



MEDIA RELEASE

TUESDAY 7th August 2012

2012 TALL POPPY AWARD FINALISTS NAMED – THE FUTURE OF SCIENCE IN SA

Researchers of nanocrystals, Indigenous archaeology and environmental modelling have been named among the finalists for the 2012 South Australian Tall Poppy Awards.

Science and Information Economy **Minister Tom Kenyon** said the Tall Poppy Awards highlighted the achievements of young scientists and the high levels of success to which others can aspire.

“The Tall Poppy Awards hold up South Australia’s best and brightest researchers as inspiration to us all,” Mr Kenyon said.

“Strong science and technology sectors will underpin our State’s transformation into an advanced and highly skilled economy.

“To support the growth of these sectors, we need to celebrate scientific leaders through initiatives such as the Tall Poppy Awards, and encourage the development of relevant skills and research,” he said.

“The State Government is committed to fostering science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education and training to support those choosing careers in these fields through our STEM Skills Strategy; and through our *Skills for All* reforms, which aim to raise the skill levels of the workforce and get more people into training and jobs.”

The Tall Poppy Campaign aims to boost public awareness by **championing the brightest young local researchers who are leading the charge to inspire the next generations of skilled South Australians.**

Fourteen researchers, who were selected as finalists from a large pool of nominees, will attend the **2012 Tall Poppy Awards Reception at Government House** this August, hosted by **His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC CSC RANR, Governor of South Australia**. The Reception will be attended by key representatives of government, industry and education sectors. Eight winners will be announced from the shortlist.

One of these eight winners will go on to win **the 2012 South Australian Tall Poppy of the Year Award**. This winner will be announced at the **Science Excellence Awards SA** being held at the Intercontinental Hotel on the **17th August**. The Tall Poppy of the Year will walk away with a \$10000 cash prize.

2012 South Australian Tall Poppy Award Finalists – alphabetical order (with research topic)

Dr Grant Brinkworth	Obesity – optimising diet and exercise
Dr Russell Brinkworth	Mechatronics – biologically inspired cameras
Dr Paul Gardner-Stephen	Humanitarian Telecommunications (Mesh telephony)
Dr Matthew Gilliam	Plant Science/ Food security – Salinity tolerance and increased productivity
Prof Dmitri Kavetski	Modelling of water catchments for planning and the environment
Dr Hannah Keage	Dementia – early life prevention and physiological symptoms
Dr Zlatko Kopecki	Fragile skin disorders and wound healing
Dr Christopher McDevitt	Microbiology – Infectious Diseases
Dr Antonina Mikocka-Walus	Psychological Medicine (Inflammatory Bowel Disease)
Dr Rachel Popelka-Filcoff	Analytical Chemistry/ Archaeological Science (Aboriginal history)
Dr Grant Tomkinson	Health Sciences (Obesity treatment in children)
Dr Kate Wegener	Protein structure and structure-based drug development (cardiovascular disease)
Dr Kerry Wilkinson	Analytical Chemistry and Wine Science
Dr Haolan Xu	Nanomaterials – study of nanocrystals for building nanodevices

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The Tall Poppy is a metaphor for excellence and endeavour and symbolises Australia’s pride in its outstanding achievers – in all fields.

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