

5TH WORLD CONFERENCE OF  
**science  
journalists**



16-20 APRIL

2007

MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA...A SCIENCE ADVENTURE IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA...A SCIENCE ADVENTURE IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

## 5th World Conference of Science Journalists

Next year, Australia will have a unique opportunity to promote the best of our science and technology to international journalists when we host some 400 science journalists and communicators for the 5th World Conference of Science Journalists.

Science journalists have an essential role in society: interpreting science to the community, engaging our sense of wonder, exploring the implications of new technologies—both good and bad—and contributing to science literacy. That's why, when the Australian Science Communicators were approached to bid for the 5th World Conference of Science Journalists, we thought it was a 'must do'.

With the combined efforts of science journalists and communicators across Australia and supported by the Victorian government, we won the bid, defeating Munich, Beijing, Trieste and Barcelona. The gathering of science journalists together from around the world will help create a global network of science journalists that will enhance the reporting of science and innovation.

In October 2004, over 600 delegates attended the 4th World Conference of Science Journalists in Montreal.

The conference was a watershed in creating a global community of science journalists and led to the creation of a \$1.5 million program to support science journalism in developing countries.

Now the mantle has passed on to Melbourne.

We are planning for a vibrant international conference with at least 400 delegates in Melbourne.

A three day event will be topped and tailed with optional satellite conferences, meetings and tours to give a full week of activities. The Australasian Medical Writers Association, and CSIRO Communicators have already confirmed they will be joining us for a week of science in Melbourne.

We believe the conference will make a permanent mark:

- helping to maintain and grow a global network of science journalists and enhancing the quality and breadth science reporting;
- building the science journalism community - helping writers, editors and media owners to see the value in good science reporting across the major media; and
- increasing the international coverage of Australian science and scientists before, during and after the conference.

The program is being developed by working journalists including: the ABC's Robyn Williams; the Australian's Leigh Dayton; Deborah Smith from the Sydney Morning Herald; BBC TV's Pallab Ghosh; Asahi Shimbun's Mariko Takahishi, and Peter Calami from the Toronto Star.

The program is shaping up to be quite provocative with sessions designed to challenge thinking on science reporting and the role that journalists play.

And with the conference now five months away, there have been some pleasing developments. The World Federation of Science Journalists has secured \$1.5 million Canadian dollars for a mentoring program for developing country journalists. This will fund the participation of twenty to thirty international journalists to Australia.

A number of countries are planning study tours: 20 science writers from Finland will be coming out together and 10 journalists from Korea. The British, Canadians and Germans are working out how they can bring across a small delegation.

And a number of leading journalists have confirmed they will be coming including: John Rennie, Editor-in-chief with Scientific American, Geoff Carr, science editor with The Economist, Pallab Ghosh, senior science reporter with BBC Television, Peter Calamai, senior science reporter Toronto Star, Mariko Takahashi, deputy science editor with Asahi Shimbun, Nadia El-Awady, IslamOnline.net's science editor, Diran Onifade, Nigerian Television, and Wolfgang C. Goede Science news Editor, P.M. Magazine.

We are promoting the Conference—and Australian science—at a series of major international meetings including: the European Science Forum in Munich in July, the BA Festival of Science in England in September, the National Association of Science Writers annual meeting in Baltimore in October and the AAAS meeting in the USA in February in 2007.

We've chosen these meetings because each is a focal point for science journalists.

But we need your help to make it happen.

In return we offer unprecedented access to the world's science journalists gathered at one time in one place, for a science adventure in Melbourne. We welcome your thoughts on how your organisation might like to be involved and support the conference

Please contact myself on +61 3 5253 1391 or Sarah Brooker, the Executive Officer on +61 3 9397 3980 to discuss how your organisation might be involved.

Kind regards,



Niall Byrne  
Conference Director