



ASIA PACIFIC NETWORK OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CENTRES

NEWS UPDATE

May 2004

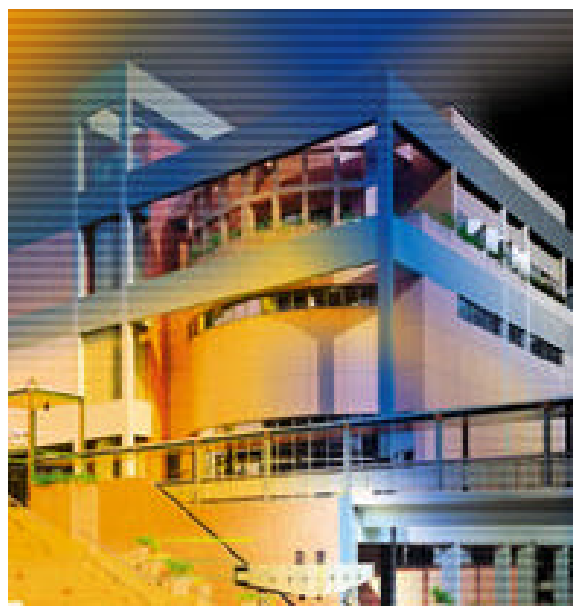
WELCOME TO THIS EDITION

This ASPAC News Update contains information on:

- **Update on 2004 ASPAC Conference to be hosted by Hong Kong Science Museum**
- **Reminder: Survey of economic impacts of science centres**
- **Discovering the secrets behind the silver screen at Singapore Science Centre**
- **New planetarium opens at Scitech Discovery Centre, Australia**
- **Saving the Earth activity at the National Science & Technology Museum, Taiwan**
- **Update on activities and exhibitions at the National Museum of Emerging Science & Innovation, Japan**
- **Next steps for the APEC Project Proposal**

UPDATE ON 2004 ASPAC CONFERENCE TO BE HOSTED BY HONG KONG SCIENCE MUSEUM

In the last edition, we announced our congratulations to the Hong Kong Science Museum on their successful bid to host the 2004 ASPAC Conference. We are now able to announce the dates for this annual meeting. Please mark these dates in your diary. Don't miss out on this opportunity to meet and to learn together.



Hong Kong Science Museum – the venue for ASPAC Conference 2004

The 2004 ASPAC Conference dates are:

Tuesday 30 November 2004

Optional Pre-Conference Workshop

Wednesday 1 December 2004

Optional Pre-Conference Workshop
ASPAC Executive & General Council Meeting
Conference Registration
Evening Welcome Reception

Thursday 2 December 2004

Official Opening
Keynote Lectures
Science Centre Reports and Parallel Sessions
Gala Evening at Hong Kong Science Museum

Friday 3 December 2004

Keynote Lectures
Parallel Sessions

Saturday 4 December 2004

APEC Project Scoping Meeting
Closing Ceremony
Optional Insight Tour

Sunday 5 December 2004

Optional Post-Conference Tour

Each year, ASPAC Conferences bring together in one place a rich diversity of inputs and discussions that inform the future thinking of science centres and museums in the region.

Each year, ASPAC offers two fellowships to support science centre staff who normally do not have the opportunity to travel to another science centre or participate in an ASPAC Conference. ASPAC will shortly call for applications for the 2004 ASPAC Fellowship program.

Further details of the program, registration fees, accommodation options, and tours will be published in future editions of the ASPAC News, and on the ASPAC website.

For further information, contact:

Paulina Chan
Hong Kong Science Museum
T +852 2732 3210
F + 852 2311 2248
E psmchan@lcsd.gov.hk



REMINDER: SURVEY OF ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF SCIENCE CENTRES

Last month, ASPAC full members received a survey requesting data for the second phase of the International Study on the Impact of Science Centres on their Communities.

Thank you to those ASPAC members who have already completed and returned the survey. If you have not yet done this, we encourage you to do so and to return the completed survey **by 18 May 2004** to:

Ilze Groves, Project Officer
Questacon, PO Box E28
Kingston ACT 2604, Australia
Fax +61 2 6273 4346
Email ilzegroves@ozemail.com.au

This second phase is responding to the need for more data on economic impacts of science centres. ASPAC encourages all Full Members to participate in this survey which will provide us with information which is useful to us as individual institutions and also to our worldwide profession as a whole.

DISCOVERING THE SECRETS BEHIND THE SILVER SCREEN AT SINGAPORE SCIENCE CENTRE

Singapore Science Centre opened two new temporary exhibitions that offer visitors the rare opportunity to discover secrets behind the silver screen. *The Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy - The Exhibition* and *Special FX II Exhibition - The Secrets Behind The Screen* were officially launched by the President of The Republic of Singapore on 12 March 2004. The gala event attracted more than 1,000 guests, including ministers,

ambassadors, government officials and CEOs of public and private organisations.

Open to the public from 13 March to 4 June 2004, the two exhibitions welcomed more than 16,000 visitors both locally and regionally in the first week of its opening. It has received rave reviews from both visitors and the media, locally as well as internationally.



Photo: Entrance to the Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy – The Exhibition

With the aim to promote interest in science and technology, the exhibitions provide visitors with a three-dimensional and interactive experience for visitors to indulge in participatory learning in a very unique fashion. Visitors not only learn about the cutting-edge technology used for movie making, but they also have the opportunity to be part of the action through interactive exhibits like blue-screen stations.

The Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy – The Exhibition is a touring exhibition based on The Lord of the Rings film trilogy. It was developed and presented by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in partnership with New Line Cinema. Singapore Science Centre is the third stop of the world tour and is the only venue in Asia.

Hundreds of props from the movies including sets, models, armoury and costumes are on display alongside demonstrations of special effects, including the combining of 'real' and 'digital' action and CGI (computer-generated-image) technology. (Props used for the filming of *The Return of the King*, which were not displayed in New Zealand and London, are showcased here for the first time.) Video footage and interviews with people behind this amazing film trilogy are featured as well. There is also a scaling interactive to explain how to make a normal sized person appear to be Hobbit sized.

As part of *The Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy – The Exhibition*, visitors also have the chance to see the Making of *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers* at the exhibition's theatrette.



Photo: One of the fascinating experiences in the Special FX II Exhibition

Located next to *The Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy - The Exhibition* is the *Special FX II Exhibition*. Comprising 27 interactive exhibits, it shows visitors how the 'unreal' can look so real by exploring the science and technology used in the making of television programs and movies. The highlight of *Special FX II* is the opportunity for visitors to

star in the action. There are 5 such video stations within *Special FX II*. Each involves visitors in a short scripted scenario demonstrating a range of special effect techniques.

Dr Chew Tuan Chiong, Chief Executive of Singapore Science Centre said, "These two exhibitions are the perfect showcase of how science and technology play an important role in the art of movie making. They have a strong educational element and, coupled with their interactive and entertaining programs, are sure to attract visitors both young and old."

NEW PLANETARIUM OPENS AT SCITECH DISCOVERY CENTRE, PERTH, AUSTRALIA

Australian astronaut, Dr Andy Thomas, launched Perth's newest attraction – Horizon the Planetarium – at Scitech on Monday 5 April 2004. Dr Thomas spoke via video from Texas, where he is training for his next mission aboard the shuttle Discovery.

Dr Thomas, who spent 20 weeks aboard the Russian space station Mir in 1998, interrupted his hectic training schedule to pay special tribute to the opening of the Perth Planetarium, which he said would help with "inspiring more of the scientists of tomorrow". As a gift to the people of Perth, he has volunteered to take with him into space a small memento from Scitech, which will be put on permanent display when it is returned to earth next year.

He was joined by WA Premier Geoff Gallop at a gala event dubbed "An Evening With the Stars". Scitech chief executive officer Alan



Brien said the opening of Horizon will give Perth the biggest and most technically-advanced planetarium in Australia. "For the first time, Western Australians will be able to experience the universe just like an astronaut – by travelling through space and seeing planets and stars up close in brilliant clarity," he said.

"In addition, a live presentation before each show will point out attractions in the Perth night sky that will provide a map that everyone can use for star-gazing at home."

Presenters will give a short presentation about the Perth night sky, pointing out where to find constellations like the Southern Cross and Orion from a typical Perth backyard.

For its opening season, Horizon will present four shows that will give audiences the feeling of zooming through space. The technology used creates a three-dimensional experience, where planets and stars move towards the audience with absolute reality.

Unlike older planetarium technology, the Scitech planetarium will showcase the latest in digital (computer) technology combined with high-resolution video projectors and a multi-channel surround-sound system.

Planetarium shows will suit visitors from the age of seven to adults. All shows are designed to appeal to the general public, but two shows to be run during school hours will support the WA school curriculum framework for the teaching of science from Years 3-12.

For further information, contact:
Louise Pemble, Communications Manager
Scitech Discovery Centre
Email louise@scitech.org.au

SAVING THE EARTH ACTIVITY AT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM, TAIWAN

The National Science and Technology Museum in Taiwan is hosting a hands-on educational activity called "Saving the Earth" from April to the end of June. As we face more and more serious environmental problems such as the shortage of fresh water, various kinds of pollution, landscapes altering due to human activities, climate change, etc, the theme of the activity reflects the main goal of World Environment Day to bring attention to many facets of the environment and to respect all life systems on earth.



Photo: Opening ceremony for the series of activities addressing environmental issues



Photo: Visitors enjoying one of the environmental activities

There are more than twelve hands-on programs which enable children to operate by themselves, including testing water quality, exploring how wind and solar energy can generate electricity, etc. This activity aims to promote understanding that each individual and each community are pivotal to addressing environmental issues if we want to achieve a more sustainable lifestyle and build a greener environment for future generations. This activity is financially supported by the largest government-run enterprise in Taiwan, the Chinese Petroleum Cooperation which has made a great contribution to environmental protection in recent years.



Photo: Another hands-on activity to help children understand their environment

For more information please contact:
Ms Szu-yi Lo by email:
loszuyi@mail.nstm.gov.tw
or visit the website:
<http://www.nstm.gov.tw>

UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES AND EXHIBITIONS AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF EMERGING SCIENCE & INNOVATION, JAPAN

On 5 May, the National Museum of Emerging Science & Innovation hosted "Volunteer Events 2004", a program where museum volunteers from around Japan gathered at MeSci to organise interactive events and to share about their activities.



Photo: Volunteer Events 2004 at MeSci

A special exhibition **PlayStation and Science - Integration of Computer Technology and Entertainment** is on display at MeSci from 29 April to 31 May 2004. This exhibition introduces the mechanism of how a computer game is projected on TV, how semiconductor chips work, and the work of the developers.

MeSci's original exhibition **Exploration of TIME!** which was exhibited at MeSci in 2003, will be on display at the Shanghai Science & Technology Museum in China from 15 May to 15 July 2004 as part of National Science Week.



For further information, contact:

Nahoko Ando

International Development Officer

National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (MeSci)

2-41 Aomi, Koto-ku, Tokyo, 135-0064, Japan

T +81-3-3570-9156 F +81-3-3570-9160

n-ando@miraikan.jst.go.jp

<http://www.miraikan.jst.go.jp>

NEXT STEPS FOR THE APEC PROJECT PROPOSAL

As reported in the last edition, the proposed regional project which was developed by ASPAC and Questacon, was presented by the Australian Minister for Science at the 4th APEC Ministers' Meeting on Regional Science and Technology Cooperation, March 2004 in New Zealand. The proposal was widely welcomed by the meeting.

In summary, the project is to develop and implement a project to study the impact of science centre programs and activities, and capture and disseminate best practice.

As the project is being established, the ASPAC Secretary has agreed to act as interim project officer to move the project forward through the various governmental and APEC processes. The next steps are planned as follows:

- Meetings are being planned with APEC's ISTWG (Industrial Science and Technology Working Group) Officers to discuss the funding and other contributions that each APEC economy (country) will make to this project. With an annual budget of the order of US\$120,000 required for each of the three years of the project, we are looking for at least 12 economies to each contribute US\$10,000 each year. The initial response from several economies is encouraging.
- During its next meeting in Singapore, 14-15 September, ISTWG will consider the final adoption of this project as an official APEC project. A presentation and side-meeting is being planned at this meeting.
- A Project Scoping Meeting on 4 December is being planned as an add-on meeting to the ASPAC Conference in Hong Kong. This meeting will provide an opportunity for ASPAC members and delegates from all APEC economies to meet to discuss the specific details of this project.

For further information, contact the ASPAC Secretary, Brenton Honeyman.

ASPAC INFORMATION

Contact the ASPAC Secretary

Mr Brenton Honeyman
Office of the Director
Questacon – The National Science and
Technology Centre
King Edward Terrace
Canberra ACT 2600, Australia
Tel +61 2 6270 2811, Fax +61 2 6273 4346
Email: bhoneyman@questacon.edu.au