



## **Internationally acclaimed German preschool science program launched in Australia**

**Sydney, 2 May 2013**

**FROEBEL Australia is setting up the acclaimed German ‘Little Scientists’ program for Australian education and care services. Last night, at NICTA’s Future Logistics Living Lab, FROEBEL Australia and the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce celebrated the launch of the program with 90 guests from the fields of business and education. German Consul General Hans-Dieter Steinbach, Hugh Durrant-Whyte, CEO of NICTA and Kristian Wolf, Executive Director of the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, stressed the importance of supporting early childhood education in the fields of natural sciences, maths and technology. The first Australian partners have already been found: Big Fat Smile and Haver Australia.**

The [Little Scientists’ House Foundation](#) is the largest early education initiative in Germany. Partners are the Helmholtz Association, the Siemens Foundation, the Dietmar Hopp Foundation, the Deutsche Telekom Foundation and the Autostadt GmbH in Wolfsburg. The initiative is also funded and supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The Little Scientists’ House in Germany is fostering young children’s curiosity for and interest in science, maths and technology through playful experiments at childcare centres, preschools and now also primary schools. As of April 2013 there are more than 26,000 services participating in the program throughout Germany, supported by 228 local networks. The program has already been introduced to several other countries, including Austria and Thailand, where the Thai Royal Princess is the patron.

[FROEBEL Australia](#) is a premium not-for-profit provider of bilingual children’s services and offers excellence in early childhood education and care, as well as unique bilingual early learning programs for children from 6 weeks to 6 years of age. The program is based on the Early Years Learning Framework and designed to encourage children’s autonomy, self-confidence and self-esteem. FROEBEL’s philosophy is rooted in progressive ideas developed by Friedrich Fröbel, the renowned educator who shaped the kindergarten concept almost 200 years ago. FROEBEL Australia is operating 2 bilingual services in Sydney and is planning to open its first centre in Melbourne early in 2014.

In Australia, as of May 2013, workshops with different focuses, such as water, air, acoustics or magnets will be held for all interested education and care services. FROEBEL Australia has recruited trainers that have been instructed by their German counterparts. The train-the-trainer model has been very successful in Germany, where a lack of skilled engineers has resulted in the launch of the initiative. Research has shown that it is crucial to start with very young children who are by nature curious about their environment and natural phenomena. The idea of the Little Scientists’ House is to foster and maintain this curiosity by taking up children’s questions and exploring their environment together with them. CEO of the *Big Fat Smile* childcare network in the Illawarra, Bill Feld, has already enrolled his 40 childcare centres into the Little Scientists coursework. He believes it will give his centres an attractive edge.



For further information please see: [www.littlescientists.org.au](http://www.littlescientists.org.au)

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