



**SENATOR THE HON ARTHUR SINODINOS AO
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE
SENATOR FOR NSW**

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\$4m to put students' STEM learning into action

The Australian Government will invest \$4 million over the next four years to help Australian school students put their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning into action.

The Maker Projects initiative opened today for grant applications from eligible Australian schools and community organisations to help set up dedicated maker spaces that offer students hands-on experience in practical aspects of design, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship as well as STEM engagement activities.

Around 75 per cent of the jobs of the future will require qualifications in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. So it's never been more important to properly equip Australia's schools to encourage our young people to engage with a range of technologies as creators as well as consumers.

The initiative will offer grants of between \$2,000 and \$5,000 to cover the costs of tools, equipment, software and consumables needed to establish maker spaces that encourage experimentation and tinkering in a supervised and accessible environment.

It will also support community organisations with grants of between \$5,000 and \$20,000 to expand existing STEM engagement activities and link young people with local experts, inventors, entrepreneurs and industries.

The Maker Projects initiative is part of the four-year, \$29.8 million Inspiring Australia science engagement programme encouraging community participation in science and technology as outlined in the \$1.1 billion National Innovation and Science Agenda.

It builds on existing successful school and community-based 'maker' activities, like local *Maker Faires*, *Coderdojo* coding clubs, and the *Questacon Smart Skills Initiative*. These activities allow young people to design and build in the real and digital world, make movies and stop-motion animation and learn the art of creating.

These activities will expand Australian students' horizons beyond the school curriculum towards the everyday experiences of engineers, scientists and innovators, giving them the skills they need for critical 21st Century jobs.

Maker Projects grants will be allocated to eligible applicants on a 'first in' basis until the annual allocation is exhausted. To apply or for more information, visit www.business.gov.au/mp

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