



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### More information

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## The future looks bright for young innovators

Kwinana and Rockingham's future innovators will put their science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills to the test by tackling a real-world challenge facing local industry.

The Future Innovators Event is run in partnership with STEM engagement organisation, Scitech and WA energy solutions provider, Kleenheat. Up to 60 students in years 5 and 6 will come together on November 17 to find ways to reduce waste in the life cycle of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

At Kleenheat's operational sites in Kwinana, PPE is worn to minimise risk to worker health and safety and includes items such as hardhats, steel cap boots and safety glasses. While it's necessary to protect workers, it's made out of material that isn't easily recycled, and unfortunately, the majority ends up in landfill.

Using a design thinking process, the students will work with Scitech consultants and Kleenheat mentors to co-design a solution to this problem, creating a prototype and presenting their ideas at a showcase for teachers and industry guests.

Kleenheat General Manager Mark Gadsby said the event is an opportunity to increase student interest and engagement in STEM by exploring a sustainability problem facing industry in their own backyard.

"When students work on an authentic problem like this one, they can more clearly see the genuine impact of their learning and how it could benefit business and the environment. This helps create a connection with the real-world and possible career opportunities after completing school," Mr Gadsby said.

### **Kwinana STEM Network**

The Future Innovators Event is the culmination of the inaugural Kwinana STEM Network, a contemporary professional development program supporting teachers from schools in Kwinana and Rockingham to develop integrated STEM lesson plans.

The teachers have spent the past two terms developing and trialling a selection of STEM lesson plans in the classroom. The Future Innovators Event is an opportunity for their students to showcase their newly developed STEM skills.

Kalien Selby, Scitech Chief Executive Officer, said inspiring educators to teach in more innovative and engaging ways is the key to motivating students in a life-long learning journey.

"Creating lesson plans that show the link between education and industry illustrates to students how the skills and knowledge they learn at school relates to their future by making them aware of pathways into STEM careers. Through our partnership with Kleenheat, we can take this one step further by connecting schools with STEM industry professionals from their local area."

In 2020, fifteen teachers participated in the Kwinana STEM Network from Bertram Primary School, Rockingham Beach Primary School, Safety Bay Primary School, Bungaree Primary School and Calista Primary School. The program is expected to continue in 2021.