



## Big Science – Big launch!

The Rio Tinto Big Science Competition has a new look for 2010.

Mr Toss Gascoigne, Executive Director of Australian Science Innovations (ASI) said he was delighted to announce a new partnership with Australia's foremost educational research organisation.

"We have contracted the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to develop the Competition questions and analyse the results," he said.

"Questions will be based on the new Australian Science Curriculum, and will test students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, the methods of scientific inquiry and their knowledge of science concepts."

He said the Competition will retain its tradition of offering stimulating questions based on contemporary science issues.

"We're adding to that a diagnostic report for teachers, so they can chart the performance of an individual student as well as a whole class, and compare that to national figures."

This year the Competition will be open to students in all years at secondary school, from year 7 to year 12. The date for the Competition is 1 September.

ACER is one of the world's leading educational research centres. Established in 1930, it has built a strong reputation as a provider of state-of-the-art research-based expertise to teachers and policy makers.

Mr Gascoigne said all participating students will receive a certificate to recognise their achievement in the Competition.

Last year, top-scoring students from Grade 10 and an accompanying teacher or parent were flown to Canberra for a ceremony at the Australian National University, where Science Minister Senator Kim Carr told them that studying science is more than just learning facts.

"It teaches us how to think. That's why I believe it is good for all Australians to learn more about science and its methods," he said.

Mr Gascoigne acknowledged the generous support of Rio Tinto for Big Science. He said it demonstrated the value that industry puts on science, engineering and research, and the jobs and careers available in these areas.

Further details and registration are on the ASI web: [www.asi.edu.au](http://www.asi.edu.au)

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