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**digIT - ICT Summer Schools**

The ICT Summer Schools initiative (digIT) funded by the Commonwealth of Australia through the Department of Education and Training. It is part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda's 'Inspiring all Australians in digital literacy and STEM' measure, which aims to increase the participation of all students and the community in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and to improve their digital literacy. The measure has a specific focus on tackling the digital divide to ensure that those students most at risk of falling behind in the digital age are given opportunities to participate and engage at all levels of education.

**Who**

digIT is aimed at capable students in years 8 and 9 who are from groups which are under-represented in STEM learning areas and may be at risk of not benefiting from the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies. The program is being run by the Australian Mathematics Trust (AMT – www.amt.edu.au)) in partnership with Australian Science Innovations (ASI – www.asi.edu.au) and support from a number of agencies including CSIRO and ATSIMA.

**What**

This is a six-month program that combines two residential camps and a mentoring program.

The camps will enable the students to explore all aspects of ICT through guest lectures, interactive sessions, practicals and field trips. Central to this will be the development of algorithmic thinking and coding skills.

The mentoring program will see each student matched with a mentor recruited from a variety of ICT backgrounds and together they will construct personal goals for the student. This might include discussing study options and career pathways, undertaking further extension work with support from their mentor, developing ideas based on learnings from the camp or working on a project.

**When**

(Students are required to commit to both residential camps)

* Summer camp: this will be in the December/January holiday at a major university
* Mentoring will take place in the period between the two camps
* Winter camp: This will occur during the July school holiday

**Where**

In each of the four years of the initiative, the program will be held in a different state, with the expectation that students from all states and territories will be able to benefit over the four-year period. In 2016/17, we will be targeting students in NSW/ACT

**Why**

In a fun and supportive environment, the students will grow in confidence and ability whilst expanding their critical thinking, programming and problem-solving skills. They will make new friends, be exposed to outstanding role models, practise new skills, and deepen their understanding of what their future may hold in the field of ICT.

**How**

digIT is an invitational program. Students are invited based on their performance in one of a number of competitions or by teacher recommendation. The program will be particularly targeted towards students underrepresented in ICT or STEM subjects in years 9 and 10 who are disadvantaged, rural/remote and/or Indigenous.

Students will be identified and invitations will be sent to schools in September/October 2016.