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MEDIA RELEASE

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AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS CHANCE TO FLY TO ANTARCTICA

An Antarctic experience of a lifetime is on offer for Australian students who win a national competition to name the nation's new icebreaker vessel, with a flight to Antarctica on offer to the winning entry.

Up to 12 students will fly to Antarctica for a day, becoming the first children to set foot on the icy continent as part of the Australian Antarctic Program.

The winning students will fly from Hobart to Australia's Wilkins Aerodrome where they will meet Antarctic scientists, as well as expeditioners living and working at nearby Casey research station.

The 'Name our Icebreaker' competition has two categories: primary (years 5 and 6) and secondary (years 7 and 8) with classes able to enter their suggested name in a written or video format.

The competition will give young Australians the opportunity to name the sophisticated new Antarctic resupply and research vessel which will shape the future of Australia's Antarctic Program.

The icebreaker will be more than 156 metres long and accommodate 116 expeditioners. It will be equipped with an array of cutting-edge scientific equipment including a moon pool, multi-beam bathymetric echo sounders, hydrophones and underwater cameras.

Seven new curriculum-aligned modules about the icebreaker have also been developed on the Australian Antarctic Division's website, 'Classroom Antarctica'.

It is my hope this competition will inspire the Antarctic scientists and policy makers of the future, engaging them to learn about the Antarctic environment, climate, history and Australia's role there.

Entries in the 'Name our Icebreaker' competition will be judged by a panel of eminent Australians on criteria including originality, creativity, sincerity, appropriateness and alignment with the values, objectives and activities of the Australian Antarctic Program.

The competition opens today and closes on Friday 9 June. The icebreaker name and winners of the competition will be publicly announced in September 2017, with the prize flight taking place in November - December 2017.

The new icebreaker will replace the current ship *Aurora Australis*, also named by Australian school children, which has been an integral part of the Australian Antarctic Program since 1989.

More information for the name the icebreaker competition via <https://classroom.antarctica.gov.au/icebreaker>.

Pictures and vision available via ftp://ftp.aad.gov.au/Public/News_Media_Files/NOI/

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