

NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK SOUTHERN TASMANIA 2022
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONDAY 15 AUGUST 2022

VICE-REGAL SALUTE IS PLAYED

Good evening. I warmly welcome you all to this reception to mark National Science Week Southern Tasmania 2022.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

I also acknowledge:

- The Honourable Roger Jaensch;
- Dr Lila Landowski, Elizabeth College Science Week Patron and noted neuroscientist
- Professor Matt King, Tasmanian STEMM Researcher of the Year
- Elizabeth College Assistant Principal Helen Cooke, and colleagues including Karen Drysdale, Laboratory Manager, who have key roles in the program.
- Terry Bailey, Executive Dean of Science and Engineering at UTAS, and other representatives from UTAS, including Young Tassie Scientists

There are many guests here this evening whom students will recognise as leaders in their fields. By having an opportunity to talk with them, you should gain a greater understanding of our island's scientific endeavours and achievements. This may help shape your science journey. One of the main reasons for this reception is to enable students, mentors and leaders in science to meet and share ideas.

As you may know, Government House hosts a reception each year for this major national initiative of the Commonwealth Government through Inspiring Australia. I am proud to be associated with such a critically important sector of our education system, namely STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) subjects.

Australians overwhelmingly trust in science and our scientists – and we strongly fear negative consequences for our society if people do not value science.

A major new study¹ published recently found that Australians see science as indispensable, say it was our salvation in the pandemic and is the key to tackling existential threats such as climate change.

The 3M State of Science Index measures public attitudes to science in 17 countries. More than 1000 Australians were surveyed for the global poll in early 2022. The 3M survey revealed Australians have very strong levels of trust in science – higher than in many other nations – with nine in ten saying they trust science and scientists. Four in five Australians said they want to hear more from scientists about their work.

This survey also highlighted Australians' fears about what may happen if people do not value science, with three in five believing it would lead to more public health crises and more than half believing it would lead to greater division in society.

With all of the problems challenging our society, from the pandemic, to climate change, to food and energy security, it is clear that the solutions will come from scientists – those who do fundamental research, as well as those who translate that research into results that can be applied in large-scale production.

This year the schools' theme for National Science Week 2022 is *Glass: More than meets the eye*. Teachers and students can join activities celebrating the roles glass plays in our lives – from phone screens to optical fibre to glassware in labs.²

This is the 22nd Year that Elizabeth College has engaged in promoting science during Science Week, Southern Tasmania. That's an excellent record and the College can be justly proud of their efforts to increase public understanding and

¹ <https://scienceandtechnologyaustralia.org.au/australians-overwhelmingly-trust-in-science/> accessed 4 August 22

² <https://www.industry.gov.au/news/celebrating-national-science-week-2022> accessed 10 August 22

appreciation of science, innovation, engineering and technology, and of their role in maintaining and improving our society, economy and environment.

I was delighted to read about the success of our Tasmanian applicants in receiving grants to support Science Week. There are events being held across the State, in such diverse areas as female reproduction, Aboriginal astronomy and what I expect will be an instant hit, “Kitchen Science and Amazing Chocolate Creations.”

We are now going to enjoy some live music as we enjoy the reception together. The Elizabeth College String Quartet, with Liam Holbrook, Eryk Augustyniak, Maya Harrington and Jode Brewster Jones will join with the Elizabeth College Woodwind Ensemble of Georgia Cordwell, Jasmine Good, Naoise Michelin and Zoe Ennis to present a selection of repertoire, from the Renaissance sounds of John Dowland to Tchaikowsky, peppered with a touch of Duke Ellington.

Congratulations to Elizabeth College and National Science Week Committee members for organising such a varied and interesting program. I now invite you to enjoy the reception and enjoy the beautiful and historic State Rooms.

Thank you.