




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Engaging Science Grants

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (2.57 pm): Earlier this year Brisbane hosted the World Science Festival, for which some of the world's most famous scientists and supporters of science graced our shores. These included renowned actor Alan Alda and American theoretical physicist and string theorist Professor Brian Greene. What was clear from the festival and all of these fantastic people was the utmost importance of communicating the value of science to the wider community. If we are to develop Queensland into a resilient and thriving economy, an economy capable of grabbing the opportunities presented by the changing global economy, then science communication is integral. It is integral to successfully persuade all our young people to look to science as a worthwhile and valuable career. It is also important as a multiplier of science literacy in the community and to keep the community informed of the great work our Queensland scientists are doing and how their efforts are beneficial to all of us.

A science literate community is vital to ensuring the success of a knowledge based economy. Recent research by the Office of the Queensland Chief Scientist showed that almost three-quarters of Queenslanders are interested in science, yet almost half believe there are not enough science events, activities and information in their area. Just last week 2,895 Queensland students set a new world record for the largest practical science lesson, and the positive reaction from the media and the public was enormous. With this in mind, I am pleased to inform the House that the Palaszczuk government is today launching a major program under the Advance Queensland innovation initiative that will help increase the reach of science in Queensland.

Our new Advance Queensland Engaging Science Grants program aims to create a Queensland population that engages in, recognises, supports and advocates for science. Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to scientists, researchers, science communicators, journalists, teachers, organisations and community groups to develop and deliver science engagement and communication projects, events and activities. I know these grants are going to increase our knowledge of the great science happening right here in Queensland and I hope that over time Queenslanders will become even more engaged in science. Applications for 2016-17 are now open and details are available on the Advance Queensland website. I look forward to updating the House on the outcomes of these grants.