



# Association of Science Education Technicians NSW

Supporting - Monitoring - Training - Facilitating  
For Labbies by Labbies

[asetnsw.org.au](http://asetnsw.org.au)

Newsletter Term 2 2025

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## ASET NSW

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Committee Member

## Chairperson's Message

It's conference time again! We have **new content** and workshops for you this year:-

- Do you want to be more involved in pracs and teaching? See how the other side works with *Questacon's STEM design* workshop or explore *Curious Minds*—a program delivering real-world STEM activities that empower and inspire girls.
- Learn how to use AI effectively to manage, streamline, and support your daily workload
- Our PD survey showed strong interest in chemical management. This year, we're offering **multiple sessions across both days**, so no one misses out.
- Join Josh, Sam or Jas—our amazing lab tech presenters in their workshops!

Take a sneak peek at our upcoming workshops on our website—start planning which sessions you'd like to attend! **Registrations open Wed 10th Sept 9am**. Our flyer includes full pricing details to support your approval application. Members and non-members alike are welcome, spread the word and bring a colleague along.

If you are travelling from outside of Sydney and are looking for accommodation options near the venue please reach out to Lisa Corado at [vicechairasetnsw@gmail.com](mailto:vicechairasetnsw@gmail.com).

Our Annual General Meeting will take place during the conference. Members will receive both the **current and proposed ASETNSW Constitution** documents ahead of the vote on **17 November**.

Hear more about our recent Canberra and Hornsby Professional Development sessions on [pages 6-7](#). Thank you to all who offered their school as possible Professional Development sites in our survey. We may be in touch for 2026! We're also planning more **regional networking events**, so stay tuned.

Our volunteer group is also working on an exclusive members only section for our website, launching **Term 4**. With this launch, our **membership fee will increase slightly from \$45 to \$50 per year**—our first update since ASETNSW began in 2011.

Thank you for supporting ASET and if you would like to join the team please reach out or come chat to us during the conference :)

*Jo Walker*

Chairperson ASET NSW



**Association of Science  
Education Technicians NSW**  
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For Labbies by Labbies

# ASET NSW Conference 2025

## *Decoding the Universe -*

*exploring the unknown with nature's hidden language.*

**17th and 18th November 2025**

**University of Technology, Sydney**

\$150 single day for members

\$190 single for non-members

\$280 both days for members

\$360 both days for non-members

**Registrations open 9am, 10th September and  
close COB 31st October 2025.**



Follow the QR code for the conference program so you can  
start planning your two day learning extravaganza now!

**Learning Workshops Networking**

Join up now—visit [asetnsw.org.au](https://asetnsw.org.au)

**Educating Lab Techs since 2011**

# WIN YOUR WAY TO ASETNSW CONFERENCE 2025

**ASET NSW Inc. would like to sponsor 2 lucky Members to come along to our November Conference at UTS!**

## **Regional Entrants:**

\*Transport/accommodation for conference of up to \$500

\*2 days conference registration fee

\*1 year ASET NSW membership

## **Metro Entrants:**

\*2 days conference registration fees

\*1 year ASETNSW membership

## **HOW TO ENTER**

**Tell us about you in 150 words or less**

**Your entry should include :**

- **An overview of your experience as a lab tech**
- **How long you have been in the role**
- **The name of your school**
- **How coming to the conference would benefit you and your school**

**Email your entry to:  
secretaryasetnsw@gmail.com  
by 26/9/2025**

[Terms and Conditions](#)



## Calendar



## Get Your Diaries Ready...

17 Sept	International Microorganism Day
20 Sept	World Cleanup Day
26 Sept	Entries close for ASETNSW Conference competition.
Oct 4-10	World Space Week
Oct 10	Entries close for STAR Week SETA competition (see below)
Oct 31	ASETNSW Conference registration closes
4-8 Nov	STAR Week - Science Technician Appreciation & Recognition Week
10 Nov	World Science Day for Peace and Development
17-18 Nov	<b>ASETNEW Annual Conference at University of Technology, Sydney.</b>
20 Nov	World Children's Day



SETA are proud to announce that MTA have donated \$2000 in sponsorship money for 2 lucky winners to attend CONASTA 73.

The winners will receive \$1000 each, this money must be used towards Flights, Accommodation or Registration fees to attend CONASTA 73 in Brisbane July 2026

CONASTA 73 is hosted by the Science Teachers Association of QLD (STAQ)



Entering is easy. If you are already a member of your State Association, simply email [wshea1@eq.edu.au](mailto:wshea1@eq.edu.au) and describe in 75 words or less why you'd like to attend CONASTA. Please include your name, email address, school and your State Association.

NOT A MEMBER OF AN ASSOCIATION

That's easy just contact your state association and sign up to be eligible to enter. Visit [seta.edu.au/state-associations](http://seta.edu.au/state-associations) for a link to your State Association.

Visit the SETA page on our website for more information.

[STAR Week Competition](#)

## ConASTA Conference Perth 7-10 July



## Our ASET NSW secretary, Jasmina Hazrolaj, attended the ConASTA conference in Perth in July.

### Here are her reflections on the event:-

---

First things first, a special shout out to Marilyn Miles. Though she retired nearly a decade ago, she continues to outdo herself, tirelessly supporting WA lab techs (and, truth be told, anyone who needs help). She's proof that retirement doesn't mean stepping back it means stepping up in new ways.

I absolutely love ConASTA. For me, meeting new people especially lab techs from every corner of Australia is basically my definition of work heaven. This year's vibe had a big emphasis on physics and junior school science, with a strong push for making sure our juniors get the proper basics of science taught well from the start. Science ASSIST did a brilliant job leading the way, pulling together a treasure chest of resources (all neatly tucked on their website for us to reference later). Strongly recommend checking them out

I was lucky enough to be presenting too, hosted by Mercedes College which, despite the name, has nothing to do with luxury cars, but everything to do with luxury hospitality. Their labbies and teachers rolled out the red carpet for us. Honestly, those lab techs were superheroes: hardworking, welcoming, and ready to help with anything. Sorry, no names for Mercedes techs, they prefer to remain anonymous.

Now, here's where it gets funny. Due to some unpredicted circumstances (a.k.a. science being cheeky), none yes, none of my experiments worked at first. But did I panic? Well... maybe just a little. But the Mercedes labbies went above and beyond, even shopping after hours to find the bits and pieces I needed. A technician from another school handed me chemicals from their stash. Our wonderful suppliers swooped in with equipment at the last minute. What looked like a looming disaster turned into a full-blown triumph.

And the best part? All 39 participants told me they enjoyed what I presented. I've decided to take them at their word and not check the written reviews because in science, sometimes faith is just as important as data!

Fun fact: At the entrance to the Physics Department at the University of Western Australia stands a very confident naked statue of a man. Turns out physique and physics might have more in common than we thought who knew?





**The PD Day had a great turn out. It's an issue we all care greatly about in our profession.**

**Cindy Fisher from SEAACT has kindly contributed this report about the day** ➡

On Monday 21 July, 35 ACT school lab technicians attended a Hazardous Chemical Training professional development day, organised by ASET NSW and presented by Julie Carey from Carey Consulting. Julie ran a very informative session and presented a lot of useful information regarding the management, storage, and disposal of hazardous chemicals in the school laboratory setting. She also covered legislation, risk assessments, and spill response.

Everyone who attended thought it was a very valuable PD, many of whom have identified ways to improve chemical storage and handling in their schools. Feedback from attendees has been very positive, with many wanting more sessions to broaden their knowledge and understanding of chemical management and disposal. Many attendees have said "When can we get Julie back for another session?" or "I would love to have Julie come and go through my chemical storage and sort it out"!

Thank you to Julie for travelling all the way from WA, to ASET NSW (particularly Jo W and Jo H) for facilitating this session for us, and to Bridget and Simone at Caroline Chisolm High School who hosted us.

Now that ACT lab technicians have representation on the SEAACT (Science Educators Association of ACT) committee we hope to see more professional development days in the ACT and some lab tech focused sessions at the 2026 SEAACT conference. If you are in the ACT or surrounding NSW areas and have a topic you would like to see on the PD calendar please email Cindy ([cindy.fisher@burgmann.act.edu.au](mailto:cindy.fisher@burgmann.act.edu.au)) or Sonja ([Sonja.Kowalczyk@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:Sonja.Kowalczyk@ed.act.edu.au)).



**Are Jo W and Jo H trying to recruit a new committee member ?  
He looks worried!**

Find all the information you need about our Professional Development Days, and other events, on the [Events page](#) of our website.



## July ASET PD Days



See our Tips and Tricks section for Bob's Using a Multimeter to 'Check Electrical Equipment' document. Click [here](#) to go straight there.

## Barker College 21 July

### Trouble Shooting with Bob Death



Bob Death is a wealth of information when it comes to equipment usage, maintenance and repairs. We have invited Bob to do two Professional Development Days for us now and they have been very popular. Bob is also available to have a chat to at our conference in November—look for his table in the Industry display area outside the main Guthrie Theatre.

We did a little "Who Is Bob Death?" interview in our Term 1 2025 newsletter, click [here](#) to have a read.

Here's some feedback from Lesley Cavanagh (Lab Tech at Monte) about the PD Day:-

*"I found the day extremely useful, as did my colleague Charlie, particularly because in our formal studies in science (Biology degrees) we have received very little training on instrumentation and how to maintain and repair it. Therefore, days like this are extremely valuable and I would definitely be interested in doing more of them."*

*On a practical level, we were able to feedback to the science teachers the next day in the staff meeting including areas they could assist with equipment maintenance and we immediately checked all of our multimeters, and repaired some equipment that had been pulled out of circulation for some time."*

*Overall, we are now more confident to repair equipment because we have a lot more knowledge about how to do it."*

Find all the information you need about our Professional Development Days, and other events, on the [Events page](#) of our website.

## New Regular Column

Welcome to our new column where we introduce you to a Lab Tech that you haven't met before and they may even let you see what's behind the lab coat!

We all have many and varied interests and life stories, apart from just our (very fascinating) work in school labs, so we thought we might start finding out what they are, starting with the ASETNSW Committee members.

First up, meet Melissa Siddons, ASETNSW Committee member and Lab Tech at Peel High School in Tamworth.



The couple that climbs (and rides) together stays together, it seems! Go Mel and Martin!

## What's Behind the Labcoat ...



*"Hi, I'm Mel and this is my 10th year of being a labbie. I've been married to Martin for 30 years (I guess that makes me old?) and we have 3 children and 2 grandchildren.*

*I grew up in Sydney, but my husband and I made a tree change when we got married and moved to Tamworth.*

*When I'm not in the lab there are a few places you might find me:-*

- *At a great café checking out the best coffee in town*
- *At our bouldering gym climbing the walls*
- *Riding my bike on the gravel and dirt roads around town*
- *Hanging out at home with my family.*

*In September I will be taking part in the annual Ride for the Chopper to raise funds for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter. This year we will be riding our bikes from Mudgee to Tamworth over 8 days. I took part in my first one last year when I rode my e-bike from Glenn Innes to Tamworth, but this year I am changing it up and riding without a battery! Woohoo!"*

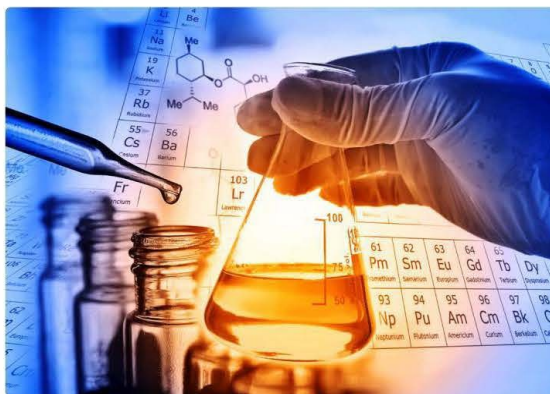






# 3-7 NOVEMBER 2025

## Science Technician Appreciation & Recognition week



### #STARweek 25

STARweek is an opportunity for schools and science departments to recognise the knowledge, expertise, and professional support that Science Technicians provide for the delivery of safe and engaging practical science in schools.

#STARweek  
3-7  
Nov  
2025



During the week 3-7 November 2025 schools across Australia are encouraged to celebrate the work that science technicians perform to support practical science in schools.

Share stories and images of your school's science technicians by posting with on social media

**#STARweek25**



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**New in 2025— MTA Science Resources Guide** is designed as a practical idea-starter, giving teachers a clear, visual overview of what's changed in the new curriculum and a handy checklist of engaging, hands-on resources by year level. It's called the MTA Lookbook and you can check it out on our website [here](#).

## Tips and Tricks

### *Did you know...*

#### \* You can make your own nutrient agar using Bonox?

Bonox has the nutrient ingredients and the yeast content similar to a nutrient agar mix. To make 250mL, use 3.75g Agar powder and approximately 0.1g Bonox.



#### \* There is a great Group on Facebook Called 'Aussie Labbies'?

Its full of information and tips from labbies all over Australia. Just search Aussie Labbies and ask to Join.

\* There is a great website filled with loads of science information quizzes and animations for kids?

<https://www.footprints-science.co.uk/>

## Tips to Improve Your Lab Life!



### Baby Bottle Drying Rack for Glassware

This baby drying rack works surprisingly well for drying test tubes, boiling tubes, and small glassware. The soft spikes hold items upright and spaced out, helping them dry quickly without rolling or breaking. It's easy to clean, compact, and safer than stacking glassware on wall draying racks. A great low cost solution for busy labs, because sometimes the best lab tools aren't from the lab store. This one was purchased from Aldi for around \$14.

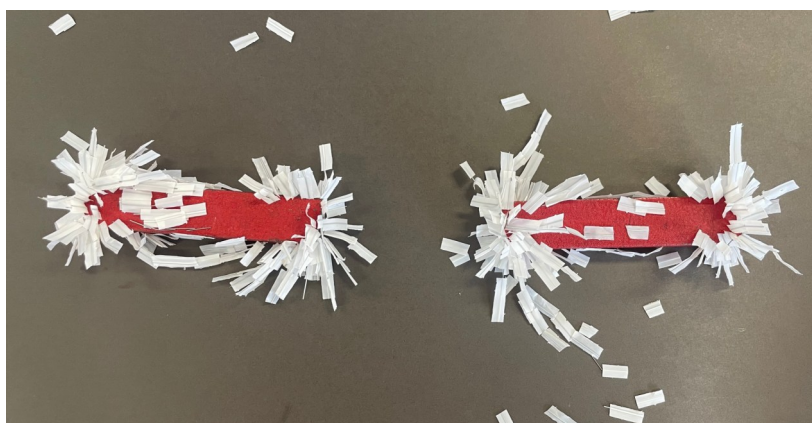


What a great idea—thanks Jasmina!

### Magnet magic, no mess.

Sprinkle chopped bag-tie wire over a bar magnet and watch invisible fields appear as swooping lines and pole clusters, a simple, safe, and surprisingly satisfying demo for your classroom. A much easier clean up than the old iron filing one too.

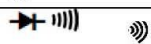

Want to get hands-on? Join us at the ASET Conference, where we'll show you exactly how !





## From Bob's PD Day




### Using a Multimeter to Check Electrical Equipment

V $\equiv$	DC Voltage
V $\sim$	AC Voltage
$\Omega$	Resistance
 or 	Continuity with beep

Plug the black probe into the **COM** port on your multimeter.  
 Plug the red probe into the **V $\Omega$**  port.

#### Testing Continuity (electrical leads, fuses, light globe etc.)

Check if two things are electrically connected.

If your multimeter has a continuity mode set it to the continuity mode    or

If no continuity mode set mode to  $\Omega$  at lowest range

Check multimeter by touching probes directly.

Check circuit by place one probe at each end of the circuit component you are testing  
 e.g. electrical lead.

Screen displays a value of zero (or near zero) & beeps (if using continuity mode) — the test current flows through. Screen display 1 or OL - no continuity & no beep (if using continuity mode, it means there is a break somewhere in the circuit

#### Testing Voltage (power packs, batteries etc.)

For DC set the dial to DC voltage mode (V  $\equiv$ ). This is the most common for electronic devices.

For AC set the dial to DC voltage mode (V  $\sim$ ).

Set to the correct range i.e. above the expected voltage e.g. if measuring 12 volts put on the 20 setting for the mode your using. If voltage unknown set the maximum range.

Place the red probe on the positive terminal, and the black probe on the negative terminal.

#### Testing Resistance (resistors)

Set the dial to resistance mode ( $\Omega$ ) and to the correct range i.e. the range above the expected resistance of item. If resistance unknown set the maximum range.

Place one probe at each end of component you want to test.

The resistance will be displayed. If close to zero, the range is set too high for a good measurement, turn the dial to a lower setting. If you set the range too low, the multimeter simply reads 1 or OL, indicating that it is overloaded or out of range.

#### Recommended Multimeter to use in the lab



Economy Autorange Multimeter with Non-Contact Voltage Sensor  
 CAT.NO: QM1529 (Jaycar)



# Science Funnies

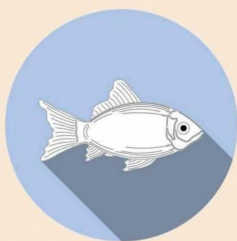


Scientists recorded  
the sound of two  
helium atoms  
laughing.

HeHe.

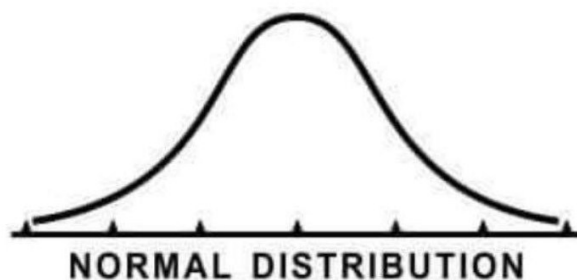
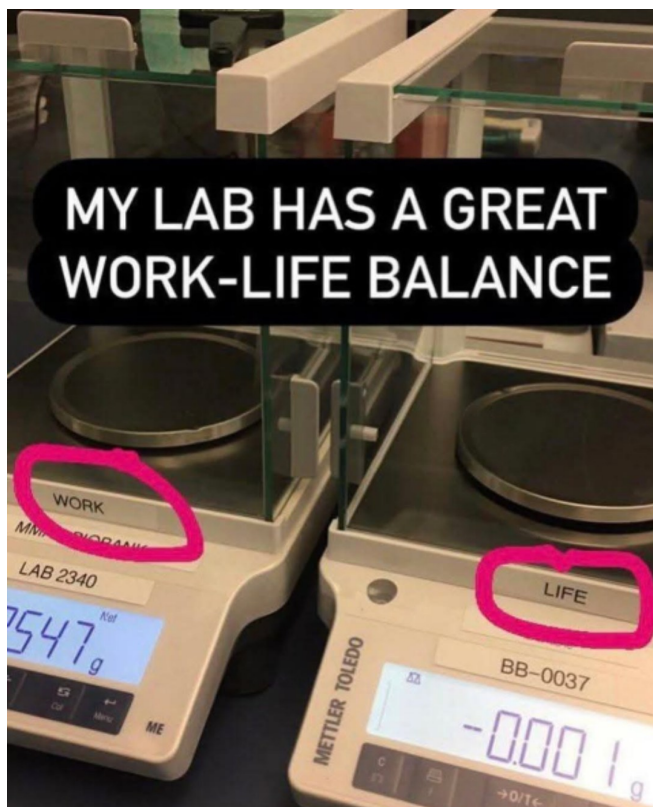


What kind of fish is made  
of only two sodium atoms?



2 Na

LIFE IS  
BETTER  
WHEN  
YOU'RE  
LAUGHING.



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[www.quantalbioscience.com](http://www.quantalbioscience.com)


The banner features a blue circle with white text, a photo of two people in lab coats, a row of colorful petri dishes, and a logo with a magnifying glass over a cell diagram.

## Alpha Chemicals is a 100% Australian owned chemical distribution company with a strong background in inorganic chemicals.

Our warehouse, in Sydney, Australia, stocks a wide range of chemicals that are used in many industries and applications, ranging from ceramics raw materials, paint raw materials, electroplating raw materials, concrete stain raw materials, laboratory chemicals, water and wastewater treatment chemicals and animal health product raw materials through to a range of powder coating equipment and chemical additives and the complete range of anodising plant equipment and chemical additives.

Our staff would welcome the opportunity to provide further information on or assistance with your specific requirements. These may not be included on our website but our experience, facilities and resources enable us to source a wider range of products.

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A circular inset image shows two students wearing safety goggles in a laboratory setting. One student is holding a smartphone, and the other is holding a test tube. They are both smiling. The background of the advertisement features a stylized globe and molecular structures.



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(\*for account customers only)



See you soon for ASET  
NSW Conference 2025!

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[Sales@westlab.com.au](mailto:Sales@westlab.com.au)

[www.westlab.com.au](http://www.westlab.com.au)

# A Final Note

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## ASET NSW Membership

If your membership has recently expired or you wish to join our wonderful organisation, please sign up on our website;  
<https://aset-nsw.currinda.com/login>

[asetnsw.org.au](https://asetnsw.org.au)



**You matter. Unless you  
multiply yourself by  
the speed of light. Then  
you energy.**

If you have any interesting science stories, funny science jokes, science photos, science hints and tips, science events (notice a theme here?) and any other science information relevant to lab techs that I can include in the newsletter please send me an email, I would love to hear your ideas.

*Salena Bryce*

ASET NSW  
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