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## The Hon Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science



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# \$4 million boost for Australia's growing citizen science movement

*21 November 2016*

From classifying galaxies to counting koalas across the country, recording rainfall or your own sleep habits, citizen science projects give Australians the chance to contribute to scientific research.

I am delighted to announce that the Turnbull Government is providing \$4 million in Citizen Science Grants, over four years, to support more opportunities for the public to collaborate with researchers on high-quality, nationally important research projects.

Competitive grants between \$50,000 and \$500,000 will be offered to Australian researchers to engage the public in research - including collecting and analysing data, formulating questions for investigation and organising research teams.

This investment will help researchers to do more work, while boosting public participation in science by involving people directly in the research process.

As well as providing valuable assistance to researchers, citizen science projects help participants to further their own interests in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The Citizen Science Grants 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 past successful citizen science projects run by leading universities and research organisations, including online projects run for National Science Week each year.

This year's National Science Week project, Wildlife Spotter, saw around 50,000 people contribute 43,000 hours to analysing and identifying wildlife snapped from over 2.7 million images from automatic cameras in diverse wild and urban environments from Far North Queensland to Tasmania.

This project, run by ABC Science, helped six different research groups understand which species were roaming our wild and urban areas, helping to save threatened species and preserve Australia's iconic wildlife.

In 2015, ABC Science ran the Galaxy Explorer project which saw 18,000 Australians assist with the classification of 225,000 images of galaxies for the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research in Western Australia.

Another example is Curtin University's Eureka prize-winning Fireballs in the Sky project, in which 24,000 people in 88 countries have reported meteor sightings via a dedicated app. Project scientists use this information to compute the meteor's orbit, contributing to planetary science and our understanding of the formation of the solar system.

Researchers across Australia are recognising the value of using people power to enhance the range and depth of data available for analysis and research.

The Turnbull Government's support for citizen science projects will contribute to Australia's national science and research priorities and increase science participation in new fields.

For more information on Citizen Science Grants visit:

<https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/inspiring-australia-science-engagement/citizen-science-grants>

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