

MEDIA RELEASE

CHARGING THE FUTURE – NEXT-GEN DREAMS TO REALITY

Adelaide, Australia. Tuesday June 11, 2019

Speaking from Victoria Square, home of the BWSC finish line, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, David Ridgway confirmed 53 teams from 24 countries have entered the 3000 km Darwin to Adelaide journey from October 13-20.

“An unsurpassed program of activities designed to showcase the State’s tourism, innovation and green-tech assets will be rolled out to teams and their supporters from Australia and around the world,” said Minister Ridgway.

“Just last week we celebrated World Environment Day - a timely reminder to recognise the need for innovative technologies like solar and protecting our environment and tourism assets”.

“The Bridgestone World Solar Challenge generates huge economic benefit for both South Australia and the Northern Territory, with the last event delivering more than \$11.9 million nationally.

“Broadcast across the globe, the event provides a unique platform to market South Australia, its iconic desert scenery and as a hotbed for innovation.

“The countdown to the race is officially on and with a reputation for staging great events we know SA and its Bridgestone World Solar Challenge will deliver more record numbers,” Minister Ridgway said.

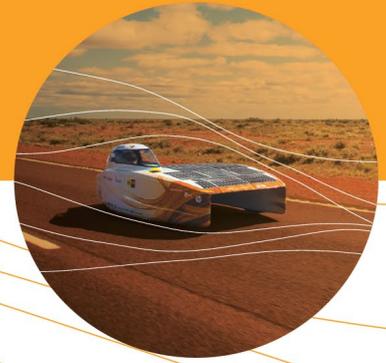
Also at the launch today, Bridgestone Corporation Japan Director, Brand Strategy and Communication, Mr Kazutoshi Oyama, said the motivations behind the BWSC title sponsorship are a seamless alignment of the event’s principles and the three priority areas of Bridgestone’s global corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitment, ‘Our Way to Serve’: mobility, people and environment.

‘Bridgestone Corporation is committed to the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge because we share the same values as the event. Through our sponsorship of the World Solar Challenge, Bridgestone will keep developing the new technology for customers around the world. Our low-rolling resistance Ecopia tyres, are an example of innovation and technology linked directly to the event,’ Mr Oyama said.

Event Director, Chris Selwood said the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge is even more relevant today than when it was first run in 1987.

‘BWSC solar cars are no longer the realm of fantastic, imaginary vehicles dreamed up by enthusiasts and niche inventors. The research and development being tested in this event now makes its way into mainstream commercialisation, such as Bridgestone. With the Paris Agreement deadlines, European bans and phasing out of petrol and diesel cars becoming a reality, the BWSC is globally significant,’ he said.

For BWSC event media information please contact:
Judi Lalor + 61 409188129 media@worldsolarchallenge.org



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In our 2019 program we champion our next generation's voices calling for change. Working with our Presenting Outreach partner, Flinders University, official Scientific Partner, the CSIRO and the Aurora Solar Car team, we have developed a 'hands on' Flinders University BWSC Outreach program which will extend from Adelaide to Darwin. Local school, St Francis, who are here today, will be assisting us with practical testing of solar and weather monitoring equipment which will be used in the program.

We are also pleased to announce a joint BWSC/Mission Innovation Smart Grid Pitch Competition to be held here in Adelaide in our new Cruiser Pavilion. Teams will pitch solar and smart grid technology that has start-up potential, to a panel of recognised experts including Glenn Platt, Research Director, Grids and Energy Efficiency Systems, CSIRO, Danny Kennedy, Managing Director, California Clean Energy Fund and CEO, New Energy Nexus, John O'Brien, Partner Energy Transition & Renewables, Deloitte, and Lex Hoefsloot, CEO and Co-Founder of Lightyear, a revolutionary solar car start-up company borne from Dutch team Eindhoven's Cruiser Class success in the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge.

Our record-breaking 2019 field includes first time countries, international 'top guns' and one of the strongest home-grown contingents, with eight Australian teams to fly the Aussie flag. Three South Australian teams; Flinders University, Adelaide University and TAFE SA, will be joined by new national team, ATN Solar Car team, which includes representation from a fourth SA University, Uni SA, along with RMIT, UTS, UQ and Curtin. Making up the remaining Australian contingent are, ANU in Canberra; Queensland's Clenergy Team Arrow; University of NSW, and Western Sydney University who were the first international team to win the American Solar Challenge last year,' Mr Selwood said.

Speaking as Mission Innovation Champion, panel judge Glenn Platt said the exciting competition will strengthen BWSC competitor links to industry and provide rewarding incubation and networking opportunities. 'It's an incredible opportunity to take the R&D being developed through this event into the commercial arena,' Mr Platt said.

Outlining expected highlights, Mr Selwood said the Challenger Class will be a battle of the titans, as 30 high-tech, high speed machines, from 17 countries, attempt to outpace Dutch Champions, Vattenfall Solar Team, previously known as the Nuon Solar Team, who have dominated the Event in all but two Challenges, since 2001. Their compatriots, Team Twente, came close in 2017, and I look forward to seeing who can rival this incredible team.

'But the point of this challenge has always been to realise a more sustainable way to travel and we are now so much closer to the reality of sustainable, energy positive, solar electric cars. This year our Cruiser Class, includes entries from 23 teams from 13 countries, who are now preparing to take on our 'Challenge within the Challenge. The Cruiser's end goal is to deliver a practical, marketable solar electric car. On the BWSC journey, they must make check points within time-windows and manage their energy consumption down to the minute. Final judging will occur in Adelaide.

'Again, the Dutch have dominated, with team Eindhoven from the Netherlands winning the title in 2013, 2015 and 2017. This year, 22 other teams are looking for a different outcome and the countdown is on,' Mr Selwood said.