**MEDIA RELEASE**

*Monday 6 May 2019*

**Teenage Olympians go for gold at the Asian Physics Olympiad**

Australia to host Asia’s toughest physics competition for the first time

170 physics whizz kids from 23 countries at Adelaide Convention Centre on 6 May 2019

Eight of Australia’s top performing student physicists will compete against 170 of Asia’s smartest kids representing 22 countries and regions at the Asian Physics Olympiad to be held at the Adelaide Convention Centre from 6 to 12 May.

The Australian Year 11 and 12 students are from Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Canberra and Sutton, NSW. They will compete in theoretical and experimental exams that draw on first-year university physics, and will try to win gold for Australia.

The students have spent a year in exams and intensive training to make the cut, outperforming more than 1,700 other students who sat the qualifying exam.

“For me to represent Australia at the Asian Physics Olympiad is a dream come true. I am here because of my brilliant science teachers who encouraged me to have a go,” says team member Rosemary Zielinski from Merici College in Canberra.

“These young science champions deserve our support because their talent will help drive the deep science and technologies on which our future prosperity in Australia and the region will depend,” says Professor Caroline McMillen, Chief Scientist for South Australia.

The Asian Physics Olympiad is Asia’s toughest physics competition for high school students.

“Hosting this competition in Australia for the first time provides an important opportunity to champion our young science talent, as well as shine a spotlight on Australian science education and Australian physics,” says Ruth Carr, Executive Director of official organiser, Australian Science Innovations.

Competitors will sit the theoretical exam on 7 May, followed by the experimental exam on 9 May. The exams are marked twice and moderated by each participating country’s team leaders before the final marks are decided. Participants will receive medals and awards based on their exam scores at the closing ceremony on 12 May.

The week-long Asian Physics Olympiad program also includes a range of cultural and educational activities, including a quantum computing presentation by 2018 Australian of Year Professor Michelle Simmons, visits to local schools and universities, and an introduction to Australian Rules Football.

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The 20th Asian Physics Olympiad is brought to Australia by Australian Science Innovations and is funded by the Federal Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.

The Australian team members for the 20th Asian Physics Olympiad are:

Stephen Catsamas Year 12 Marcellin College VIC

Benjamin Davison-Petch Year 12 Christ Church Grammar WA

Min-Je Hwang Year 12 James Ruse Agricultural College NSW

Alexander Lin Year 11 The King’s School NSW

Jessie Lum Year 12 Pymble Ladies’ College NSW

William Sutherland Year 12 Scotch College VIC

Simon Yung Year 12 Narrabundah College ACT

Rosemary Zielinski Year 12 Merici College ACT

Find out more about the Australian team in this video [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uemoLCdnuf0).

**About the Asian Physics Olympiad**

The Asian Physics Olympiad (APhO) is modelled after the UNESCO-sanctioned International Science Olympiad competitions for high school students held annually and hosted by a different country each year. The first APhO was hosted by Indonesia in 2000. It has grown in popularity from year to year as a platform for unlocking the potential of Asia’s best young science brains.

The competition involves two five-hour exams of university standard, one theory and one practical. Each country sends a team of up to eight competitors. Exams are undertaken individually, with bronze, silver and gold medals awarded to high-scoring students.

The competition is a unique experience for high school students as they battle it out to prove their knowledge and problem-solving skills, while also building relationships and sharing knowledge with peers across Asia. For more information visit: apho2019.asi.edu.au

**About Australian Science Innovations**

Australian Science Innovations runs the Australian Science Olympiad program that selects and trains Australian students to compete in the International Science Olympiad competitions. Learn more about the Australian Science Olympiads Competition at: asi.edu.au

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