

More information

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New Five-Year Partnership for Scitech and Rio Tinto to Strengthen STEM Capabilities Across Western Australia

Scitech and Rio Tinto have signed a new five-year Partnership worth \$4.4million to continue the work that has directly influenced over two million West Australians through science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education initiatives since 2003.

The 2018 – 2023 Partnership will add two new initiatives to the five existing program areas, to specifically boost engagement with young people aged 12 – 17years, to support the need to develop a future STEM enabled workforce pipeline and to have them equipped and ready for empowering STEM careers.

Ms Deb Hancock, Chief Executive Officer, Scitech said, “The continuation of our partnership with Rio Tinto allows Scitech to deliver important STEM-skills development programs, which through our depth of reach across the state, create an incomparable connection between industry, community and education. We are extremely proud to continue to work with Rio Tinto to drive STEM engagement to all corners of our great State, with the mutual ambition to create future prosperity and economic sustainability for all Western Australians.”

Matthew Holcz, Rio Tinto Managing Director, Planning, Integration and Assets, said “We recognise that jobs are changing and so too are the skills needed for the workforce of the future. Rio Tinto is committed to helping build capacity in future generations by actively supporting STEM education pathways.

“Our 15-year partnership with Scitech has delivered a wide range of STEM educational initiatives, helping to foster a culture of innovation and inspiring hundreds of thousands of primary and secondary school students across Western Australia along the way.

“The extension of our successful partnership for a further five years ensures we can continue to support development of a STEM literate workforce to strengthen the future economic and social prosperity of Western Australia.”

The 2018 – 2023 Partnership will introduce the new elements of Hackathon challenges for secondary students to solve real world problems in a collaborative environment, which over time, will be rolled out regionally and virtually. And an increase in community and youth engagement in towns where Rio Tinto employees live and work.

A planned upgrade to the Rio Tinto Innovation Central interactive exhibition at the City West Science Centre will support an increase in hackathons and makers workshops to encourage young people to explore innovation principals.

Beijing Bound and RoboCup Junior are two highly successful annual competitions that target the development of critical STEM skills in school students. RoboCup Junior is an interschool competition for primary and secondary students to build and programme robots. Beijing Bound is a



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mentorship between Rio Tinto employees and secondary school students in the Pilbara, where two students are chosen to present their science projects at the annual Beijing Youth Science Creation Competition in China. From 2018 this program will be introduced to Busselton secondary students.

In the community, Rio Tinto supports a suite of live Scitech shows, hands-on workshops and events touring to 85% of all WA schools and 120 towns annually. On top of this is Scitech's highly lauded Aboriginal Education Program, a multi-partner initiative that visits every Aboriginal community in WA once every three years with culturally appropriate science activities.