australian Space Discovery Centre

Commissioner Connolly has today announced the opening of the **2021 Space to Dream Exhibition** at the **Australian Space Discovery Centre** at Lot Fourteen. The exhibition features 21 designs chosen from entries received from more than 2,180 South Australian students whose schools sent them through to the Commissioner for her consideration.

They were a portion of the overall number of South Australian students who participated in the Challenge this year, estimated to be in the vicinity of 10,080 students representing more than 220 SA schools that registered to take part – double the number of participants in 2020. **The Space to Dream Challenge** supports students to learn design thinking skills and then apply their knowledge to design a toy or gadget for someone their age who is 'moving to Mars'.

**Jimmy in Year 5 at Hawker Area School** near Flinders Ranges has taken out the grand prize this year winning a 3D Printer for his school donated by Maker's Empire. His *New and Improved Fix Bot* was selected by the Commissioner as the **highest ranked design for 2021** for its ingenuity and versatility. Designed to fix spacecraft, Fit Bot has "a parachute, iron filings for making screws, an electric screwdriver and drill, a battery charger, laser eyes, and a welding tongue. It even includes paint for where you want the Fix Bot to weld, cut or screen for programming, and a remote controller with three buttons that you can use to tell it to come to the operator, go back to the charger or power down".

Other gadgets and toys featured in the exhibition include a *Pet Box* that transforms into a space pet you can design yourself, a *Foodotron* that turns rubbish into food, and an *Anything Tree*, which as its name suggests, can grow anything you might want or need on Mars. There is also a 'GoldFish 2000' that plays different songs, tells jokes and keeps you company while you're in space, and *Zero Gravity Fins* that come with VR goggles to enable you to imagine you're in water on Earth while you're actually swimming in Space.

The Commissioner's **Space to Dream Challenge** was devised to inspire the next generation of South Australian space entrepreneurs and innovators. By exhibiting the top-rated **Space to Dream** designs at the **Space Discovery Centre** we are joining the dots for children and the Space industry. Children are using their creativity and design thinking skills in a fun way, to think about Space and Space travel and what it might mean for them in the future, hopefully inspiring some of them to become involved in the Australian Space industry in the future.

The top-rated designs will be on display in the **Endeavour Room** at the **Australian Space Discovery Centre** in the McEwin Building of Lot Fourteen **through to the end of January 2022**.

**Travelling Exhibition:** In 2022 the **Space to Dream Exhibition** will tour to metropolitan and regional centres in Adelaide, on the Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, in the Far North and Far South. Venues include Goodwood Library and Salisbury Community Hub, Hawker School Community Library, the Riddoch Arts and Cultural Centre in Mount Gambier, and the Community School Library in Streaky Bay, to name a few.

**Details of the 2022 Space to Dream Travelling Exhibition can be viewed here:**

<https://commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au/exhibition/>

**Quotes attributable to Helen Connolly, Commissioner for Children and Young People:**

I am always thrilled to see what the students come up with. There are so many extraordinary ideas making it very difficult for me to determine which entries should be included in the top-rated designs. This year we are pleased to be partnering with the Australian Space Discovery Centre to showcase the exhibition. My congratulations to all those schools whose teachers supported their students to participate. The growth this year has been fantastic, and we are confident it will continue to expand as teachers and schools become aware of the Challenge and the great design thinking learning it unlocks. All children and young people in SA should be able to engage with the digital world, access its benefits equally, be digitally included and have their rights protected. That's why I've made my Digital Challenge suitable for every school and adaptable to any age and level of experience and ability.

**Quote attributable to Mandy Dimitriades, Director of Learning, Makers Empire**

It has been so exciting to see the innovative, creative, and thoughtful designs students have come up with in this second year of the Space to Dream challenge. We've seen so many clever designs and I think it shows that when you give young people the tools and opportunities, they do amazing things. Makers Empire is proud of our ongoing partnership with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the opportunities it brings for young people to develop important design thinking skills, empathy for others, and excitement about the space industry.

### **Background**

The Commissioner's Digital Challenge is the result of Commissioner Connolly's commitment to ensuring South Australian children and young people are given an inclusive digital opportunity. The free, recurring, year-round Challenge (January to September each year) has been designed to ensure core ideas integral to digital empowerment are taught in fun and interactive ways, supporting students, teachers, schools, libraries, and community groups to participate with ease. It is made available FREE via a dedicated website ([www.commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au](http://www.commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au)) where hundreds of digital activities curated with input from some of Australia's (and the world's) leading digital industry players can be accessed with ease.

**Space to Dream** is the second in a series of digital challenges designed to emphasise the importance of digital literacy for today's young people because **"digital skills are life skills; crucial to future jobs, social inclusion, and to building a more equitable world."** The other Challenges in the series are *Learn to Speak Robot* (a Computational Thinking challenge) and *Zoom Out* (a Systems Thinking Challenge).

Full details of SA schools who received 2021 Challenge rewards are available via the following links:

**Space to Dream Winners 2021:**

<https://commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au/design-thinking/schools/schools-winners-2021/>

**Learn to Speak Robot and Zoom Out Winners 2021 -**

<https://commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au/digital-thinking/schools/schools-winners-2021/>

**The Commissioner's Digital Challenge re-opens on Day 1 of Term 1 in 2022.**

Schools can pre-register via this link: <https://commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au/registration/>

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