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Scitech and Rio Tinto take 'Wheel World Problems' to Schools in Regional WA

Scitech and Rio Tinto have partnered to create an innovative new schools program that explores ways to solve real world sustainability problems. Aimed at secondary schools, the 'Make it to Market' program explores the innovation process and challenges students to apply design thinking methodology.

As part of Rio Tinto's ongoing support of STEM education within the WA community, 150 students at Tom Price Senior High School in the Pilbara will take part in the workshop over three-days later this month.

Year 7, 8 and 9 students from the school have been engaged to take part in repurposing old tyres from 500 Rio Tinto mining vehicles. Students will be encouraged to think big and come up with resourceful ways to repurpose materials using resources available from Scitech.

Applying 21st Century skills, students are encouraged to work collaboratively, critically analyse information, develop a creative solution and pitch their concept for evaluation. The workshop aims to address current and future complex problems that will need creative and innovative solutions. Using real world industry tools and process, students will learn to – *Understand, Define, Think, Make, Try, Refine and Share*.

Paul Stone, Scitech's Chief Executive Officer, said that through their partnership with Rio Tinto, the 'Make it to Market' program is able to be rolled out in regional WA and reach more students with an active interest in STEM learning.

"We encourage schools to get involved with these types of workshops. This specific activity using repurposed tyres will help to build real world skills and teach students how to apply knowledge, rather than just remembering it," he said.

"A program like 'Make it to Market' gets students thinking about the big picture and how actions have a flow-on effect. Students become empowered when they can see the connection to their futures through a relevant and 'self-guided' learning journey."

Rio Tinto Chief Executive, Iron Ore, Simon Trott said innovation is playing a significant role in the future of the mining sector.

"Rio Tinto is proud to partner with Scitech to deliver a program that invests in the next generation of innovators. This program will inspire the critical thinking that we need to find solutions to real issues at our mining operations.

"Programs like these have the potential to encourage students to explore technology focussed career opportunities so essential to the industry."

The 'Make it to Market' program, proudly supported by Rio Tinto, will be rolled out at Tom Price Senior High School across three, full-day sessions from 29 June – 1 July 2021.