



Virtual Work Experience Program

CSIRO is recruiting high school students across Australia to experience the workplace of the future.

About the program

To increase access to work experience opportunities for students across Australia, CSIRO is working with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training on a pilot project to develop and test a Virtual Work Experience Program.

The program will provide an opportunity for students to undertake collaborative, group (STEM) projects, linked to real-world CSIRO research and industry challenges. Instead of students attending a CSIRO site, experienced CSIRO staff or STEM industry professionals will supervise groups of students *remotely* using a secure ICT platform.

CSIRO is seeking 100 high school students to take part in several program pilots between March and July 2019. Students from remote, rural, regional and metropolitan areas—and with diverse academic backgrounds and career aspirations—are invited to be involved in program pilots.

Virtual work experience sessions are offered for during Term 2 and during the Term 2 (July) school holidays.

What will students do?

The program aims to give students insight into possible STEM careers and develop new skills through collaborative projects supervised by STEM professionals. As part of a group, students will undertake meaningful work in an area of interest, performing different roles and delivering outputs and outcomes that can be used as part of their work portfolio.

CSIRO is currently seeking students with an interest in one of the following areas:

- Agriculture
- Chemistry
- Hydrology
- Meteorology
- Science communication
- Statistics
- Technology and engineering

Where will students undertake the program?

Students will participate in work experience projects using a secure ICT solution while in their school, home or community venue, such as a library. Students must be supported by a teacher, parent or an approved adult in their physical location.

Is there a cost to students?

Participation in the pilots is free of charge to all students and no payments will be made to students in this program.

Get involved

If your child is interested in participating in the Virtual Work Experience Program, please complete the attached Expression of Interest form and email to vwep@csiro.au. Please ensure you have read the *Fine Print* document included at the end of this document.

Virtual Work Experience Program

Student Expression of Interest form

The Virtual Work Experience Program (VWEP) will pilot the delivery of student work experience using secure ICT solutions, rather than on-site visits. The program allows students opportunities to engage in STEM work experience outside their geographic area while providing an insight into the work patterns and skills of the future. CSIRO is seeking up to 100 high school, work experience students across Australia to participate in sessions between March and July 2019.

If your child is interested in participating as a student, please complete the Expression of Interest (Eoi) form below and return it to vwep@csiro.au. The VWEP team will use the Eoi to match students and supervisors according to STEM interests and availability. CSIRO cannot guarantee participation for all students wishing to be involved.

If a match is possible, your student will be contacted and asked to have participant's, parent/guardian's and school consent forms completed: these forms are similar to those required for traditional, on-site work experience opportunities.

Student's details:

Given name: _____ Family name: _____

Email address: _____ School name: _____

School year in 2019: _____ Date of birth: _____

Telephone: _____ Home postcode: _____

Please indicate the student's areas of STEM interest (from the list on page 1)

Preference 1: _____

Preference 2: _____

Preference 3: _____

(Continued over)

Student's availability:

Does the student have a specific time or week in which they are expected to do work experience?

(If so, when?) _____

Would the student be available to do work experience¹:

- five days straight during term time? (If so, which week/s?) _____

- during one week of the July school holidays? (If so, which week/s?) _____

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¹ To be considered for this pilot program, students must be able to participate prior to 26 July 2019.

Virtual Work Experience Program

The fine print

What will the program explore?

CSIRO is working with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training on a pilot Virtual Work Experience Program that will explore and report on:

- whether genuine work experience programs for high school students can be provided using non-traditional methods, such as ICT solutions
- how non-traditional work experience programs should be structured to achieve the best outcomes for students, including whether face-to-face elements are needed
- optimal timeframes and models to provide non-traditional work experience programs (full-time, part-time or a combination of both)
- a one-to-many supervisory arrangement between Remote Work Experience Supervisors and groups of students (who may be co-located with, or remote from, each other)
- the requirements of the ICT solution used to support the virtual work experience activities.

How will the program be evaluated?

The program will be evaluated by the CSIRO Planning, Performance and Impact unit. The evaluation may include surveys, online observations and interviews, and analysis of online interactions. Students and Remote Work Experience Supervisors will need to read and complete evaluation consent forms to participate in the program.

An Advisory Group of industry experts has been established to provide input and guidance on the program, including scoping, content, practicality and relevance.

How will students' personal data be protected?

All information provided by students will be treated confidentially. It is anticipated that some student personal data will be collected for the project, including names, school year, home address, age, gender, cultural background, identified special needs, school and/or personal email addresses, school name and address, and phone numbers. This personal information will only be used to contact the students and to facilitate students' participation in the pilots and the evaluation of those pilots.

Personal data will be stored on secure CSIRO servers in Australia and in locked cabinets on secure premises (if in hard copy). Where third parties are provided with personal data to conduct the pilots (e.g. a third-party IT vendor), they will be required to provide a similarly safe environment.



The main output of the pilot program will be a report from CSIRO to the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. The report will not identify any student by name and will not include any personal data. The high-level findings of the project may also be shared at education conferences and with education stakeholders but will not identify any student by name and will not include any personal data from students.

Any personal data collected will be retained until the acceptance by the Department of Education and Training of the final report, upon which time the personal information will be destroyed or securely archived in accordance with the Commonwealth Archives Act (1983).

Can students opt out?

Participation in this program is completely voluntary and students may withdraw at any time. Any data collected in the evaluation process about a withdrawn student will be destroyed and not be reported upon.

Contact

If you would like more information regarding the Virtual Work Experience Program, please contact vwep@csiro.au or 08 6436 8831.