

Shine On



Scientific researchers require a particular type of mind to understand that which is often beyond the understanding of others. They have courage, dedication, absolute focus, and a relentlessly inquisitive approach that drives them to succeed, regardless of the challenges.

Philanthropy comes from the heart. It comes from a desire to give back, a desire to change the things in the world that are unjust and solve the problems that seem overwhelming.

Through our work, the Australian Academy of Science strives to bring together the people who want to change the world with those who can. This type of partnership is surely one worthy of support.

Academy launches its Annual Giving Program for 2017

Science matters: support the future of science today

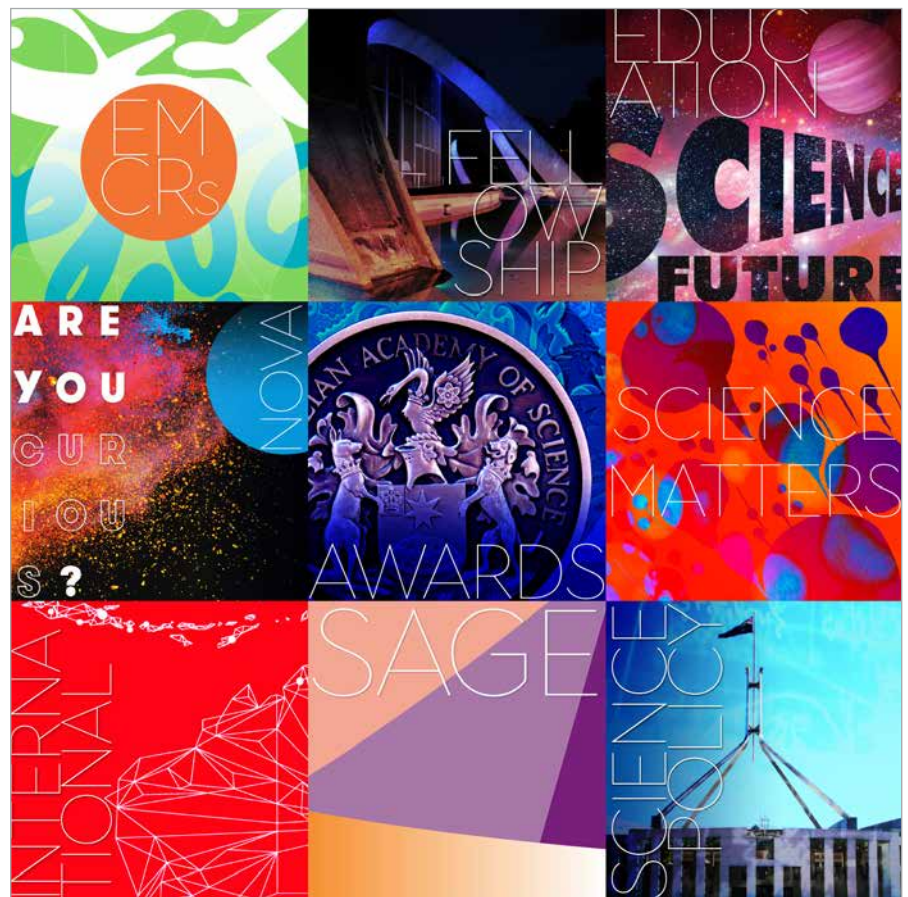
Science makes valuable contributions to our communities, saving lives, improving living standards and protecting our environment.

We have achieved a great deal in our 63-year history, but the future is going to require all our efforts if we are to continue to meet the challenges ahead.

Your gift helps the Academy maintain its independence and supports our efforts to forge a future that transforms our understanding of ourselves, our world and our universe.

In May, the Academy is launching our 2017 Annual Giving program and we invite you to be a part of our valuable future through your donation. Make science matter.

You will shortly be receiving our appeal letter or email and we thank you for your trust in the Academy to direct your donations to those projects that will have the greatest impact.





Indigenous scientist award

The Academy is excited to announce a wonderful new initiative. An anonymous donor has contributed \$250,000 over five years to establish an Indigenous scientist award. While the award details are still being developed, we envisage it will be:

- awarded annually
- focused on early- and mid-career researchers
- awarded in any field of science recognised by the Academy
- comparable with other awards
- evaluated by a committee.

The Academy is consulting with Indigenous experts to maximise the award's impact. We expect that the first award will be announced at Science at the Shine Dome in May 2018.

Philanthropic support for the Academy Awards

Our distinguished Fellowship and friends play an important and ongoing role in supporting our efforts to champion, celebrate and support excellence in Australian science. The numbers below help give a glimpse of the range of activities at the Academy.

The Academy runs **15** schemes to support research, research conferences and travelling fellowships. Annually these provide around **\$350,000**.

The Academy awards honorific awards that recognise distinguished research in three categories:

- Early-career awards—for scientists up to 10 years post PhD
- Mid-career awards—for scientists 8 to 15 years post PhD

- Career awards—for scientists to recognise achievement over their career.

5 career, **3** mid-career and **9** early-career research awards with **\$10,500** worth of associated honorariums and lecture funding.

Talks and lectures

In 2016, **42** talks and lectures were funded by the Academy's travelling fellowship and lecture awards. These were conducted in **6** states at **22** different venues including **19** universities. **1700+** attendees were recorded.

The Academy's ability to provide these awards has been made possible over the years by philanthropic funding and astute investment. Individuals have given through bequests, some provide annual support and others prefer to be

more involved and participate in the award process, ensuring that their experience deepens the satisfaction of contributing to a world where scientific research is valued and encouraged.

Inaugural Max Day Award at Science at the Shine Dome

In our last donor newsletter we spoke about the new Max Day Environmental Science Fellowship Award. Dr Max Day is a champion of entomology, conservation and forestry, and at 101 is the oldest and longest-serving Academy Fellow. With funding from the Day family, the Academy is providing this support to early-career researchers in his honour.

The Academy received 111 eligible applications—a terrific response. The award provides up to \$20,000 per year



Nick Leseberg in the field in Western QLD where he's studying the elusive Night Parrot. Photo credit: Nick Leseberg



Marta Yebra characterising the spectral response of grasses during a fire experiment in Braidwood. Photo Credit: Carolina Luiz

to support early-career researchers working on the conservation of Australia's flora and fauna, ecologically sustainable use of resources, protection of the environment and ecosystem services.

Mr Nicholas Leseberg from the University of Queensland and Dr Marta Yebra from the Australian National

University are the first recipients. PhD student Mr Leseberg will use his Max Day Award to investigate the ecology of the elusive and endangered Night Parrot, while Dr Yebra will study the moisture content of Australian forests to create models that predict bushfires.

In addition to the awardees, three researchers were highly commended:

- Dr Hugo Harrison from the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University for his project 'Connecting reefs in the Anthropocene: managing Australia's coral reefs for recovery and persistence'
- Dr Kerensa McElroy from CSIRO for her project 'The 'DNA footprint' of near extinction: interrogating 100 years of black-throated finch decline by sequencing contemporary and historical specimens'
- Mr Max Worthington from Flinders University for his project 'Renewable polymers for agriculture and the environment'.

On Wednesday 24 May during Science at the Shine Dome, a special marquee will be set up to provide a relaxed setting for supporters of Academy awards and their guests to meet the award recipients. This event will be a wonderful opportunity for all to chat over lunch about the benefits of the awards and future plans.

Polymers the talk of the town

Plastic Fantastic: Polymers in a Material World has begun, with talks delivered in Melbourne and Sydney to captivated audiences.

This series brings to the main stage the science of polymers, a magnificent material science which is working to destroy cancer cells, make aeroplanes lighter, strengthen windscreens and even give us the ability to create artificial muscle tissue from fishing line that reacts in a similar fashion to our muscle tissue.

In this polymerised world nothing is off-limits; if you can dream it they can make it a reality. New uses for polymers are being developed to purify water, enable us to paint a whole structure in



Left: Dr Scott Watkins (centre) chief Marketing Officer KISCO, one of the speakers at the polymers talk, engaging with attendees.

Above (from left): Professor Andrew Holmes, Dr Ezio Rizzardo and Professor David Solomon, three giants in the world of chemistry and polymers, catching up after the polymers talk in Melbourne.

solar-conducting materials to generate energy, and even recycle waste products to clean up environmental disasters.

Dr Scott Watkins, Associate Professor Drew Evans and Associate Professor Madhu Bhaskaran presented wide and varied uses of polymers and the audience had lots of questions following the talks.

Later in the year we will head to Wollongong, Newcastle and Adelaide to explore 'Making better humans with polymers'.

This series is presented with the generous support of Academy Fellow and developer of the polymer bank note, Professor David Solomon AC FAA.

Supporters and partners for polymers national speaker series

The Academy would like to thank:

- Professor David Solomon, without whose generous support this series would not be possible
- our marvellous MC Bobbi Cerini, National Manager of the Inspiring Australia Program, Questacon

- our science communication partner, Nova, which helped make this subject more accessible for our audience
- the Garvan Institute, for its support with our Sydney venue
- Questacon, for its production of the 'Story of the Plastic Bank Note' video.

Coming up next: Wollongong, Newcastle and Adelaide

Join Dr Katherine Locock, Professor Martina Stenzel and Professor Gordon Wallace and explore the future of polymers and the human body, where futuristic polymer materials will be used to augment, heal and even replace parts of the body.

MAKING BETTER HUMANS WITH POLYMERS

- Wollongong—17 August 2017
- Newcastle—5 October 2017
- Adelaide—2 November 2017

Dawn of the new space age: Canberra speaker series

Our 2017 Canberra speaker series, 'Dawn of the New Space Age', is attracting large audiences, with many

patrons kindly giving a donation. These donations are used to bring these and more amazing science speakers to the Academy year on year.

Thank you again to our donors and patrons of the Academy speaker series.

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President meets young science enthusiast in Adelaide

Philanthropy comes in all shapes and sizes

As Academy President, Professor Holmes travels the world championing, supporting and promoting scientific excellence and international scientific engagement. In spite of this, he always manages to have time to inspire young scientists of the future. Here is the story of Robert Jeffries and his family from Adelaide.

Dear Academy person,
 My name is Robert Jeffries and I am 11 years of age. My dad is a space nut but can't come and see Buzz Aldrin as it is too far away and he can't afford the trip. Could I buy Mr. Aldrin's autograph to give to my dad for his Christmas please. His name is Daren and he would be very very happy if I could get this for him.

Thank you and I hope you can help me out.

Robert.

The letter the Academy received from young Robert

What began with a letter from a 9-year-old boy, ended with a dream come true for Robert Jeffries from Adelaide.

While we couldn't get a hold of Buzz Aldrin (see Robert's letter), we could think of no better space superstar than Academy Fellow Professor Brian Schmidt—the Australian Nobel Prize winner who discovered dark energy.

Professor Schmidt's discovery that the universe is growing at an accelerating rate—not slowing down as most scientists had thought—completely changed our understanding of the universe.

Also keen to foster an interest in science in the young (and not so young), Brian was happy to have a Nobel poster with his autograph sent to Robert.

What happened next?

Through the powers of social media, 'Mars One' participant Josh Richards saw our story in February about Robert's Christmas wish...



Above and left: Academy President, Professor Andrew Holmes meeting the Jeffries family at IMMORTALITY in Adelaide

'I have Buzz Aldrin's signature,' Josh wrote to us via Facebook, 'and I'd love to get it to the boy and his family.'

So, at his Planet Talk at WOMADelaide on Saturday 11, March the Academy helped make this happen.

The Academy sent Robert and his family to WOMADelaide on us so they could hear Josh speak about the Mars One mission, whether colonising Mars is the next giant leap for humanity, and how he's practising and preparing to go and live on the Red Planet.

Dear Elena,

This is just a short thank you note for the brilliant poster that you sent to my son Robert in November for my Christmas present.

To receive a poster signed by Professor Schmidt, and from such a prestigious academy as yours, is something to be cherished, and to see the pride on Robert's face when I received it on Christmas day is something that will not be soon forgotten.

Your organisation should be congratulated for honouring a small boy's wishes for a present for his dad.

Thank you once again with sincere gratitude.



Academy Fellow, Professor Robyn Williams with young Robert and Josh Richards at the WOMADelaide Festival

And then, Josh gave 9-yr-old Robert and his space-nut dad Buzz's signature.

It was a touching moment and there weren't many dry eyes in the room as Robert got his wish. Thank you so much to Josh for his generous and inspiring act of kindness and the many people who helped make this dream come true.

Another highlight for Robert and his family was meeting radio legend and Fellow of the Academy, Robyn Williams from the ABC Science Show.

Science at the Shine Dome, May 2017

Science at the Shine Dome will be a fantastic event that showcases our new Fellows and awardees. Sponsorship helps the Academy to engage with the broader science community and facilitate an early- and mid-career researcher program. We are grateful to our generous sponsors who help make these events possible.

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- Institute for Glycomics, Griffith University (x 2)
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- University of Western Australia.

President's Circle Members

The President's Circle is the Academy's community of donors who have shown a commitment, through their donations, that reinforces their engagement with our mission and values and for this the Academy is deeply grateful. The Academy's endowment fund allows us to implement a wide range of initiatives that extend its core business.

The Academy acknowledges the support of donors who gave generously **over the past 12 months**. Their support plays a critical role in helping us achieve our mission. Members of the President's Circle and Science Circle appear on the donor recognition boards in the foyer of the Shine Dome.



Professor Andrew Holmes AC PresAA FRS FTSE

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- Dr Maxwell Day AO FAA
- The Late Professor Rod Rickards FAA and Dr Anna Rickards
- Professor Terry Speed FAA FRS and Ms FE (Sally) Speed

Science Circle

(Donations of or valued at \$20,000 – \$99,999)

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- Anonymous (1)

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NOTE: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. We sincerely apologise if any error or omission has occurred. If you notice an error or omission please notify us on 02 6201 9400.

All donations will be acknowledged for a period of 12 months. This list will be updated quarterly. **Last updated March 2017**

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through a donation or bequest, please contact:

Ms Isobel Griffin MFIA
Manager

Development and Stewardship
isobel.griffin@science.org.au
Phone: 02 6201 9471