

Aust Institute for Commercialisation promotes research into reality: a National Science Week TV series



The Oscars theme for the pre-screening event, hosted by the AIC at Brisbane Technology Park.

The Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) last month hosted the pre-screening of National Science Week's TV series, *From Research to Reality*, on Queensland's community TV channel, 31 Digital.

The pre-screening event, which took place on February 24, showcased the series which throws a spotlight on some of Queensland's scientific, technical and entrepreneurial genius.

In keeping with the proceedings of an opening night, the evening took on an Oscars theme and was officially launched by Minister for Energy and Water Utilities, Stephen Robertson.

Rowan Gilmore, CEO of the AIC and the evening's master of ceremonies, stressed the need for an excellent education system, a technologically-skilled workforce, a com-



Rowan Gilmore.

munity literate in science, and well-informed decision makers if Australia is to remain a rich, advanced and developed nation.

Dr Gilmore also highlighted the work of the National Science Week committee in engaging the community in science, not only through the *Research to Reality* TV series, but also through the range of events and activities it runs during the year. These are now part of an overarching *Inspiring Australia* national strategy which seeks to build a strong, open relationship between science and society, underpinned by effective communication of science and its benefits as the most effective way to ensure Australians enjoy a healthy, wealthy future.

As one of the episode sponsors, Dr Gilmore highlighted the work done by the AIC with entrepreneurs, businesses, research organisations and governments to convert ideas or intellectual property into successful business outcomes and growth, and the fact that the AIC is delighted to be a part of the National Science Week series to demonstrate how science, technology and entrepreneurship can deliver such achievements.

Mr Robertson attended to show his support of the National Science Week initiative and spoke about his government's commitment to science at a local level. The Minister praised the efforts of researchers and their contribution to the local economy, and emphasised his belief that support of science is a long term investment, rather than a short term effort.

Queensland Chief Scientist Geoff Garrett, then undertook a question and answer session with Dr Gilmore which included Dr Garrett sharing his thoughts on his new role as Chief Scientist as well as the key barriers to young people pursuing a career science.

Dr Garrett also outlined the challenges faced by science and research industries in Queensland and the role of science in the states key sectors of tourism, agriculture, and mining.

Two short clips from the series

were shown, recounting the stories behind two Queensland companies that have gone to market with products developed from their research.

The first clip covered Klein Architectural, an AIC client, providing stainless steel products. Klein invented and patented an innovative Grab Rail – the KAG rail. The KAG has 80 percent more grip than conventional rails.

The second clip highlighted GroundProbe, also an AIC client and a high-growth Brisbane company providing the mining industry with innovative radar technology (called Slope Stability Radar) to improve safety on-site by alerting staff to potential instability in a mine wall before it collapses.

Simon France, programs manager of Science Communications and Strategic Partnerships at the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research outlined the vision for National Science Week and the *Inspiring Australia* strategy.

Mr France spoke about the impact that National Science Week has had in the past and mentioned how proud he was to see the changing attitudes of young people towards their peers who express an interest in science. Mr France encouraged all attendees to be involved in this year's National Science Week activities to continue raising the profile of science and research in Australia.

More than 100 people attended the event and a wide range of organisations were represented, including CSIRO, the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), and UK Trade and Investment.

The series began broadcasting on 31 Digital starting from March 3 at 7pm.

Episode sponsors include the Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC), QUT Medical Engineering Research Facility (MERF), Queensland Police Service Forensic Services Branch, UniQuest and 31Digital.

<http://31digital.com.au/nsk/> ■