

2022 - 2023

Annual Report

PDG Marilyn Mercer

Rotary Representative

The Science Experience

Annual Report 1 July 2022- 30 June 2023

MARILYN MERCER PDG elected Rotary Representative (2011-2023) on the Federal Committee of The Science Schools Foundation Inc., incorporating The Science Experience.



THE Santos SCIENCE EXPERIENCE

A nationwide STEM outreach program for year 9 and 10 students in 2022

2022 PROGRAM

Australian Capital Territory	
Australian National University, Canberra	21-23 September
New South Wales	
Macquarie University, Sydney	4-6 October
University of Sydney, Sydney	20-22 April
University of Sydney, Sydney	18-20 Jan 2023
University of Technology Sydney, Sydney	27-29 September
University of New England, Armidale	TBA
Queensland	
Griffith University, Gold Coast	5-7 July
Combined Brisbane program, UQ, QUT and Griffith Nathan	Mid year, January 2023
CQUniversity Gladstone	18-20 October
CQUniversity Rockhampton	4-6 April
CQUniversity Bundberg	20-22 September
CQUniversity Cairns	14-16 June
CQUniversity Mackay	5-7 July
CQUniversity Townsville	20-22 September
South Australia	
University of Adelaide, Adelaide	13-15 December
Flinders University, Adelaide	6-8 December
University of South Australia, Mawson Lakes	22-24 November
University of South Australia, Mount Gambier	10-12 August
University of South Australia, Whyalla	27-29 September
Victoria	
Federation University Gippsland	20-22 September
Federation University (Berwick)	20-22 September
Federation University Ballarat	27-29 June
Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre, Queensland	11 April, 27 Sept, 17 Jan 2023
RMIT University, Melbourne	28-30 June
Swinburne University of technology, Hawthorn	6-9 July
KIOSC, Warrnambool	18-20 July
University of Melbourne, Parkville	11-13 April
University of Melbourne, Dookie	30 Nov-2 Dec
Western Australia	
Fifth Cowan University, Joondalup	TBA
The University of Western Australia, Perth	TBA
CQUniversity Pilbara University	24-26 May
Murdoch University, Perth	13-15 December

THE Santos SCIENCE EXPERIENCE
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 www.scienceexperience.com.au
 Phone 03 9756 7534

Registration Fees

- 1 day program \$65 (incl GST) – Queensland
- 3 day program \$190 (incl GST)
- 4 day program \$240 (incl GST) – Fifth Cowan, Joondalup
- Please note these fees do not cover any transport, meals or accommodation costs
- Refunds are available (minus \$35 administration fee) until 4 weeks before a particular program commences.

The Board 2022-23

included Ms J. Bellars (National Director), Mr R. Tudor OAM (Chairperson,) Mr R Aikenhead (Vice Chair), Mr. J. Sorbello (Treasurer), Mr S. Basnayake (ASTA), Mr. E. Dawes OBE (Life Member), Dr. H. Evans, Mr. G. Fagan, Dr. L. Godinho, Adjunct Associate Professor Mr R. Laslett, Mrs M Mercer (Rotary Rep), Dr. J Patterson, Mrs H. van Reenan, Ms Aileen Stewart (Santos), Mr. O. Zymaris (YSA Melbourne), with Ms Michelle Hall (Minutes Secretary)

Board Meetings

The Science Schools Foundation Inc. Coordinating Committee (The Science Experience) held **bi-monthly meetings**, 22nd August, 17th October and 19th December, with the **AGM** on 17th October 2022. As well there were the 2023 meetings on 13th February, 17th April and 19th June. Meetings are hybrid, at Swinburne University and zoom

Following a very slow year due to COVID, each month allowed us to finally show some normality with The Science Experience.

Marketing and Publicity

Rotary **District Assemblies**

started to get back to face to face meetings. Format changes did not allow for booths, although some pamphlets were distributed

Rotary International Zone 08 Conference (formerly **Institute**)

Zone 8 includes Australia, New Zealand, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu.

2022 Rotary Zone 8 Conference (Institute) Canberra, ACT, was held on October 28-30, 2022 National Convention Centre. Michelle Hall (Minutes Secretary) set up and attend the booth.

District Conference

District 9685 annual conference was held at Cowra, NSW. Despite the heat our booth was well attended



Talks

were given about The Science Experience via ZOOM to the **Rotary Club of Kincumber** on the Central Coast and face to face with the **Rotary Club of Umina** (which has supported students to attend the Science Experience at Dookie Campus for many years)

Information packages

were posted to all Rotary Clubs, High Schools and interested parties in May. Some are still being returned unopened, though not as numerous as in previous years.

RADIO

An opportunity came with a **radio interview** by Ian Stuart, (**Rotary Matters**) with PDG Marilyn Mercer (Rotary Rep). The following link is to an edited version of the program. It is also on the Rotary Matters Australia Facebook page and will soon go out as a podcast on Spotify.

[Stream Whetting The Appetite For STEM With The Science Experience by Rotary Matters | Listen online for free on SoundCloud](#)

Ian's comment: "Thank you again for your time in explaining The Science Experience....it really is an inspiring program and a great tribute to Rotary and The Science Foundation"



The STUDENTS

The Science Experience supports the students across all areas of STEM. Many students took up the offer of financial help to attend the program, which, otherwise, would not have been within their reach.

Please note we can only record the Rotary sponsorship when we are informed of it. Some Rotary clubs pay the schools and the school is invoiced thus we believe them to be the payee. **To make sure that the Rotary sponsor is acknowledged the following link should be used.**

<https://www.scienceexperience.com.au/programs/rotary-apply>

Dates	Student No.	Days
1 Jul 22-31Dec 2023	624	1838
1 Jan 2023-30 Jun 2023	424	1106

UNIVERSITIES & TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS	Student Numbers for 2021-2022 financial year	Student numbers for 2022-2023 Financial year
Australian Capital Territory		
Australian National University, Canberra	32	50
New South Wales		
Macquarie University, Sydney	P	42
University of New England, Armidale	P	16
University of Sydney, Sydney	89	P
University of Technology, Sydney	P	25
Northern Territory		
Charles Darwin University, Casuarina Campus	100	200
Queensland		
Griffith University, Gold Coast	P	19

Queensland Combined, UQ, QUT and Nathan	P	11
University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba	11	P
Central Queensland University, Gladstone Marina	58	59
Central Queensland University, Rockhampton	30	0
Central Queensland University, Townsville	16	30
Central Queensland University, Bundaberg	11	5
Central Queensland University, Cairns	22	P
USQ Ipswich	12	11
Uni Central Qld, Mackay		
South Australia		
University of Adelaide, Adelaide	72	61
Flinders University, Adelaide	100	47
University of South Australia, Adelaide	18	P
Uni of South Australia, Mt Gambier	30	31
University of South Australia, Whyalla	28	P
Tasmania		
University of Tasmania, Hobart	28	25
University of Tasmania, Launceston	22	53
Victoria		
Federation University, Gippsland	P	29
Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre, Queenscliff	28	57
RMIT University, Melbourne	91	P
Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn	P	48
Federation University, Ballarat	P	
University of Melbourne, Parkville	98	50
Melbourne University – Dookie campus	P	P
Swinburne University KIOSC, Wantirna	P	34
Western Australia		
Curtin University Perth	0	P
Murdoch University	57	45
Edith Cowan University, Joondalup	40	P
University of Western Australia, Perth	117	P
Karratha	650	P
TOTAL	1760	1048

Some courses were postponed (P) for a variety of reasons

Supporters

Appreciation is extended to the following groups which provided continued support to our students.

Rotary Districts and Clubs of Australia

The Science Experience was initiated by a Rotarian and Rotary Club of Doncaster over 30 years ago. Rotary District Governors have promoted the program in their Newsletters and through their Assistant Governors and Clubs. Many clubs sponsored students to attend;

transported students; billeted students; participated in organising programs; provided social activities. A Past District Governor serves on the organising committee

Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA)

ASTA has promoted the program in schools and with its members. One of its members serves on the organising committee.

Universities and Tertiary Institutions

Universities and Tertiary Institutions organised and conducted the programs on their campuses and surrounding facilities and provided a director, presenters, laboratories, equipment and other resources. Alumni serve on the organising committee.

Young Scientists of Australia (YSA)

Many YSA members voluntarily assisted in supervising sessions and groups, led some sessions and conducted some social activities.

M.P. Sponsorship

Members of Parliament, in most states, continued to financially sponsor local students

Rotary Clubs and Rotarians

continue to assist in many ways – sponsorship, publicity, billeting students, chaperoning over-night stays, donating to an isolated student fund for travel and accommodation, etc.

The Youth Director of the **Rotary Club of West Pennant Hills and Cherrybrook**. That club is hosting and sponsoring four students from **Coonabarabran** to attend the October Santos Science Experience at Macquarie Uni. Due to the advice from the District Child Protection Officer, the Rotarians arranged to accompany the students to and from the University

Also, in September we received a request for assistance from the Science Teacher at **Menindee Central School**. He wished to send 12 students and 2 teachers to the Uni. Of Adelaide. 13 -15 December. I sent a request to the Rotary Club of Broken Hill Inc. and received this wonderful reply within a few days “our club is happy to support the kids of Menindee School and fund the full amount for the registrations at \$190 per student. I will contact the teacher and advise them”.

A Wealth of Experience

The scope during these 1/ 3 / 4 days is expanding each year with cutting edge high-quality science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education which is critically important for Australia’s current and future productivity. The Science Experience encourages well informed decision making and effective community, national and global citizenship.

The science activities forensic techniques of DNA fingerprinting, model rockets, geological mapping, gamma-ray radioactivity, robotic cars, 3D Indigenous science, coding and precision agriculture to name a few.

Each venue provided different emphases.

Here is a small selection:

University Macquarie (3-day program)

career speed dating, STEM expo, a chemistry magic show, solar system and the world beyond earth, Indigenous science and sustainable use of natural resources

University of Sydney, (3-day program)

forensic science and techniques to solve an unusual problem, use university wet and dry labs, meet STEM experts, learn new forensic skills in microscopy, cyber security, chemical sample identification, electrical circuitry etc, cooperatively solve a crime

University of Technology Sydney, (3-day program)

Various hands-on and fun science, maths, and technology activities. Explore some of the hottest topics in forensic science, physics, microbiology, and mathematical modelling.

Macquarie University (3-day program)

career speed dating, get hands-on with science, technology, engineering and mathematics at our expo, participate in a chemistry magic show, learn more about our solar system and the world beyond earth, explore the world of Indigenous science and sustainable use of natural resources etc

Dookie campus Uni Melbourne (4-day program)

is a working farm- a centre of agricultural research and teaching hands on activities in laboratory and paddock investigating real world issues. biodiversity, sheep science, plant science, protein content of milk, cheese making and robotic dairy

Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre Queenscliff (1 day program)

Immersion in marine and freshwater science. Sharks, seahorses and seaweed; beasts big and small.; law enforcement in the aquatic and marine worlds.



Registration Fee

The full fee to register and attend a program, payable by participant or sponsor or combination, remained unchanged again this year:

- \$72 (incl GST) for one day
- \$150 (incl GST) for two days
- \$210 (incl. GST) for all 3 - day programs
- \$450 (incl. GST) for all 4 - day programs- residential

This is definitely the **most cost-effective** Rotary Youth program.

Rotary Sponsorship

As this program was initiated, promoted and supported by Rotary International Districts of Australia since its beginnings in 1990, most Rotary clubs have been willing to sponsor one or more students for part or all of their registration fee. Completed forms are presented to Rotary clubs by the students. Students are warned that it may take 3-6 weeks for this to be presented to the club board for consideration.

To find their local Rotary club students connect via a call to **1300 4 ROTARY**

Meal expenses. In general, food and drink costs need to be met by participants, but in some cases the organisers will provide morning tea, drinks and maybe as BBQ. Arrangements will be provided about a week before the program.

Transport and accommodation: Transport to and from the program and any accommodation costs need to be met by the participants. Transport arranged by the organisers during the program to local visits will be provided free of charge.

Community Service/Youth

Another positive story:

Thank you very for providing an extraordinary, life changing experience for **Congolese refugee** Moises. When I picked him up yesterday afternoon after his Science Experience at Macquarie Uni, he was bubbling with excitement. "I learned a lot," he told me. *'I think now I will go to uni.'* He especially liked meeting fellow students, seeing how avocados can be frozen and broken into bits with a hammer, and hearing the personal story of a medical researcher who gave examples of various roadblocks she had experienced in life. *'She kept picking herself up and going on,'* Moises told me. ***'This gave me hope.'*** He hopes his younger sisters will also participate when they are in grades 9-10 (next year!). Lucy Hobgood-Brown. Rotary E-Club of Greaser Sydney

This is the most cost-effective Youth Program any Rotary Club can undertake



The Future

Many programs were postponed during the previous year and some Universities reduced numbers. However, gradually enrolments are again reaching maximum numbers. The website is kept current at <https://www.scienceexperience.com.au/>

The program will take place in over thirty-five universities and tertiary institutions, within many different laboratories and lecture theatres. More than 84,000 students have taken this rare opportunity, to date.

Thank you once again to those Rotary Districts, Clubs and Rotarians that have given their support. Also, my appreciation goes to National Director of the Science Schools Foundation Jacqueline Bellars, Chairman Rick Tudor and the Committee members for their excellent management of this valuable and valued Rotary initiated and District supported Youth Program.

Marilyn Mercer. District Governor 2010-11
Rotary Elected Representative, (2011-2023)
The Science Experience

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