
Inspiring
AUSTRALIA
Tasmania

We acknowledge the palawa/pakana, the traditional custodians and first scientists of the land upon which we live and work. We honour their enduring culture and knowledges as vital to the self-determination, wellbeing and resilience of their communities, and to shaping a just, inclusive and equitable Australian society.

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1. Summary

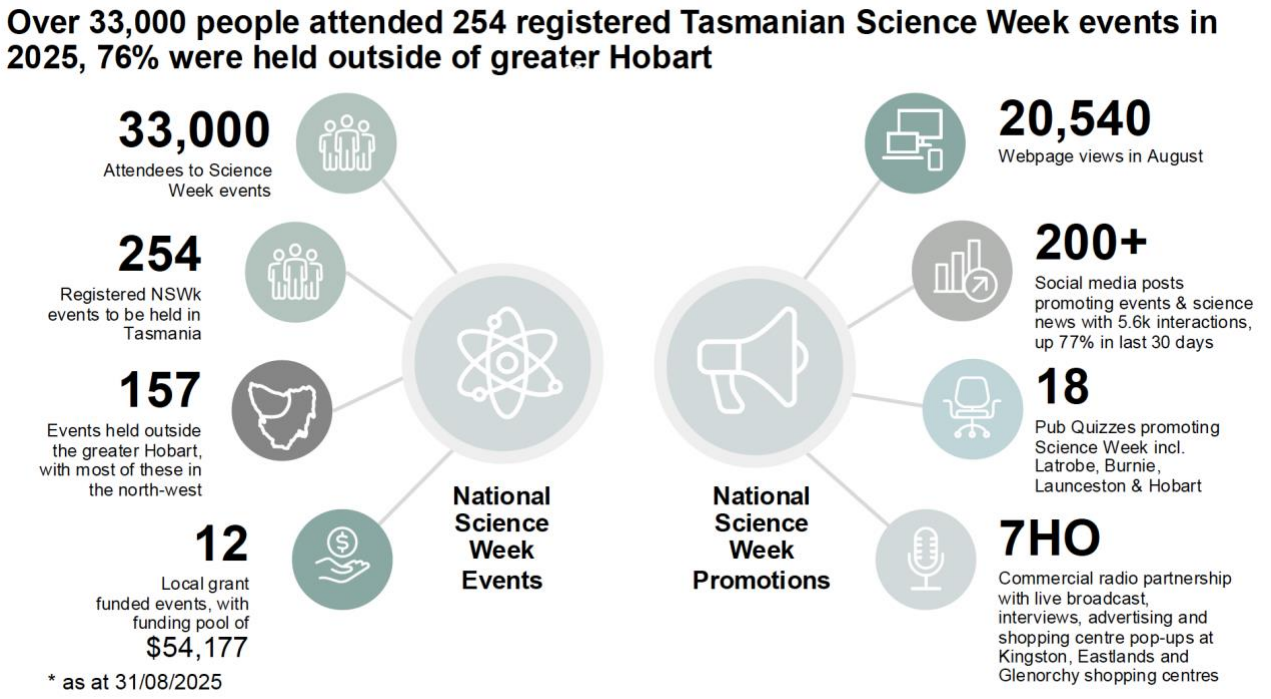
Tasmania has once again delivered a vibrant, diverse, and successful Science Week. With events happening all across the state, catering to a record number of Tasmanians, and topics ranging from parental stress, the clitoris, and beer, there was something for everyone.

This year saw a record number of people participating in Science Week in Tasmania. Across August, more than 33,000 Tasmanians participated in 254 registered events, from large-scale festivals like the Festival of Bright Ideas and Beaker Street to community-led programs in regional towns from Burnie to Geeveston. Twelve state grants were awarded that prioritised regional events and under-represented audiences, including those who had never attended a science week event before, and reached nearly 12,000 people. Highlights included the BIG Science Fair in Burnie, Circular Head Science Gig, and creative new formats such as The Clitoral Chronicles and The New Parents' Relaxation Toolkit, which engaged diverse communities, including women, parents, LGBTQIA+ audiences, and culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

Science Week inspired wide community participation through flagship events like the Festival of Bright Ideas and the BIG Science Fair in Burnie, which showcased student innovation from regional and low-SES schools. These events made science hands-on, social, and fun for families, educators, and young people across the state. Tasmanian scientists and innovators were celebrated through programs such as Beaker Street Festival and UTAS's Island of Ideas talks, highlighting local expertise and national leadership in fields from marine science to renewable energy.

A coordinated media and social campaign, spanning print, radio, and digital platforms, expanded reach and visibility. Innovative partnerships, such as a new statewide Science Week Pub Quiz Program run in the lead up to Science Week, further extended audience diversity and introduced Science Week to new participants.

Tasmanian Science Week 2025 at a Glance



Chair's Statement

Dr Adele Wilson, CSIRO

National Science Week once again brought lutruwita/Tasmania to life with creativity, curiosity, and community spirit. From large-scale festivals to grassroots events, the energy and innovation of our event holders continue to inspire pride and optimism.

This report celebrates what we've achieved together, and I'm keen to acknowledge some of the key people behind the success of National Science Week in Tasmania.

We thank the amazing work of the Inspiring Tasmania Reference Group, whose guidance and hard work have helped to ensure 2025 was another wildly successful year.

Dr Tiana Pirtle's leadership remains central to this success. Spinning various plates with remarkable efficiency, Tiana's extraordinary leadership sees her supporting event holders while also delivering standout events with grace. We're grateful for her vision and tireless dedication.

We also thank our Patron, Dr Jess Melbourne-Thomas, whose advocacy and leadership continue to build strong connections to inspire and inform decision-makers and the community, recognising STEM across the state.

The Festival of Bright Ideas, now in its tenth year, was a standout. Led by Jenny Dudgeon and a hard-working subcommittee, and delivered with volunteers from the University and the wider community, the Festival welcomed new organisations and delivered family-friendly hands-on science to thousands. Thank you Jenny and subcommittee members for your efforts to ensure another brilliant event, and thanks also to Belinda Brock, Savannah White, and their team from the University of Tasmania for their professional management of the Festival across both the schools day and public day.

Congratulations to everyone who contributed to the 2025 program of events big and small! Particularly to our National grant winners, Beaker Street, the Hive and the ever-growing Young Tassie Scientists. Your efforts are helping to build a more connected, curious, and science-savvy Tasmania.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're excited to grow our regional networks and continue refining our grants process to support inclusive, impactful events across the state.

Message from the Tasmanian National Science Week Patron

Dr Jess Melbourne-Thomas, CSIRO

I'm thrilled to be part of National Science Week Tasmania again in 2025!

I must say as a long standing maths enthusiast I particularly love the theme for this year around nature's hidden language.

I think that the urgency to use our science to save nature and indeed the planet is greater than ever before.

As a marine scientist I have found the news of the last few months – devastating losses of marine life in South Australia due to the algal bloom, the first ever large-scale coral bleaching of Ningaloo reef, and prolonged marine heatwaves around the country – particularly gut wrenching.

These impacts are enormous and unprecedented – they are a national emergency.

With our natural environments in crisis, strong leadership on science and technology, environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and reconciliation are more important than ever.

Science week can help us shine a spotlight on these needs, and to engage the Tasmanian public in a shared vision for the future.

2. The Committee

2.1 Committee Members

Inspiring Australia Tasmania Reference Group

Dr Adele Wilson, CSIRO (Chair)
Dr Alfonsina Arriaga Jiménez, QVMAG
Belinda Brock, University of Tasmania
Clarissa Forster, University of Tasmania
Glenda Routley, Department of State Growth
Jenny Dudgeon, Community Educator
Jesse Jorgensen-Price, Questacon
Maria Dalla-Fontana, Department of State Growth
Marjorie Morgan, Department of Children and Young People (*joined May 2025)*
Dr Tiana Pirtle, Inspiring Australia

Festival of Bright Ideas Sub-committee

Jenny Dudgeon (Chair)
Dr Jess Melbourne-Thomas (Tasmanian National Science Week Patron)
Dr Adele Wilson, CSIRO
Bob Fletcher, Science Teachers Association of Tasmania
Caryn Shield, Geography Teachers Association of Tasmania
Claire Knowles, Hobart City Council
Dr David Klaver, Southern Christian School
Eve O'Neile (Secretary)
Jarod Earley, Engineers Australia
Dr Tiana Pirtle, Inspiring Australia
Savannah White, University of Tasmania
Timothy Gibbons, Science in the Pub

National Science Week Grants Sub-committee

Dr Adele Wilson, CSIRO (Chair)
Glenda Routley, State Growth
Jenny Dudgeon, Community Educator
Dr Alfonsina Arriaga Jiménez, QVMAG

2.2 Operation of the Committee

The Tasmanian National Science Week Coordinating Committee (TNSWCC) was disbanded in 2024, to be replaced with smaller, more focused sub-committees of the Inspiring Australia-Tasmania Reference Group. Following the success of last year, this format of targeted sub-committees was retained in 2025. The sub-committees this year included the Grants sub-committee and the Festival of Bright Ideas (FOBI) sub-committee.

The FOBI sub-committee met monthly from September 2024 to September 2025. The sub-committee provided advice and direction to the festival organiser and host and was involved in recruiting sponsors and activity providers (exhibitors).

The Grants sub-committee assisted in the preparation and assessment of applications and recommendations for awarding grants. They met initially in February to update and finalise the guidelines, application form, and assessment rubric. In April 2025, the subcommittee met twice to moderate the allocation of grant funding for Tasmanian National Science Week events.

It is important to acknowledge that Committee members are volunteers and as such, their contribution is dependent on competing demands for their time and the support of their employers. Many Committee members also took on the responsibility for coordinating events within the organisation that they represented. Committee members were also encouraged to share information about their events as well as attend and cross-promote other Science Week events.

2.3 Organisations working with the committee

Atomic Blender
ABC Science
agriCULTURED
Architecture & Design, University of Tasmania
AST
Australian Christian College Launceston Distance Education
Bass Straight Maritime Centre
Beaker Street
Beer Aquatic
Bob Brown Foundation
Bookend Trust
Burnie Works
Casey Garrett t/as Tasman Tutoring
Chemistry, University of Tasmania
Children's University
Chocolate Winterfest
Circular Head Council
City of Hobart

City of Launceston
Devil Robotics
Dr Tiana Pirtle
Elizabeth College
Engineers Australia
Environment Tasmania
Fisheries Tas
Forest Education Foundation
Future You Australia
Georgraphy & Spacial Science, University of Tasmania
Goodwood Primary School
Great Southern Bio Blitz
Great Southern Reef Foundation
GreenSTEM Education
Hive Tasmania
Hobart College
Hobart Hurricanes
Hydro Tasmania
Institute for Marine and Antarctic Science
Inala Nature Tours
InnQUIZitive
Invasive Species Council
Invasive Species Council
Island of Ideas, University of Tasmania
Kingsborough Council
Latrobe Council
Luke Tscharke Photography
Mathematics, University of Tasmania
Marine Discovery Centre, Department for Education, Children and Young People
Material Institute - 24 Carrot Gardens
Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania
Natural Sciences, University of Tasmania
Nature.be in it.
Penelope Jones
Plant Science, Biological Sciences, UTAS
Promed
QVMAG
Rethink Waste
Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI)
Royal Society of Tasmania
Peter Bignall Sand Sculpture
Science in the Pub
Science Made Beerable
Science Teachers Association of Tasmania (STAT)
Shasta Henry
Sports Science, University of Tasmania

St Mary's College
STEMM Communicators Australia
Sustainability Learning Centre and Hobart College
Tas Farm Innovation Hub
TasPorts
Tasmania Police
Tasmanian Government
Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG)
TasNetworks
The Hobart Hackerspace
TMAG
University of Tasmania
Young Tassie Scientists, University of Tasmania
Wildcare Tas
7HO Radio

3. State Event Coordination

3.1 Committee-funded events

The Inspiring Australia Tasmania Reference Group coordinated activities across Tasmania in several ways:

- Promoted local grant opportunities amongst networks across the state.
- Convened a competitive grant round for National Science Week Engagement grants.
- Continued to provide support for winners of local grants for Tasmanian events.
- Produced a coordinated communications strategy that integrated promotional activity and media engagement.
- Provided a point of contact for local event support, maintaining oversight of events state-wide to facilitate collaborative opportunities and maximise a diverse, cohesive calendar of events.
- Supported the coordination and promotion of the Festival of Bright Ideas.
- Undertook evaluation of the grant holder's events.

The Inspiring Australia Tasmania Reference Group offered $54,177 in funding this year. In response to feedback from event holders, the Reference Group revised the grant types offered in 2024; these revised grant types were retained for 2025 with two types of grants available: 1) up to $5,000 of support for a public STEM engagement event/activity, and 2) up to $8,000 of support for a program of STEM events/activities delivered outside of the Greater Hobart area.

Seventeen applications were received, with twelve grants awarded to local organisations/individuals for National Science Week events/activities (see Table 3.2 below). Among these successful grant applications, four were new applicants.

Additionally, the Inspiring Australia Tasmania Reference Group and Festival of Bright Ideas sub-committee provided financial and logistical support for the Festival of Bright Ideas, the flagship event of National Science Week in southern Tasmania. The Committee also provided in-kind support to several other events, including the University of Tasmania's Island of Ideas Public Talks program and Beaker Street Festival.

3.2 List of events funded by or organised by the Committee

Event	Organiser	Grant/Support	No. People attended
Festival of Bright Ideas	Inspiring Australia-Tasmania Project	IAT Major Event	4,400
TNSWk Science Week Launch	Inspiring Australia-Tasmania Project	IAT Major Event	25
Beaker Street Festival	Beaker Street	In-kind	20,000
Dr Karl Live in Devonport	UTAS/Beaker Street	In-kind	Incl. above
National Science Week at Government House	Elizabeth College	N/A	120
Nuyina's Voyage to Antarctic's Meliting Heart	UTAS Island of Ideas	In-kind	591
Tassie's Wild Weather Up Close	UTAS Island of Ideas	In-kind	418
Is Laughter the Best Medicine	UTAS Island of Ideas	In-kind	507
The Clitoral Chronicles	Dr Tiana Pirtle	SciWeek	1435
The Science of Sweet Creations	Latrobe Council	SciWeek	175
CallTrackers	Bookend Trust	SciWeek	268
Southern Nights: The Science & Beauty of Aurora Australis	Luke Tscharke	SciWeek	2,000+
Tasmanian Native Bee Homes & Gardens	Shasta Henry	SciWeek	1,500
Circular Head Science Gig 2025	Circular Head Council	SciWeek	465
From Fact to Fiction	STEMM Communicators Australia	SciWeek	49

Exbeerimental Science	Science Made Beerable	SciWeek	100
High Schools Workshops at Botanical Site	Material Institute - 24 Carrot Gardens	SciWeek	142
Fizz Bang!	Casey Garrett t/as Tasman Tutoring	SciWeek	18
Big Science Fair 2025	Burnie Works	SciWeek	800+
The New Parents' Relaxation Toolkit	Individual	SciWeek	48

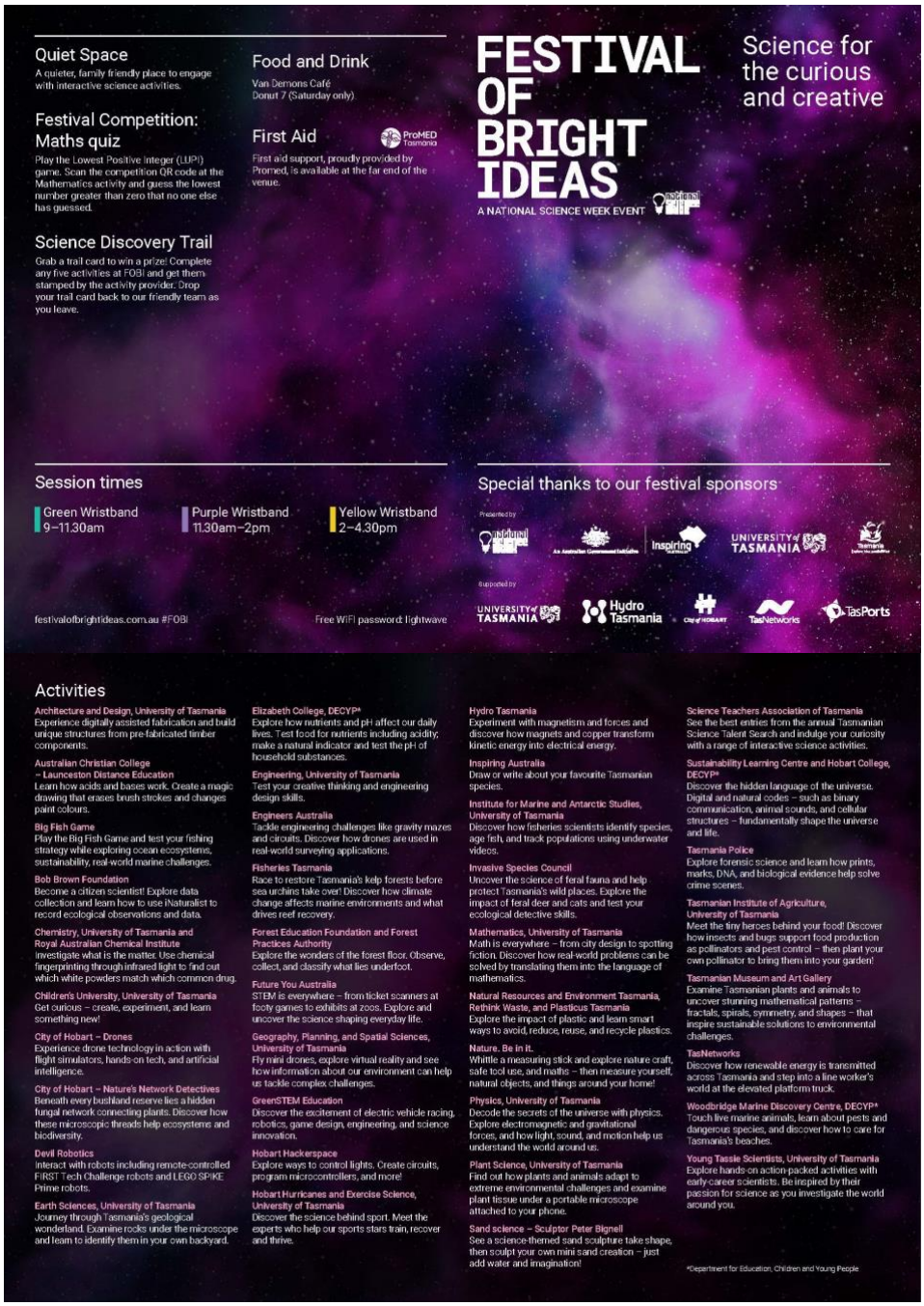
4. Promotional Activities

The promotional strategy was coordinated by Dr Tiana Pirtle (Manager, Inspiring Tasmania, UTAS), Belinda Brock (Manager, Community Engagement, UTAS), and Jack Hayes (National Science Week Promotions Coordinator). The promotional activities for National Science Week commenced in February with the advertising of the Tasmanian National Science Week engagement grant opportunities. Promotional activities ramped up in May with the announcement of grant winners and continued until the final Science Week activities in the last week of August. 580 Science Week posters were distributed around the state to museums, cafes and other public places.

The promotion of the Committee's flagship event, Festival of Bright Ideas (FOBI) was coordinated by the University of Tasmania's Community Engagement team, with the support of the FOBI sub-committee. Activities included a five-week commercial radio advertising campaign and outside broadcast by 7HO FM, which was the fourth most common way for attendees to find out about the festival; this was an increase from 5% in 2024 to 8 % 2025.

Additional FOBI promotional activities included 527 posters displayed around Tasmania, civic flags displayed from mid-July along the Hobart, signage on and around Princess Wharf 1 location on the Hobart waterfront for two weeks, promotions through school newsletters and Infostream, and a social media campaign.

A printed program was also produced for the Festival of Bright Ideas, which was handed out to the public on arrival. The FOBI program was also available to download on the festival website.



Quiet Space
A quieter, family friendly place to engage with interactive science activities.

Festival Competition: Maths quiz
Play the Lowest Positive Integer (LUPI) game. Scan the competition QR code at the Mathematics activity and guess the lowest number greater than zero that no one else has guessed.

Science Discovery Trail
Grab a trail card to win a prize! Complete any five activities at FOBI and get them stamped by the activity provider. Drop your trail card back to our friendly team as you leave.

Food and Drink
Van Demons Café
Donut 7 (Saturday only)

First Aid
ProMED Tasmania
First aid support, proudly provided by Promed, is available at the far end of the venue.

FESTIVAL OF BRIGHT IDEAS
A NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK EVENT
Science for the curious and creative

Session times
Green Wristband 9–11.30am
Purple Wristband 11.30am–2pm
Yellow Wristband 2–4.30pm

festivalofbrightideas.com.au #FOBI
Free WiFi password: lightwave

Special thanks to our festival sponsors
Presented by
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Activities

Architecture and Design, University of Tasmania
Experience digitally assisted fabrication and build unique structures from pre-fabricated timber components.

Australian Christian College – Launceston Distance Education
Learn how acids and bases work. Create a magic drawing that erases brush strokes and changes paint colours.

Big Fish Game
Play the Big Fish Game and test your fishing strategy while exploring ocean ecosystems, sustainability, real-world marine challenges.

Bob Brown Foundation
Become a citizen scientist! Explore data collection and learn how to use iNaturalist to record ecological observations and data.

Chemistry, University of Tasmania and Royal Australian Chemical Institute
Investigate what is the matter. Use chemical fingerprinting through infrared light to find out which white powders match which common drug.

Children's University, University of Tasmania
Get curious – create, experiment, and learn something new!

City of Hobart – Drones
Experience drone technology in action with flight simulators, hands-on tech, and artificial intelligence.

City of Hobart – Nature's Network Detectives
Beneath every bushland reserve lies a hidden fungal network connecting plants. Discover how these microscopic threads help ecosystems and biodiversity.

Devil Robotics
Interact with robots including remote-controlled FIRST Tech Challenge robots and LEGO SPIKE Prime robots.

Earth Sciences, University of Tasmania
Journey through Tasmania's geological wonderland. Examine rocks under the microscope and learn to identify them in your own backyard.

Elizabeth College, DECYP*
Explore how nutrients and pH affect our daily lives. Test food for nutrients including acidity, make a natural indicator and test the pH of household substances.

Engineering, University of Tasmania
Test your creative thinking and engineering design skills.

Engineers Australia
Tackle engineering challenges like gravity mazes and circuits. Discover how drones are used in real-world surveying applications.

Fisheries Tasmania
Race to restore Tasmania's kelp forests before sea urchins take over! Discover how climate change affects marine environments and what drives reef recovery.

Forest Education Foundation and Forest Practices Authority
Explore the wonders of the forest floor. Observe, collect, and classify what lies underfoot.

Future You Australia
STEM is everywhere – from ticket scanners at footy games to exhibits at zoos. Explore and uncover the science shaping everyday life.

Geography, Planning, and Spatial Sciences, University of Tasmania
Fly mini drones, explore virtual reality and see how information about our environment can help us tackle complex challenges.

GreenSTEM Education
Discover the excitement of electric vehicle racing, robotics, game design, engineering, and science innovation.

Hobart Hackerspace
Explore ways to control lights. Create circuits, program microcontrollers, and more!

Hobart Hurricanes and Exercise Science, University of Tasmania
Discover the science behind sport. Meet the experts who help our sports stars train, recover and thrive.

Hydro Tasmania
Experiment with magnetism and forces and discover how magnets and copper transform kinetic energy into electrical energy.

Inspiring Australia
Draw or write about your favourite Tasmanian species.

Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania
Discover how fisheries scientists identify species, age fish, and track populations using underwater videos.

Invasive Species Council
Uncover the science of feral fauna and help protect Tasmania's wild places. Explore the impact of feral deer and cats and test your ecological detective skills.

Mathematics, University of Tasmania
Math is everywhere – from city design to spotting fiction. Discover how real-world problems can be solved by translating them into the language of mathematics.

Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, Rethink Waste, and Plasticus Tasmania
Explore the impact of plastic and learn smart ways to avoid, reduce, reuse, and recycle plastics.

Nature. Be in it.
Whittle a measuring stick and explore nature craft, safe tool use, and maths – then measure yourself, natural objects, and things around your home!

Physics, University of Tasmania
Decode the secrets of the universe with physics. Explore electromagnetic and gravitational forces, and how light, sound, and motion help us understand the world around us.

Plant Science, University of Tasmania
Find out how plants and animals adapt to extreme environmental challenges and examine plant tissue under a portable microscope attached to your phone.

Sand science – Sculptor Peter Bignell
See a science-themed sand sculpture take shape, then sculpt your own mini sand creation – just add water and imagination!

Science Teachers Association of Tasmania
See the best entries from the annual Tasmanian Science Talent Search and indulge your curiosity with a range of interactive science activities.

Sustainability Learning Centre and Hobart College, DECYP*
Discover the hidden language of the universe. Digital and natural codes – such as binary communication, animal sounds, and cellular structures – fundamentally shape the universe and life.

Tasmania Police
Explore forensic science and learn how prints, marks, DNA, and biological evidence help solve crime scenes.

Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, University of Tasmania
Meet the tiny heroes behind your food! Discover how insects and bugs support food production as pollinators and pest control – then plant your own pollinator to bring them into your garden!

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery
Examine Tasmanian plants and animals to uncover stunning mathematical patterns – fractals, spirals, symmetry, and shapes – that inspire sustainable solutions to environmental challenges.

TasNetworks
Discover how renewable energy is transmitted across Tasmania and step into a line worker's world at the elevated platform truck.

Woodbridge Marine Discovery Centre, DECYP*
Touch live marine animals, learn about pests and dangerous species, and discover how to care for Tasmania's beaches.

Young Tassie Scientists, University of Tasmania
Explore hands-on action-packed activities with early-career scientists. Be inspired by their passion for science as you investigate the world around you.

*Department for Education, Children and Young People

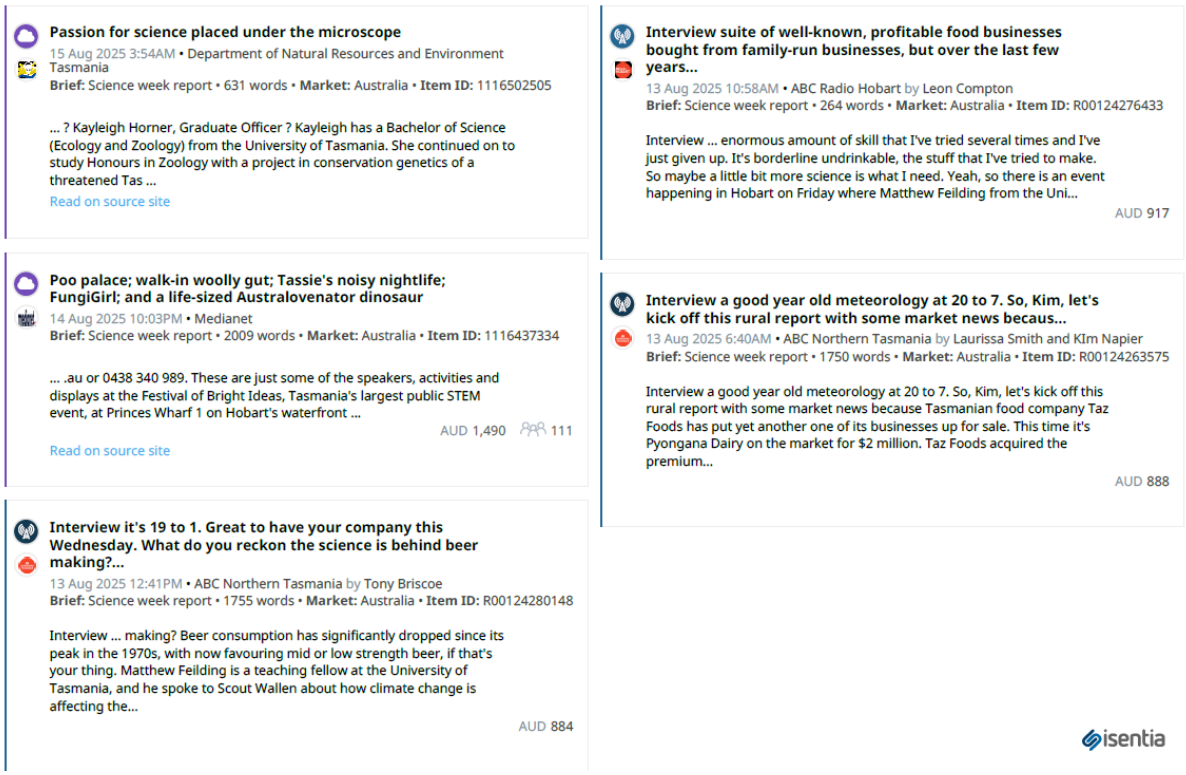
4.1 Traditional Media

National Coverage

Nationally, there was an increase in media coverage from 11,059 media items that mention 'National Science Week' tracked (Source: Instant Insights) this year, as compared to 9,000 last year (Source: Isentia). The leading media type for coverage by far was radio, with 7,500 mentions (up from last year's 4,329 reports). This was followed by social media influencers with 1,600 mentions.

State Coverage

The media in Tasmania continued their support of National Science Week with several stories covered across all platforms. Circulation from print, radio, online, and television in Tasmania reached at least 179,791 people (Source: Isentia UTAS and Science Week Media Monitor report). The cumulative ASR value of all media coverage in 2025 was at least $56,009. The highest volume occurred in the week of 11th August. The highest volume media channel was AM radio.



4.2 Social media

The IAT project uses its own Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts to promote National Science Week in Tasmania. These accounts were managed by the Inspiring Tasmania Manager and Promotions Coordinator. The Inspiring Tasmania account is the primary social media channel throughout the year. Leading up to and during Science Week, activity is primarily shifting to the Science Week Tasmania and Festival of Bright Ideas accounts. The social media accounts are:

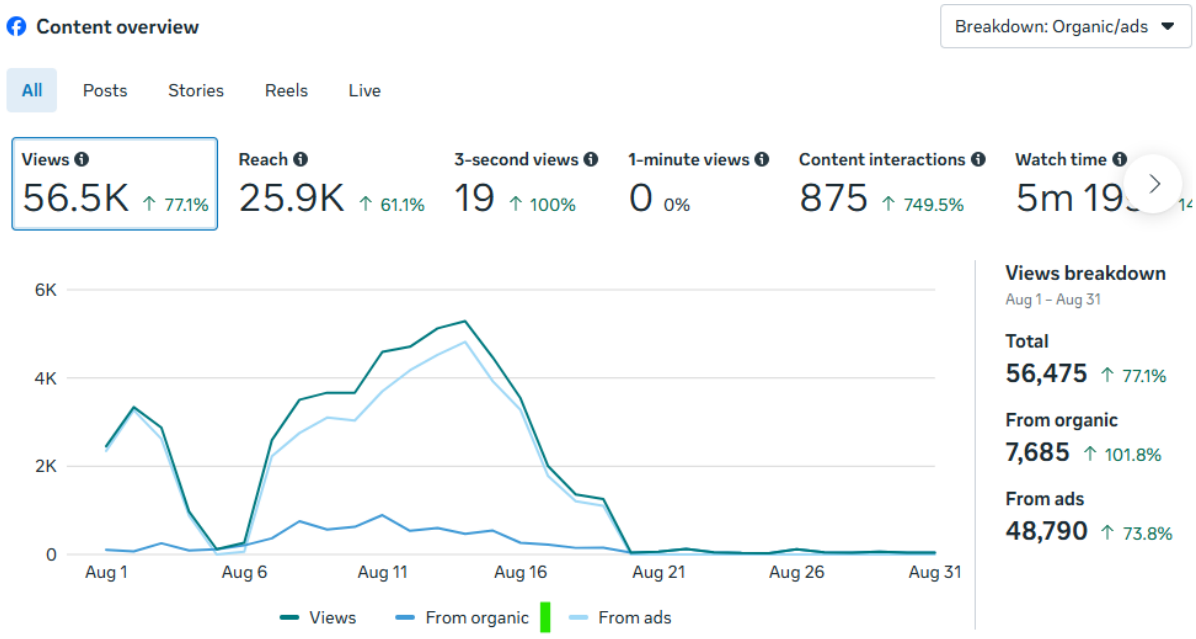
- Facebook: Science Week Tasmania, Festival of Bright Ideas, and Inspiring Tasmania
- Twitter: Science Week Tasmania and Inspiring Tasmania
- Instagram: Inspiring Tasmania, Festival of Bright Ideas

National Science Week was also promoted through the host organisation, the University of Tasmania's social media accounts.

Reach and Engagement

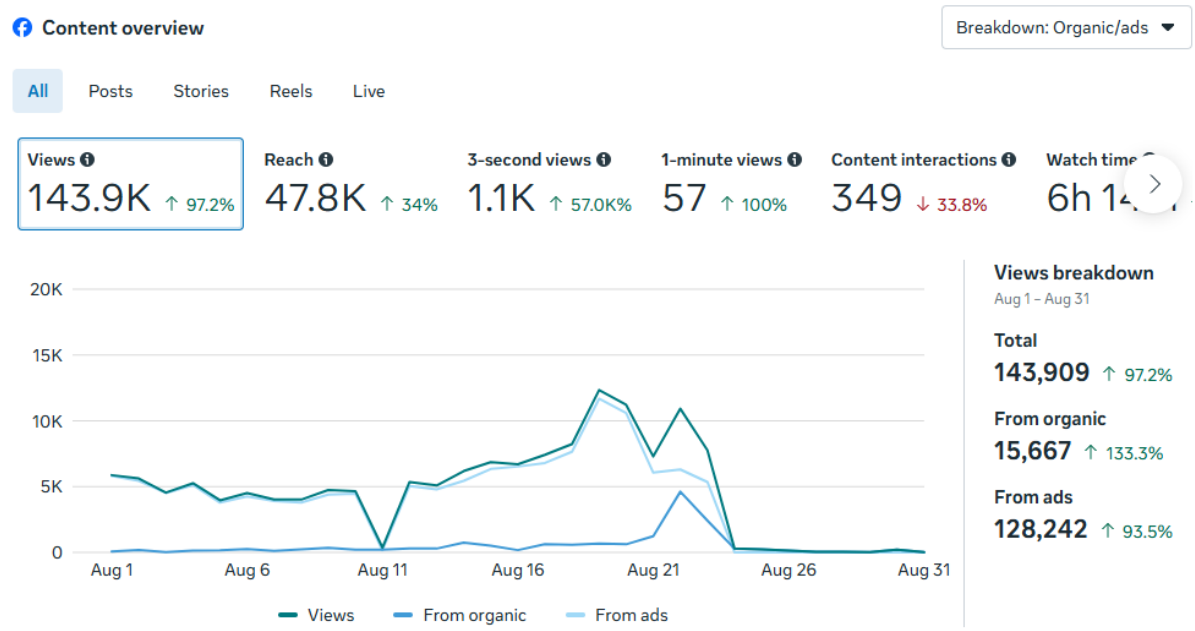
From 1 August to 31 August 2025, Inspiring Tasmania, National Science Week, and Festival of Bright Ideas platforms saw significant growth in reach and views across Facebook and Instagram. The Facebook platform continues to be the most impactful platform with great organic reach.

National Science Week Tasmania's Facebook achieved a 25.9.4K reach (up 61%) and 56.5K reach (up 77%).

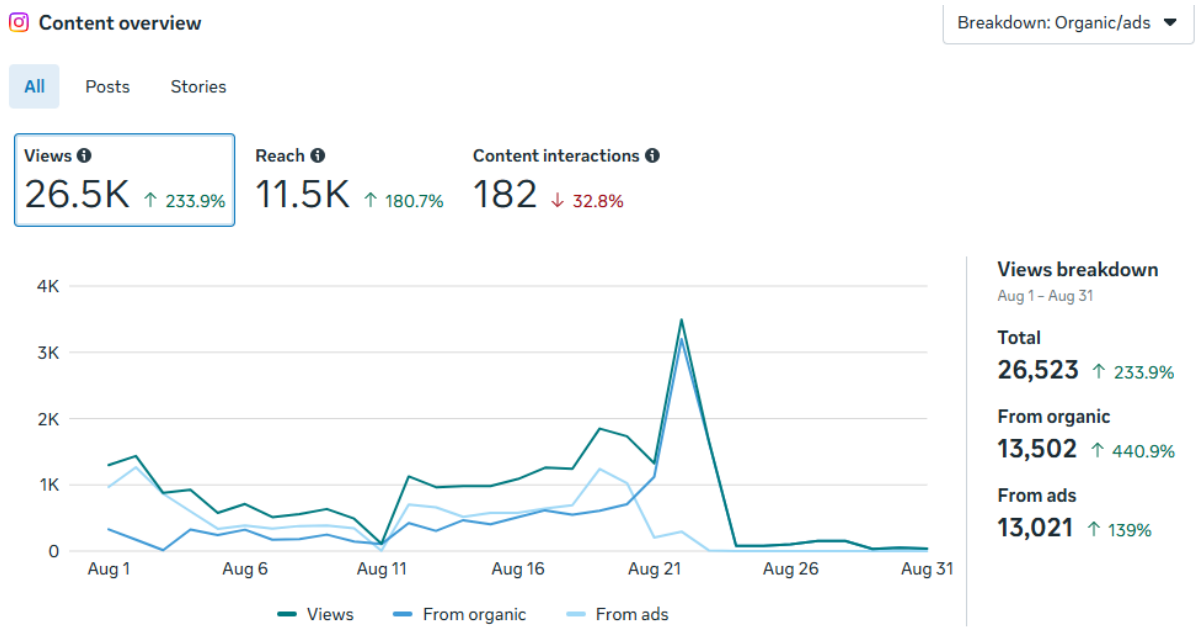


Graph 1. National Science Week Facebook Insights (1-31 August)

The Festival of Bright Ideas' Facebook had a 47.8K reach (up 34%) and 143.9K views (up 97%), with Instagram reaching 11.5K daily (up 180%) and 26.5K views (234%).

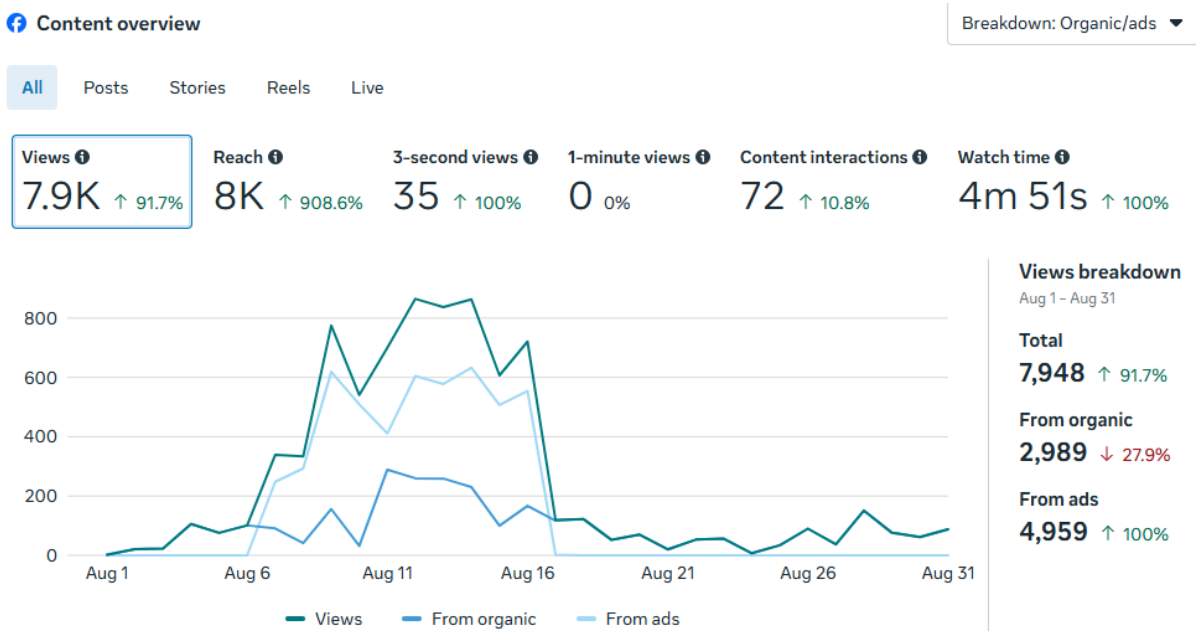


Graph 2. Festival of Bright Ideas Facebook Insights (1-31 August)

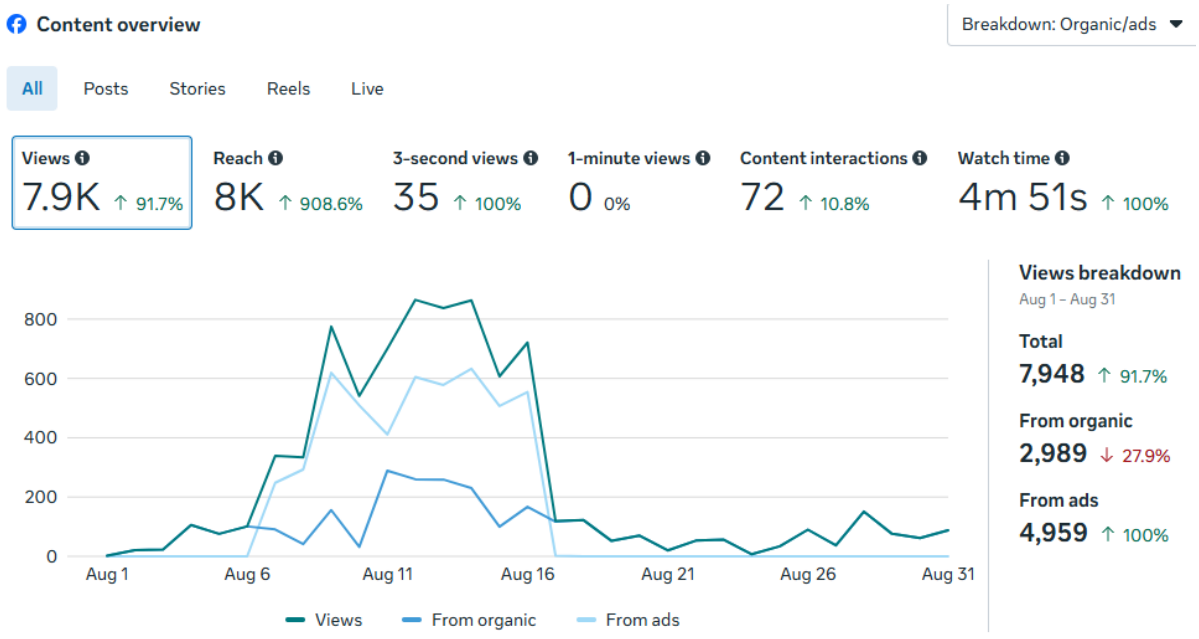


Graph 3. Festival of Bright Ideas Instagram Insights (1-31 August)

Inspiring Tasmania's Facebook had a 8K daily reach (up 907%) and 7.9K views (up 92%), while Instagram had a 213 reach (down 162%) and averaged 1K views (up 10%).



Graph 4. Inspiring Tasmania Facebook Insights (1-31 August)

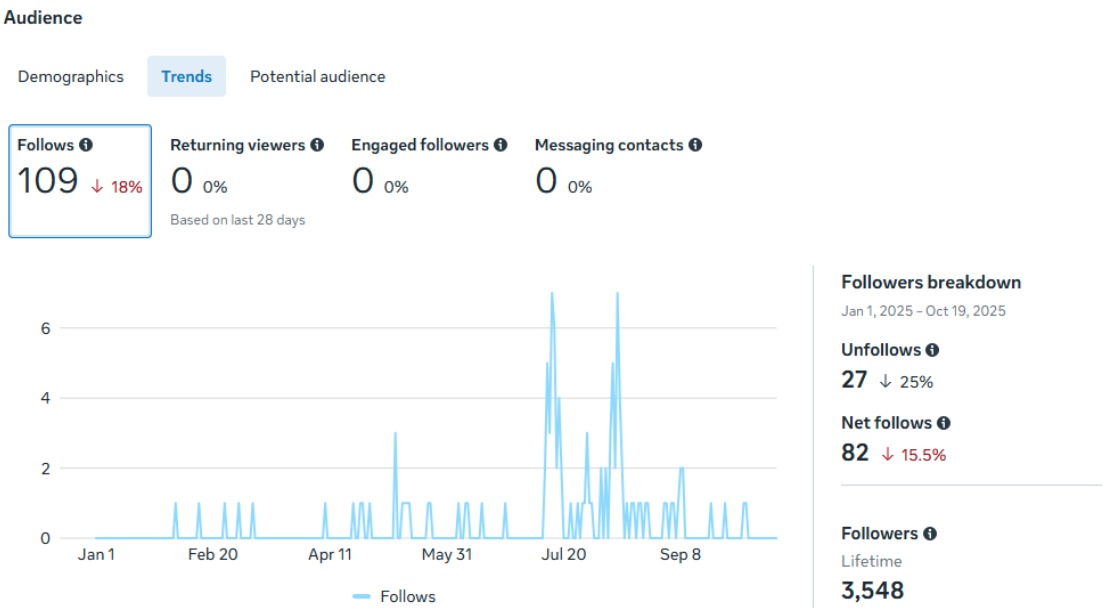


Graph 5. Inspiring Tasmania Instagram Insights (1-31 August)

Audience

Thanks to dedicated resources to manage the social media campaign during National Science Week, the audience for the National Science Week Tasmania channels and Festival

of Bright Ideas channels increased across the year, peaking before Science Week, while the audience for Inspiring Tasmania remained steady. The audience for the Festival of Bright Ideas channels rose sharply immediately prior to the festival.



Graph 6. National Science Week Facebook Audience (2025)

4.3 Sponsorship

This year, the IAT committee again offered a STEM Champion corporate sponsorship for $15,000. The sponsorships offered acknowledgement across all Tasmanian National Science Week promotional material, invitations to VIP events (such as the launch), and custom exhibition space at the Festival of Bright Ideas. Hydro Tasmania was the 2025 STEM Champion Sponsor for the Tasmanian National Science Week.

4.5 Pub Quiz Promotion

A new promotional activity trialled this year was a partnership with InnQUIZitive to deliver a series of engaging, science-themed trivia nights across Tasmania. These events were held over two consecutive weeks in late July and early August 2025, in the lead-up to Science Week, to raise the profile of Science Week among a new audience.

InnQUIZitive provided a tailored "Science & Nature" round for each event. Local hosts announced the round as being sponsored by National Science Week, introducing participants to Science Week and highlighting the events happening in their local area. Each quiz night offered the prize of tickets to local science week events and/or science week merchandise.

The sponsored pub quizzes were held at 9 venues, with each hosting two trivia nights, resulting in 18 promotional pub quizzes across the state.

Southern Tasmania

- The Mayfair – Mon July 28 & Aug 4
- The Waggon – Tues July 29 & Aug 5
- Claremont Hotel – Tues July 29 & Aug 5
- Deep South Brewing Co. – Wed July 30 & Aug 6
- Prince of Whales – Thurs July 31 & Aug 7

Northern Tasmania

- The Newstead Hotel – Tues July 29 & Wed July 30
- The Newstead Hotel – Tues Aug 5 & Wed Aug 6

North-West Tasmania

- Beach Hotel (Burnie) – Wed July 30 & Aug 6
- Mackey's Royal Hotel (Latrobe) – Thurs July 31 & Aug 7

The pub quiz events successfully engaged a wide range of participants, many of whom had not heard of Science Week before and do not normally attend science events. Having free tickets to Science Week events as prizes encouraged a range of people who do not normally engage in Science Week to get involved.

4.6 Other promotional activity

Additional promotional activities included:

- Events were promoted through Infostream to reach educators and schools.
- National Science Week banners and merchandise (hats, badges and T-shirts) was provided to event holders on request, as gifts to speakers/guests and prizes to the audience
- The Inspiring Tasmania website was used for event promotion.

- Media releases were sent for key activities and events such as the Tasmanian National Science Week launch and Festival of Bright Ideas.
- Street banners were hung along the main eastern arterial road into Hobart and in York, Charles, Tamar Streets and Invermay Road in Launceston.
- Street signs were posted at the three major arterial roads into Hobart as well as two in Launceston and two in Burnie.
- Radio listener competition with prizes being free tickets to FOBI.
- Word of mouth, which remains a powerful tool for promotion and relationship building in Tasmania

5. Events

5.1 Tasmanian National Science Week Launch

Tasmania's National Science Week was launched on Thursday, 7 August 2025 with over 20 STEM stakeholders attending the event. Presentations were made by the Director of Antarctic, Science and Technology at the Department of State Growth, Dr Tara Martin, the Tasmania Patron of National Science Week, Dr Jess Melbourne-Thomas, and a winner of a 2025 state grant and organiser of the Southern Nights: The Science & Beauty of Aurora Australis exhibition, Dr Andrew Phipps. Dr Tiana Pirtle, the Tasmanian IA manager, provided the Master of Ceremonies service. Several media outlets attended the launch with good media coverage.

5.2 Event reflections

Reflection from Inspiring Australia Reference Group member, Dr Alfonsina Arriaga Jiménez:

> *"National Science Week, or month, is always such a fun and exciting time. It's a busy period, but the energy in the air as people share their projects, activities, and passion with the public is amazing.*
>
> *At QVMAG, I was lucky to experience this first-hand, from the buzz of Pub Science Trivia night to watching our educators bring science to life for school kids. As part of the Inspiring Tasmania Reference Group, I also saw the real difference our funded projects make in communities, as I joined the Inspiring Women in STEMM Program luncheon, where sharing stories with such a diverse and passionate group of women was heartwarming and a real privilege. This project continues to grow and make an impact across Tasmania and beyond.*
> *In Burnie, the BIG Science Fair completely blew me away. Seeing the students' projects was not only motivating but also reassuring, our future really is in the hands of so many talented, curious young people.*
>
> *This was also my first year as a Roving Scientist at the Beaker Street Festival, and I was amazed by the creativity and energy of researchers ready to share their knowledge in fun, unexpected ways. From tasting beers brewed using the scientific method, to enjoying science comedy sketches, to listening to brilliant music, and get into TMAG after dark, the range of experiences showed just how diverse and engaging science can be.*
>
> *I wish I could have attended even more events, but I'm so grateful that lutruwita/Tasmania is alive with science and art hubs and opportunities to share knowledge. My absolute highlight was seeing children ask the best questions, explore fearlessly, and engage directly with scientists. Watching them burst with curiosity and excitement is a wonderful reminder of why we do this. Their energy captures the true spirit of Science Week: celebrating discovery, creativity, and awe! Science is fun, explosive, hands-on, colourful, and sometimes stinky too, and through these events we're helping the next generation ask questions, be creative, explore, and embrace all the letters in STEAM."*

Reflection from Inspiring Australia Reference Group member, Jenny Dudgeon:

> *This year we welcomed new members to the Festival of Bright Ideas (FOBI) subcommittee who used their networks strategically to engage new providers for the festival such as the Hobart Hurricanes Cricket Team's Sports Science specialists and Tasmania Police's Forensic Investigation team, emphasising the breadth and interconnectivity of STEM and its diverse career opportunities.*

Feedback from attendees and activity providers was resoundingly positive. Both the school's day and public open day were well attended and had a very positive vibe. It was very pleasing that remote area school- Swansea Primary made the special 2 hour trek to Hobart specifically to attend FOBI. Swansea teachers and students were genuinely enthusiastic in their praise about the benefits for their students of engaging with STEM and STEM professionals and look forward to being involved in 2026.

On the public open day, at the Inspiring Tasmania stand we engaged with many intergenerational family groups who expressed their delight in being able to spend time exploring science concepts in an interactive and supportive atmosphere. A number were from non-english speaking backgrounds and described their wonderment at being able to see, touch and learn first hand about Tasmania's:

- *marine species*
- *endangered species*
- *energy generation*
- *drone technology*
- *robotics,*
- *forensics*
- *sport science and much more*

from enthusiastic, knowledgeable and approachable STEM professionals.

The focused support provided by Inspiring Australia -Tasmania Manager Dr Tiana Pirtle and the generous funding and logistics provided by The University of Tasmania's Community Engagement Team, led by Belinda Brock ensured the success of FOBI 2025

5.3 Event distribution and audience

In total, there were 254 registered events for National Science Week in Tasmania, including public events and private events (excluding events held at schools except those conducted by the Young Tassie Scientist program). 157 of these events took place in regional areas outside the greater Hobart region. A record of more than 33,000 Tasmanians attended events around the state. The main unrepresented groups reached by these events were young people, people in regional and rural areas, and women and girls.

The events funded or organised by the Committee reached an audience of nearly 12,000 people. More than 4,400 attended the Festival of Bright Ideas on either the school day or the public day. 20,000 people participated in the Beaker Street Festival, which was supported by a national grant. 1,109 attended the two University of Tasmania Island of Ideas National Science Week talks either online or in-person.

This year saw a slight reduction in the number of events as compared to the record year of 2024 with 306 registered events. However, more people were reached this year as compared to 2025 (over 33,000). The larger audience is in part due to the expanded reach of Beaker Street, which saw its biggest year yet, as well as the expanded reach of some of the state grant winners, which was a result of the higher funding amounts awarded. The fewer events may be explained by the Grants sub-committee choosing to award fewer grants at a higher funding amount, and Young Tassie Scientists, who are responsible for many registered science week events, having a smaller number of events, particularly public ones, due to logistical and financial limitations.

There were several unique and successful events held in 2025. Below is just a sampling of the inspiring and unique events that helped Tasmania achieve the goals of National Science Week this year.

5.4 Notable Events

Festival of Bright Ideas

The Festival of Bright Ideas celebrated its 10th year as part of National Science Week. Thirty-nine local science, tech, engineering, and maths (STEM) affiliated organisations hosted interactive experiences and activities for curious Tasmanians. Activities were highly engaging and varied from robotics, live marine fauna and flora and solar powered vehicles. The full list of activities is viewable here.

Across the School's Day on Friday 22 August and the Public Day on Saturday 23 August, more than 4,400 Tasmanians attended.

Feedback was collected from participants both during the event as well as afterwards via email. Feedback was collected from 202 ticket holders. Some key public feedback:

- More than half of the respondents had previously attended FOBI.
- 66% respondents were from a non-science background.
- 18% respondents reside in areas of greater socio-economic disadvantage.
- A greater proportion of attendees came from 'Outer Regional' and 'Remote' areas
- 91% of respondents had positive feedback.
- Most popular activities for respondents were marine-themed and robotics.

"I think it was great and my 11 [year old] and 13 [year old] loved it. It has inspired them to explore careers in [STEM]."

Nine out of 10 respondents agreed that the Festival of Bright Ideas achieved its aims.

- FOBI inspired me to find out more about science in everyday life.
- FOBI made me more aware of the number of people involved in science in Tasmania.
- FOBI made me more aware of the variety of science organisations in Tasmania.
- FOBI made me excited about science.

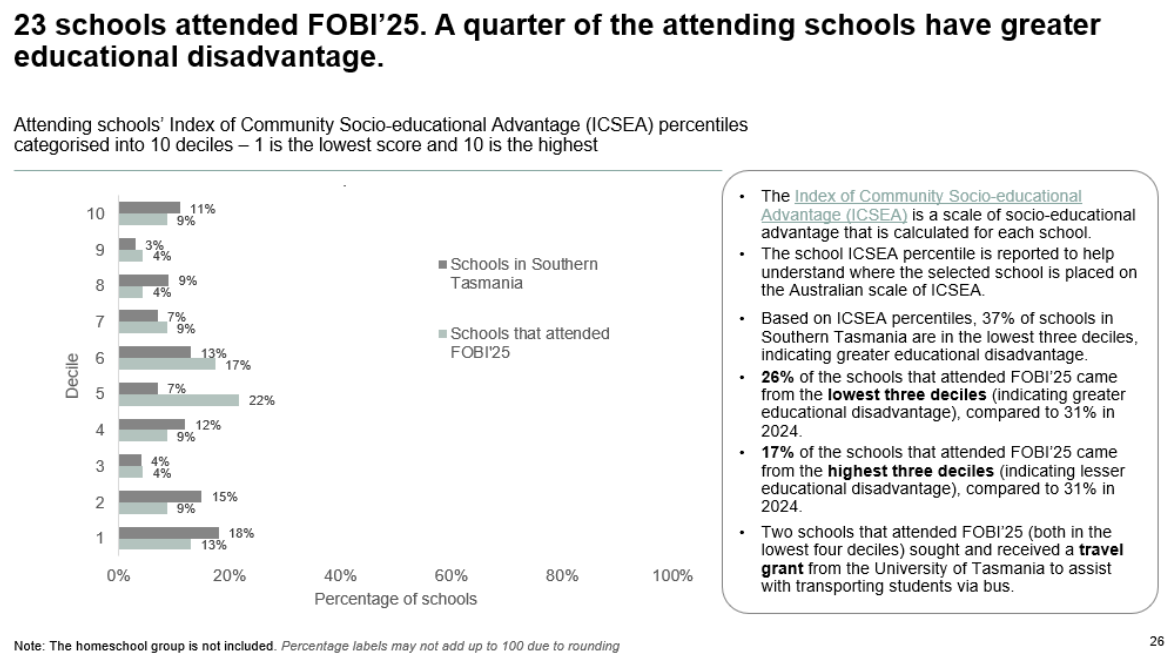
More great statistics available at FOBI'25 Survey Results.

Twenty-three schools brought almost 1,700 students to attend the three dedicated school sessions on Friday.

Most schools that responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that FOBI:

- Made their students more aware of the variety of science organisations in Tasmania.
- Made their students more aware of the number of people involved in science in Tasmania.
- Made their students excited about science.
- Was a worthwhile experience for their students.

Almost all respondents indicated they were very likely to recommend FOBI to a friend or colleague and indicated they are interested in bringing students to the next FOBI.



Graph 8. FOBI school attendance by educational disadvantage

Beaker Street Festival

Beaker Street Festival 2025 had its biggest year yet, drawing record audiences across Lutruwita/Tasmania from 12–24 August.

Across 13 Festival days, around 20,000 people attended events in Nipaluna/Hobart and beyond. Audiences travelled from across Australia and overseas, with around 13% of attendees visiting from interstate or abroad, adding to the buzz in pubs, galleries and late-night venues.

Sold-out shows in Hobart, Devonport and regional centres highlighted the strength of this year's program, while unique participatory events proved hugely popular. Hundreds of people took part in the Polar Plunge and Sauna, with around 200 earning their Polar Plunge patch after submerging in nearly zero-degree water. The new Hobartica East precinct in Bellerive attracted 1,000 visitors to its debut, expanding the Festival footprint across the Derwent.

More than 200 scientists, some travelling from as far away as Europe and South America, joined locals in pubs, bars, museums and nightclubs to share research and spark conversations. More than 140 volunteers and 30 Tasmanian businesses contributed directly to the Festival, which drew glowing feedback from audiences.

"Beaker Street has always been about connection — connection between people, between science and art, and between Lutruwita/ Tasmania and the world," says Festival Founder Dr Margo Adler. "The energy this year was incredible, and we're thrilled that the Festival keeps growing while staying true to its playful, curious, community-centred spirit."

Fact to Fiction

From Fact to Fiction offered a unique blend of science, storytelling, and cinema screening the cult classic *Total Recall* (1990) at a local pub, followed by a live panel discussion exploring the film's STEMM themes.

The event invited the public to engage with complex scientific ideas in a relaxed, informal setting. A panel of Tasmanian experts unpacked topics such as human-technology interfaces, automation, and the ethics of emerging technologies—drawing parallels between the film's futuristic vision and real-world scientific developments.

Audience engagement was strong, with more questions than time allowed during the panel session. The event reached 49 attendees and received enthusiastic feedback, including:

"A wonderful event - I hope this becomes a yearly event."

The panel discussion was recorded and will be released as an episode of the *That's What I Call Science* podcast, extending the event's reach beyond the room.

Organisers from STEMM Communicators Australia expressed a strong desire to make this science fiction film format a recurring feature of National Science Week, citing its success in sparking curiosity and conversation among diverse adult audiences.

Southern Nights – the Science and Beauty of Auroa Australis

Southern Nights – The Science and Beauty of Aurora Australis offered a captivating fusion of science and visual art. Held over 12 days, the photographic exhibition attracted more than 2,000 visitors, drawing in families, science enthusiasts, photographers, and people who just happened to be strolling by.

Curated by photographer and scientist Luke Tscharke, the exhibition featured 24 large-format images of the Aurora Australis, each paired with accessible scientific explanations. Visitors explored the physics of space weather, geomagnetic storms, and atmospheric interactions through both visual storytelling and interactive displays including a real-time Aurora Dashboard.

The exhibition was designed to make complex scientific concepts approachable for general audiences. With the universal appeal of photography and auroras, the event drew people who do not typically attend science events and served as a gateway to STEM learning.

The exhibition not only served as a major draw during National Science Week but also hosted the official opening event for the state's celebrations.

Organisers expressed strong interest in continuing and expanding the concept in future years, noting:

"The exhibition demonstrated strong community appetite for science communication through visual arts." - Luke Tscharke

The BIG Science Fair

The 2025 BIG Science Fair, held at the Burnie Arts Centre, was a major highlight of Tasmania's National Science Week in the northwest. Over two days, the fair brought together students, educators, families, and industry partners in a vibrant showcase of science, engineering, and technology and was the largest in-person STEM event in the region.

The Fair featured student-led projects across multiple science and engineering categories, including a new "Technology Enhances the Arts" stream. Nearly 500 students from 15 schools and home-schooling families participated, with a strong focus on inclusion. Twelve of the fifteen schools were classified as disadvantaged, and seven of the eight major awards were won by girls.

Interactive booths from organisations such as the University of Tasmania, NAB, TasNetworks, Marinus Link, and Tasmania Police helped connect students with real-world STEM pathways. The event also served as a launchpad for further opportunities, with many students planning to enter the Tasmanian Science Talent Search because of their participation.

Feedback from all stakeholders—students, teachers, volunteers, and sponsors—was overwhelmingly positive. A particularly poignant example was of a young father who hadn't wanted to attend because he didn't like attending these types of events as a child so had no interest as an adult. However, he reported he had such a wonderful time, learnt so much, and enjoyed the activities and participating with his son, that he brought the rest of the family back the next day.

The New Parents' Relaxation Toolkit

The New Parents' Relaxation Toolkit offered a unique and deeply personal approach to science engagement, bringing evidence-based wellbeing practices to new parents through storytelling, music, and embodied science.

Held at child-friendly venues across Chigwell, Bridgewater, Geeveston, Kingston, and North Hobart, the event series reached 48 parents and carers, the majority of whom were from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The sessions combined science-backed breathing techniques, yoga, and music with storytelling to explore the scientific link

between these practices and mental health, particularly as related to reduced stress in early parenthood.

The program was designed to be accessible and inclusive, with all events offered free of charge and hosted in familiar community spaces such as Child and Family Learning Centres. The event drew people who would not otherwise have attended science-based events. In Chigwell, for example, the entire audience came from non-English speaking backgrounds, and some attendees in Bridgewater and Geeveston shared that they had never heard of National Science Week before.

The Clitoral Chronicles

As part of the 2025 Beaker Street Festival and National Science Week, the Clitoral Chronicles delivered a bold and theatrical science communication experience that blended comedy, music, and anatomy in several sold-out stage shows.

The production explored the science of reproductive biology and evolution through a feminist and queer lens, using full-body costumes, humour, and storytelling to make complex topics accessible and engaging.

The event focused on one of biology's most neglected organs: the clitoris, and provided participants with an anatomy and evolutionary history lesson on the clitoris in a fun and acceptable manner. The event also taught participants the scientific method and how bias can and has been introduced into science.

Across four performances – including the Beaker Street "Come Again?" stage show, "After Hours" nightclub event, and a standalone performance at the Founders Room – the show reached approximately 1,435 attendees, many of whom were young adults, women, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Several of the young participants informed the organisers that they had never been to a science event. Media coverage further reinforced the event's reach and credibility, with features on ABC Radio and through social media amplifying the impact to wider audiences.

By highlighting queer and feminist perspectives and relevant aspects of biology, this event represented an act of scientific reclamation for these communities, turning the tables by using science to legitimise and empower diverse experiences rather than erase them.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and indicated that attendees left with new knowledge and understanding about reproductive biology and evolution, and the scientific method. The audience also left with a better understanding of their own bodies, which left people feeling empowered to improve daily well-being. Many audience members stayed on after the shows to have informed and engaging conversations about what they learned from the show. Audience feedback included:

> "Best sex ed class ever"
>
> "The world needs more comprehensive, sex-positive sex ed like this."

5. 5 Audience distribution

Tasmanian Demographics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated that the Tasmanian population was approximately 578,000 at September 2024. As of 2021 15% of people living in Tasmania were born overseas. Tasmania's average population is four years older than the national average, at 42. Tasmania has a lower proportion of people ages 20 to 44 years (31%) than Australia as a whole (35%). The proportion of Tasmanians over 65 years is continuing to grow and the portion of young people under 15 has reduced, resulting in a reduction in the working age population.

In the 2021 Census, almost two-thirds of Tasmania's population lived outside of the capital city area of Greater Hobart. 30,000 people identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin in Tasmania, making up 5.4% of the population, higher than the Australian percentage of 3.2%.

In Tasmania, the median weekly income was $701 for individuals and $1,720 for families in 2021. For comparisons, in Victoria, the median weekly income was $803 for individuals and $2,136 for families in 2021

Reference: 2021 Tasmania, Census All persons QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)

Tasmanian National Science Week Demographics

In 2025, more than 33,000 people were recorded to attend public National Science Week events, with many more attending private events, primarily at schools. Audiences included families, young people, kids of all ages, all genders, and communities in low socio-economic regions in the state. In particular:

- *Regional communities*. With 62% of events taking place in regional areas outside of the greater Hobart area, this year's Science Week really targeted people in regional and rural communities with events such as the BIG Science Fair and the Circular Head Big Science Gig.

- *Young people and families*. Several events, such as The New Parents' Relaxation Toolkit, Fizz Bang!, the BIG Science Fair, Circular Head Big Science Gig, and Festival of Bright Ideas, catered to young people to inspire a love of science in the younger generation. This was particularly poignant for young people in rural communities, demonstrating that there is a future in STEM for all.
- *People from low socio-economic backgrounds*. Science Week reached many lower socio-economic communities through events, like the BIG Science Fair in Burnie and the Festival of Bright Ideas, with a quarter of the schools attending being low-SES schools.
- *LGBTQI+ community*. There were several events this year that catered to the LGBTQI+ community, including the Clitoral Chronicles and Beaker Street's After Hours, both of which highlighted queer and feminist perspectives and relevant aspects of biology. These events used science to legitimise and empower these communities rather than disenfranchise.

Beaker Street's Krill Party

6. Outcomes

6.1 Analytics

Evaluation and feedback from TNSWC grant recipients

While the 2025 Tasmania National Science Week program was widely successful and grant recipients appreciated the support and funding provided, which made the events possible, they identified several recurring challenges that impacted event planning and delivery.

- **Access to STEM experts**: Organisers in regional and rural areas reported difficulty in sourcing qualified STEM professionals, particularly in specialised fields such as food science and science communication. Early access to a pool of available presenters or facilitators would enhance planning and event quality.
- **Promotion and audience engagement**: Some events experienced lower than expected attendance due to limited promotional reach in remote communities and seasonal factors such as winter illnesses affecting participation. There is also a wider issue of people not always valuing free events and thus not attending events they had booked free tickets for.
- **Planning and funding timelines:** Tight funding and planning windows made it challenging to secure venues, presenters, and promotional materials in advance.
- **Collaboration and networking**: There was a strong appetite for increased collaboration among event organisers, including the desire for facilitated networking opportunities and knowledge sharing platforms.
- **Funding limitations**: Some event organisers found it challenging to host professional-level events and events in regional areas due to rising costs, especially those involving travel or specialist presenters.

6.2 Success stories

Grant holder survey comments and quotes

Grant holders rated the success of their events highly and well attended. Given access to funding, the consensus amongst event organisers was that they would be very likely to run an event for 2026.

Select quotes provided by grant holders are provided below:

> *"The 2025 event demonstrated the enormous value of providing young people in the North West and surrounding regions with a dedicated, inclusive, and inspiring platform to showcase their STEM learning. With almost 500 students from 15 schools and home schooling families involved, and strong engagement from industry,*

community, and government partners, the Science Fair has proven itself as a flagship National Science Week event for Tasmania." — 2025 BIG Science Fair

"Our event continues to bring a novel audience to National Science Week, exposing science to the craft beer community." — ExBEERimental Science

"I am already planning an activity for females to engage in STEM called 'She Shapes Science.'" — Fizz Bang!

"The BIG Science Fair is not only delivering immediate impact for students, schools, and communities in the North West and surrounding regions, it also has long-term potential to position Tasmania on the global STEM stage." — 2025 BIG Science Fair

"Our event drew people who would not otherwise have attended science based events… We reached socio-economically, culturally and linguistically diverse groups... In Chigwell in particular we drew a very culturally and linguistically diverse audience, with all audience members coming from non-English speaking backgrounds. We had feedback from some audience members at both Bridgewater and Geeveston that they hadn't heard of National Science Week before." – The New Parents' Relaxation Toolkit

7. Challenges

7.1 List challenges

One of the key challenges of Science Week this year was balancing the number against the quality of events. The grants sub-committee found it challenging to strike a balance between funding smaller, grassroots events and continuing to support high-quality, larger events. In response to feedback in previous years expressing the difficulty of hosting quality events on such meagre budgets, particularly in the face of rising costs, the IAT Ref committee increased the grant funding amounts. However, this meant that fewer projects could be funded, resulting in fewer events. This also meant that smaller, grassroots events were outcompeted by more experienced, professional applicants. The committee expressed a desire to encourage and support more smaller, grassroots initiatives, but recognised the risk of not funding more established, highly successful events that ensure a vibrant Science Week in Tasmania.

Event holders continue to find challenges in promoting events effectively in regional and remote areas, thus resulting in some regional events having lower than anticipated audiences. However, event holders reported that those who did attend reported extremely positive experiences and gratitude for science engagement opportunities in their local regions.

7.2 Learnings to share

- **Grant funding amounts:** As mentioned above, one of the results of raising the grant amount in response to rising costs associated with hosting events was that the sub-committee could not fund as many events and found it very challenging to strike a balance between funding smaller grassroot events in more regional areas and larger events with proven success that would reach more people, while ensuring each project has sufficient funding to run a quality event. While the Grants sub-committee does not have a solution to this issue yet, possible options that have been discussed are offering a small, seed grant specifically for regional, grassroots events or making applicants who have already received two years of funding in a row ineligible.

- **Promotional activities**: Following the results of the promotional strategy in 2024 that indicated reduced reach through traditional print media, the IAT Ref group decided this year not to invest in the production and distribution of the printed program or newspaper advertisements. Instead, the 2025 promotional strategy invested those resources into greater social media advertisements, an expanded commercial radio campaign, as well as trialling two new promotional activities: street signage on major highways and a partnership with a local pub quiz group. Results from visitor surveys for the Festival of Bright Ideas indicated that social media continues to be the major method for promotion. After word of mouth and previous attendees, the radio promotion was the next most successful promotional activity and was an increase from last year. Fewer attendees found out about the festival through the poster distribution, which suggests that the cost-benefits of the poster distribution should be considered for 2026.

- **Increased Participation**: Tasmanian National Science Week 2025 saw a record audience of over 33,000 community members participating. Having key events in regional locations, along with the expanded Beaker Street Festival provided greater visibility of the National Science Week festival, resulting in increased awareness and participation across the festival. This highlights the importance of regional flagship events in raising the profile and providing an anchor for science week events across the state.

7.3 Recommended actions

Through the experience of the committee and after receiving feedback from event holders, these are the following recommendations for next year:

1. National grant winners should be announced earlier, so that those winners can be marked ineligible for state funding. Currently, recipients are applying for both national and state rounds and the delay in national funding announcement is impacting the timely acceptance of state funding.

2. Review the state grant categories and funding amounts. This includes reviewing the type and amount of grants available to ensure smaller local initiatives are fostered, but still supporting high-quality, larger events that ensure Science Week is a diverse and vibrant festival across the state.

3. Consider supporting Science Week 'hubs' in the regional areas. Beaker Street is a keystone Science Week event in Hobart and provides an anchor for Science Week activities in the south. Outside of Hobart, events are far more dispersed and not as clearly part of a cohesive festival. Something to consider for next year is supporting some of the key science centres or regular science week events in the regional areas to be a keystone Science Week event in the north and the northwest.

4. Continue to pursue new/expand on current partnerships with, for example MONA, Beaker Street, CSIRO, etc

5. Some grant applicants struggled with how to write budgets for grant applications. Previous years had run grant writing workshop; however, attendance to these sessions dropped to zero in recent years. Thus, new ways to improve the STEM ecosystems' grant writing abilities should be explored. Improvements should also be made to the budget templates to simplify the process for applicants.

6. This year, more travel support was available for Committee members to attend Science Week events around the state, which resulted in higher Committee attendance than in previous years. Next year, this travel support should also be provided.

7. Due to the regionality of Tasmania, look to recruit more representatives from the northwest and north of the state on the Reference Group and its sub-committees.

8. Grant recipients felt that their activities would benefit from increasing advertising and communications training. Next year, look to providing upskilling opportunities.

9. Further support the engagement of underrepresented groups.

This report has been compiled by Dr Tiana Pirtle, Belinda Brock, Eve O'Neile, and Jack Hayes.

We wish to thank the Chair, Dr Adele Wilson, FOBI sub-committee Chair, Jenny Dudgeon, Tasmania's National Science Week Patron, Dr Jess Melbourne Thomas, and all the committee members for all their hard work to ensure this year's Tasmanian National Science Week was a success.

We thank the Australian Government, the Tasmanian State Government, and the University of Tasmania for the continued financial support.