Accelerator Program 2024

What is the Young ICT Explorers Accelerator Program?

The Smith Family's **Young ICT Explorers Accelerator Program** provides Smith Family partner schools with support to participate in a national schools digital technologies competition, called Young ICT Explorers.

What is Young ICT Explorers?

Young ICT Explorers is a competition to encourage school students in years 3 to 12 to create a technology-based project of their choice and submit the project to the competition. Suitable projects are invited to enter the state/territory finals, where students are asked to pitch their project to a panel of judges with ICT industry experience.

The competition is aligned with the digital technologies curriculum and enables students to take their classroom learning and apply it to a digital technology project of their choice.

Tell me more about the Accelerator Program.

The Young ICT Explorers Accelerator Program will support teachers to encourage disadvantaged students to explore technology and equip themselves with skills for their future. The program consists of:

- Professional development and mentoring for teachers.
- Hardware for students to create projects.
- Support to ensure student submit their projects to the Young ICT Explorers competition.

This support is free of charge to the school, and the school can keep all resources provided.

Why is this program important?

The Australian economy is changing in the face of demographic and technological pressures such as automation, and it is affecting young people most of all.[1]
[i]Digital skills are critically important; 90% of future jobs will require digital literacy skills.[2]
This challenge is even more complex for young people growing up in disadvantaged communities.

The Smith Family acknowledges the creativity and strengths of young people, and the Accelerator Program provides an opportunity to remove barriers that our partner schools might be facing so that their teachers can confidently support the students in the school to showcase their talents.

The 2014 NAP ICT data shows a gap in achievement standards between students from high socioeconomic status backgrounds compared to those with lower socioeconomic status backgrounds.[3]

Who can participate?

The Young ICT Explorers competition is open to students in years 3-12.

In 2024, the Accelerator Program will support the participation of primary and high school students. Each school can select which students participate in the program, and how the program will be run in the school.

We have a guide for the minimum number of students to participate in the program, which is 12 students. Project teams have up to 4 members each. However, there is **no maximum amount of students** per school.

What do we need from you?

- An enthusiastic teacher, or several teachers, ready to take this on.

- 12 or more primary or high school students who have the interest and passion to submit projects to Young ICT Explorers.

- Commitment to provide students at least 1 hour per week over one term or equivalent of support (10 hours+) to develop their project.

- Commitment to submit student projects to the Young ICT Explorers competition in 2024; and attend the online competition finals.

- Commitment to participate in an evaluation of the program.

When will the program run?

The program is delivered by teachers during Term 2 and 3, 2024. Dates for the online professional development opportunities will be confirmed in Term 1.

School registration: Please contact your school's TSF contact person for a <u>Program Requirements Form</u>. This form must be completed by the **6th of March** to allow time for resources to be delivered. Your school must register your intent to support students to submit a project in the YICTE competition by the **(1st July)**

Critical dates

Professional Development session (optional but recommended) is planned for late 9 April or 17th-April, 1ST May 2024.

TSF Student consent: Returned to your TSF Program Coordinator by week 2 Term 2

Competition submission: Project concept report submission by 31st July 2024

YICTE Competition student consent: The YICTE team have an additional student consent/media release form that must be uploaded to the competition website prior to judging.

Judging:

State Finals: Suitable projects will be invited to attend state finals in August-October

National Finals: Successful state finalists will be invited to the National Grand Final

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i 1 CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organisation) (2016), Tomorrow's digitally enabled workforce. 2 FYA (2015) How are young people faring in the transition from school to work. Report card 2015 transition from school to work. Report card 2015

Helping young Australians in need to build better futures through education.

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