

MEDIA RELEASE

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 10.30AM AEDT SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER 2015

Game changers

30 October 2015: Winning games in the Australian STEM Video Game Challenge, to be announced at 10.30am tomorrow, Saturday 31 October, at PAX in Melbourne, show that game development is an educational game changer that is empowering Australian teachers, and inspiring a new generation of switched-on students.

Coordinated by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and supported by major partner PwC and innovation partner HP, and government, universities, corporate partners and game developers, the Australian STEM Video Game Challenge promotes engaging and interactive learning to increase interest and participation in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines by inviting school students to create an original video game.

More than 1500 students from across Australia registered for the 2015 Australian STEM Video Game Challenge, a quarter of them girls.

Chad Habel, Spokesperson for the Australian STEM Video Game Challenge, said the Challenge leverages the massive interest and engagement that many students have in video games to engage them in a more constructive and explicit learning process.

“The idea of the Challenge is that students take concept knowledge, something they’ve learnt in science class for example, and then create a game that elaborates on that concept. The Challenge also encourages freedom and creativity, and that can be a liberating experience for many students. It also offers goals and rewards which drive commitment to developing a game.”

Winners in the 2015 Australian STEM Video Game Challenge will be showcased at an award ceremony hosted by Dr Chad Habel at 10.30am, Saturday 31 October, at PAX at the Dropbear Theatre, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre when expert game industry professionals Rae Johnston, Dr Kristy de Salas, Josh Caratelli and Virginia King play the winning games, unpack what goes into making a great game and talk with the winning students.

Winning games will also be playable at the Australian STEM Video Game Challenge stand in the PAX expo hall. PAX, one of the largest video gaming events in the world, runs from 30 October to 1 November.

Winners in the Australian STEM Video Game Challenge

Years 5 to 8 individual – Daniel Blaker, Parade College, Melbourne, for *Phlight – The journey home*

Years 5 to 8 group – Periodic Survival, Mosman High School, Sydney, for *Periodic Survival*

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Years 9 to 12 individual – Aidan Court, John Pirie Secondary School, Port Pirie SA, for *Rexplorer*

Years 9 to 12 group – Anomaly Blue, Callaghan College, Jesmond Senior Campus, Newcastle, for *Dolphin Dive*

Years 9 to 12 individual advanced – Kwegan Gregory, Bunbury Senior High School, Bunbury WA, for *Rewire*

Years 9 to 12 group advanced – Invisible Wombats, Trinity Christian School, Canberra, for *Malware Meltdown*

PwC achievement award – female – Penrhos 1, Penrhos College, Perth, for *Destroy the Nurdles, Save the Turtles*

PwC achievement award – Indigenous – Couch Gaming, Montrose Bay High School, Hobart, for *Times of War*

Further information on the winners in the attached information sheet is also strictly embargoed until 10.30AM AEDT Saturday 31 October 2015.

The winning students and showcase participants will be available for interview after the award ceremony.

Watch or download game play videos of the winning games using the username **stem-media** password **Stem2015**

[*Phlight – The journey home; Periodic Survival; Rexplorer; Dolphin Dive; Rewire; Malware Meltdown; Destroy the Nurdles, Save the Turtles; Times of War*](#)

[Download all winning entries.](#)

Registrations for the 2016 Australian STEM Video Game Challenge open in April 2016. For more information, visit < www.stemgames.org.au >

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