



MEDIA RELEASE

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## Inaugural i3 Awards Presentation Honours Top Young Scientists

The i3 Awards, a national science competition celebrating inquiry, innovation and ingenuity of Australian school students, held its inaugural awards ceremony tonight, recognising the brightest young minds in science and technology. The virtual event featured esteemed guests, Professor Lyn Beazley AO and Macinley Butson, who presented the prizes to junior and senior students, and messages from Minister for Education the Hon. Jason Clare and the Minister for Industry, Science and Resources, the Hon Ed Husic.

Across the country, either as classroom tasks or independently, students from kindergarten to year 12 complete authentic independent scientific research projects or design innovative new technologies. Science and engineering competitions in each state encourage and support students and recognise their success. ASTA President Rosemary Anderson said, "These national awards recognise some of the most promising young scientists in Australia. Nationally we are looking at the best of the best. We received 54 nominations from students who excelled in their state science and engineering competitions."

The projects demonstrated a great deal of creativity, innovation, and technical skill. With projects ranging from new technologies to support people with hearing and vision impairment, innovations to support environmental sustainability and inventions to increase health and safety.

Of these 54 projects, judges selected twelve finalists for consideration by a senior judging panel that included representatives from the Australian Academy of Science, AARNet, The Australian Museum, and CSIRO. Projects were evaluated on their scientific merit, technical skill, innovation, and potential impact.

President Rosemary Anderson congratulated all participants, saying, "I am thrilled to see so many young people passionate about science and technology. Your creativity and ingenuity are inspiring, and I have no doubt that you will go on to make significant contributions to the scientific community and to society as a whole."

The federal Ministers for Education and Industry, Science and Resources also shared messages of support and congratulations to the winners and all nominees.

"There is a considerable amount of inquiry, innovation and ingenuity among the students who have been nominated for these awards," said Minister Husic.

“To the students nominated here tonight, congratulations on all of your hard work, I hope that you have learned a lot, and that this work has inspired you to join our ranks of incredible STEM researchers and scientists or perhaps become a science teacher one day yourself.” said Minister Clare.

"We were blown away by the quality of the entries," said the judges. "Their projects are a testament to the strength of science education in this country. The students demonstrated not only scientific excellence but also a deep understanding of the social and environmental issues that affect our world. We are honoured to have had the opportunity to recognise and celebrate their achievements."

Now studying science and working as a STEM professional, former NSW Young Australian of the Year Macinley Butson said, “Competing in this kind of competition definitely played a huge role in my career path - I’m so thankful for the opportunities that came from being involved. I am excited to see what the future holds for these brilliant young scientists”.

For more information, please visit <https://asta.edu.au/programs/asta-i3-awards/>

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## 2023 i3 Award Winners

### **Grand prize for Innovation - Senior Invention and Engineering Award.**

Kai Turner from NSW

*TARS - An AI and robotics enabled drone for inspection and maintenance of High-Voltage Transmission Lines*

### **Senior Scientific Inquiry Award**

Lily Neyland from Tasmania

*An investigation into the impact of nutrients on the growth of Salix fragilis cuttings*

### **Senior Ingenuity Award.**

Youser Alrubaiey and Zahraa Al Mosawe from Victoria

*Which Mycelium Can Be Grown Into Eco-Friendly Tiles?*

### **Junior Ingenuity Awards**

Madeleine Luu from ACT

*Is the first toilet stall still the cleanest?*

Eloise McFarlane from ACT

*Energy efficient water wheels*

Marko Jovevski from Victoria

*Magnetic Vehicle Decelerator Road Safety System*