



# Media Release

## Australian students set to turn their passions into tech

### NBN Co launches STEM+X initiative to equip local students with skills for tomorrow's workforce

Eight schools across Australia will participate in a nationwide pilot that will see students applying their personal interests to learning science and technology skills.

The STEM+X initiative has been developed by NBN Co in partnership with the Australian Business Community Network (ABCN) in order to get students excited about the possibilities of learning Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills by combining it with their hobbies and passions.

NBN Co and ABCN facilitators will kick off the first phase of the initiative from today, with a hands-on workshop at a school in Ballarat designed to give students an understanding of how technology can be applied to solve real life problems. Workshops at the other participating schools will take place across Februarys and March.

**Kathrine Dyer, Chief Network Deployment Officer at NBN Co said:**

“Access to fast broadband plays a fundamental role in providing the infrastructure to support educating tomorrow's workforce.



“With one in two Australians predicted to need online skills such as programming, software development and digital technology to remain competitive in the 2030 job market, getting students excited about learning STEM will be vital to their future success.

“We are passionate about bridging the digital divide and are continually working to ensure remote and rural communities can access online education resources.”

**Allegra Spender, Chief Executive Officer at ABCN said:**

“STEM education is a vital part of providing the next generation of Australians with the skills they need for the future – this initiative is all about enabling learning to be a continuous and engaging experience for students across Australia.



“We are excited to be working alongside NBN Co to deliver a program that uses the everyday passions and interests of young Australians and their families to encourage STEM learning.”

Following the workshop, the students will be called on to develop a STEM idea that will brighten their community or Australia’s future. They will present their idea at the ‘**nbn**™ Futurists’ Fair’, a virtual competition streamed live via video conferencing into NBN Co HQ in Sydney.

A panel of experts including Allegra Spender, Chief Executive Officer at ABCN, Kathrine Dyer, Chief Network Deployment Officer at NBN Co, and Scott Gaunson and Brett Stanford from the STEM YouTube channel [How Ridiculous](#) will judge the entries at the Futurists’ Fair.

The students will be competing for the chance to win a once in a lifetime opportunity to have How Ridiculous visit their school for a day of science fun as well as a tech prize pack for the school.

For more information about the STEM+X initiative, check out the **nbn**™ blog designed to equip parents with the tools needed to support STEM learning and give students practical experiments to try out at home.

The participating schools in the STEM+X initiative are:

- Para Hills Primary School, Adelaide, SA
- Canadian Lead Primary School, Ballarat, VIC
- Islington Public School, Newcastle, NSW
- Glenorchy Primary School, Hobart, TAS
- Leanyer Primary, Darwin, NT
- Invermay Primary School, Launceston, TAS
- Townsville Central State School, Townsville, QLD
- Beaconsfield Primary School, Perth, WA

**ENDS**

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Media assets - [Click here](#)

## Notes to editors

- STEM+X is a new term used within the education system. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, while ‘+ X’ represents the application of one’s personal interests in relation to learning these subjects. For example, a student’s interest in a career in design, may require them to study engineering and mathematics.



- *'The Future Of Work - Setting Kids up for Success'* report was commissioned by nbn in September 2016 and includes research from the Regional Australia Institute (RAI).