

MEDIA RELEASE
27 February 2008



Teachers put to the test at student science and engineering challenge

More than 75 teachers from south-east Queensland schools will put their skills to the test in the Science and Engineering Challenge next week in a bid to strengthen ties with industry and the broader scientific community.

Held at the University of Queensland from March 3-7, the challenge will see teachers compete against their students in a race to apply problem solving and investigation skills to a range of challenge questions.

Education Queensland has been working collaboratively with the Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) to improve the level of interaction between Queensland science based industries and Education Queensland's science teachers and students.

Developed by the University of Newcastle for students across Australia, the challenge will allow teachers to engage in real-world problem solving with their students and enable them to take fresh ideas back to the classroom for implementation.

Queensland Chief Scientist Prof Peter Andrews said the challenge offered teachers a rare opportunity to engage with colleagues from the science and engineering community to develop practical skills.

"The Science and Engineering Challenge is an excellent opportunity for middle school science teachers to foster active partnerships with the industry in a practical setting," Prof Andrews said.

"Competing against their students will provide an added challenge, creating a fun and competitive atmosphere for them to put their knowledge into action."

The week will kick-off on Monday 3 March with an inspiring breakfast for teachers featuring former student Ben Lukoszek, who at the age of 14 used his high-school science skills to take a pet skateboard design project to the commercial marketplace.

Middle school teachers and their students will then participate together in the challenge activities, a bridge building competition and a series of presentations and practical workshops.

AIC Chief Executive Officer Dr Rowan Gilmore said it was imperative for teachers and students to maintain regular contact with the emerging sciences to ensure Queensland remains competitive at a national level.

"If Queensland is to continue to generate future science and engineering leaders, we need to ensure our teachers are given the best resources and industry support in order to educate our future generation," Dr Gilmore said.

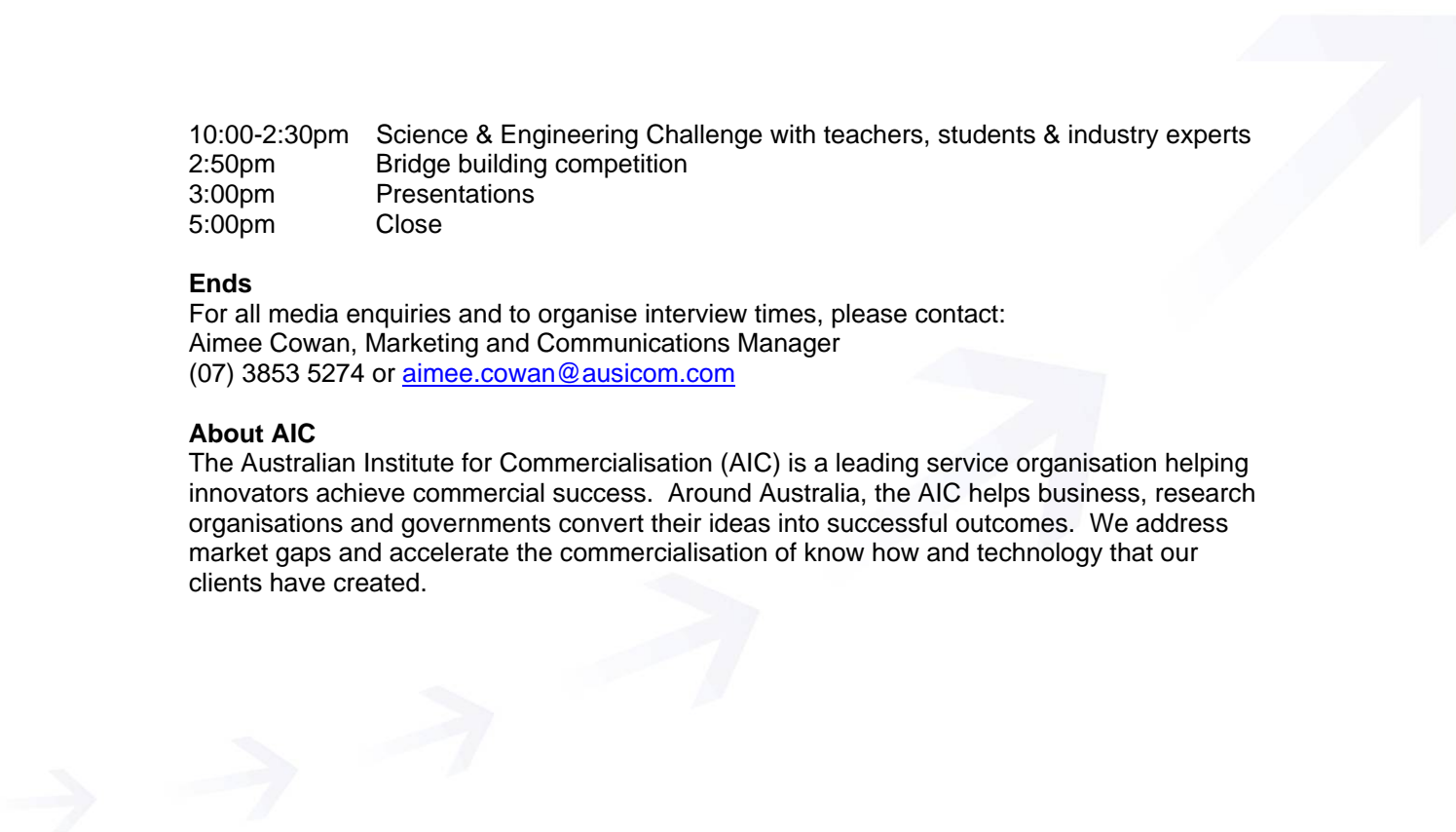
"The new idea that a teacher takes away from this challenge could be the one that inspires their students to pursue a career in science or engineering".

This event forms part of a broader initiative between Education Queensland and the AIC to build linkages between Queensland schools and industry.

PHOTO/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:

Monday 3 March

LOCATION: UQ Centre, Union Road Building 27a (next to the pool)
7:15-9:00am Breakfast at University of Queensland



10:00-2:30pm Science & Engineering Challenge with teachers, students & industry experts
2:50pm Bridge building competition
3:00pm Presentations
5:00pm Close

Ends

For all media enquiries and to organise interview times, please contact:
Aimee Cowan, Marketing and Communications Manager
(07) 3853 5274 or aimee.cowan@ausicom.com

About AIC

The Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) is a leading service organisation helping innovators achieve commercial success. Around Australia, the AIC helps business, research organisations and governments convert their ideas into successful outcomes. We address market gaps and accelerate the commercialisation of know how and technology that our clients have created.