

**More information**

**Susan Hoerlein**

Public Affairs & Communications Specialist

**p** (08) 9215 0733

**m** 0422 553 343

**e** [susan.hoerlein@scitech.org.au](mailto:susan.hoerlein@scitech.org.au)

## Scitech Partners with Ground-breaking Digital Child Research Centre

Scitech is proud to be a partner of the new Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child, granted \$34.9million by the Federal Minister for Education the Hon. Dan Tehan MP.

The only Science and Technology Centre in the cohort of partners, Scitech will have unprecedented access to world-class research investigating the risks and opportunities for children when using digital technologies.

Ms Kalien Selby, Scitech Chief Executive Officer, said “Scitech’s involvement with the Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child is an incredible opportunity for us to raise the bar on how we engage all Western Australians in STEM skills and knowledge through digital interactions.”

“We will be developing a collaborative space in the science centre, enhanced by global expertise, to facilitate research that will determine healthy and productive ways to use digital technologies for education purposes.”

“Results and learnings shared between Centre of Excellence researchers and Scitech’s team of content producers will then inform our program design and implementation for years to come. The return on investment for Scitech and by extension the WA community, will be immeasurable.”

“Linked directly to the ‘New Scitech’ strategy, our participation will accelerate Scitech’s commitment to drive deeper STEM engagement via digital and interactive experiences. This is truly vital to deliver equity of access and opportunity, to develop STEM skills across this vast state.”

Two PhD students will be residents within collaborative children’s technology spaces at the City West Science Centre, modelled on research hubs established at Queensland University of Technology and University of Wollongong. These hubs will contribute to a longitudinal family study over the 7-year research program, with a target of 3000 participants.

In a world-first, the Centre of Excellence will track the digital child from birth to eight years of age to consider the effects of being born into the digital age. However, by focusing research on families, the scope will broaden to include interactions with the key influencers of parents, grandparents and older siblings, who are key target audiences for Scitech.

The three central areas the Centre of Excellence will focus on are health, education and connectedness. Through inter-generational engagement, the study will look to balance the risks of using digital technology against the benefits in terms of health, security and the rights of the child.

The research will also look to understand how technology can optimise learning and will inform the development of engaging and thought-provoking new technologies and teaching resources aligned with the Digital Curriculum.

This timely and important research program will provide authoritative, evidence-based information to guide public policy, curriculum development and parenting decisions to help reduce the often confusing and opposing views surrounding such a critical issue.



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### *The ARC Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child Partners*

Based at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, researchers from five other Australian universities will also contribute to the Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child, including Curtin University and Edith Cowan University.

Fourteen international universities from the United States, United Kingdom, European Union and South Korea will contribute expertise from diverse disciplines ranging from education, health and psychology to digital technologies among others.

Scitech is proudly a Partner Organisation alongside eighteen other highly regarded institutions. These include, among others, Australian Council on Children and the Media; Australian Human Rights Commission, eSafety Commissioner; Google Australia, Playgroups WA, SBS and State Library WA.

For more information: <https://www.qut.edu.au/research/article?id=151648>