

## Deep dives, green steel, Star Wars – National Science Week kicks off

August promises cool science, hot topics and sharp people.



With more than 2000 planned events around Australia, National Science Week, 10 to 18 August, offers multiple story opportunities – so the time to start scheduling is now.

Headline local and international science stars include:

- NASA exobiologist **Darlene Lim** – a scientist who prepares astronauts for missions by putting them in the toughest environments on Earth.
- **Sylvia Earle** – nicknamed “Her Deepness”, this veteran US oceanographer pioneered extreme diving, and lived in experimental underwater habitats.
- **Veena Sahajwalla** – based at UNSW, Veena is the inventor of green steel, a new building material made from old car tyres and recycled plastic.
- **Eddie Wu** – a Sydney maths teacher and YouTube star, Eddie was named Australia’s Local Hero for 2018, and fronted the ABC television series, *Teenage Boss*.

Other guests include US-based astrobiologist **Paul Davies**, Australian Nobel laureate **Elizabeth Blackburn**, and *War on Waste* star **Craig Reucassel**.

National Science Week activities take place in capital cities, regional centres, and remote settlements across the country. Highlights include:

- **The Great Aussie BioQuest** – a citizen science project using smartphones to map biodiversity.
- **The Science of Star Wars**, at Canberra’s popular culture festival, GAMMA.CON.
- **Coffee in Space**. How do you make a decent latte on the moon? In Melbourne and Victorian regional centres, scientists demonstrate the fine art of brewing in zero-gravity.
- **Science Behind Bars** – visit Fremantle Prison and explore forensics and criminology with scientists from Perth’s Murdoch University.
- **Kids Navigate Neuroscience** – fun and games for Adelaide children keen to explore the form and function of the brain.
- **TastroFest** – featuring droid-building displays, telescope workshops and a giant inflatable Space Shuttle, Tasmania’s astronomy festival happens in the north coast town of Ulverstone.

National Science Week is one of Australia’s largest festivals, first held in 1997. Last year about 1.2 million people participated in more than 2100 events.

This year will feature parties, music and comedy shows, panel discussions, citizen science opportunities, interactive displays, film nights, open days and online activities.

The festival is proudly supported by the Australian Government; partners CSIRO, the Australian Science Teachers Association and the ABC; and media sponsors including *Cosmos*, *New Scientist* and *Science Illustrated*. More information: [www.scienceweek.net.au](http://www.scienceweek.net.au).

Search for events in your area: [scienceweek.net.au/events/](http://scienceweek.net.au/events/). More highlights [here](#). Images for media [here](#).

If you’d like to follow up on any of these stories or hear about others that are relevant to your round, get in touch. To receive story alerts in the lead up to and during National Science Week, [register here](#) or email [tanya@scienceinpublic.com.au](mailto:tanya@scienceinpublic.com.au).

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