

# THE SCIENTIFIC SPOTLIGHT

By Lara Cooper and River Milkovich

## YEAR 9/10 REMOTE STUDENTS OFF TO THE BIG SMOKE!

On July 3rd to 8th, 2025, Miss Trinity and Mr French took a group of us from Nhulunbuy High School to Melbourne for a once-in-a-lifetime, weeklong trip to attend the Deadly Science Program.

The aim of the camp was to explore future science pathways, discover new opportunities, and be inspired by the world of science. We feel incredibly lucky to have been part of such a wonderful program. A huge thank you goes to Miss Trinity and Mr French for giving us this opportunity and filling us with new ideas about what we might like to do in the future. The Deadly Science Program not only inspired us, but also many other schools who took part.

From this experience, students came away with fresh ideas and a stronger passion for science. The program encourages younger kids to see the value of hands-on learning and imagine themselves going to university one day to continue researching science.

After arriving in Melbourne, we checked into the Ibis Hotel. That evening we enjoyed dinner at a hot pot restaurant before heading off in search of dessert at Yo-Chi. The line for frozen yoghurt stretched out the door! While Lara and Grace waited, the rest of us explored a nearby bookshop.

The second day was all about sightseeing and (lots of) shopping! We visited Melbourne Central and the Emporium, where we enjoyed lunch at the food court. River and Ayianna accidentally took a wrong turn and got lost in the Emporium for half an hour, but they eventually made it back in time to share sushi with the group.

In the afternoon, we caught a tram to Flinders Street Station and walked to the Eureka Tower. After a long elevator ride, we reached the 91st floor. Grace, River, Lara, Miss Trinity and Mr Friedmann even stepped into the glass box that extends out from the tower, looking straight down at the city below. Back on the ground, we finished the day with a VR experience of Melbourne.



## FROM CURIOSITY TO DISCOVERY...

On the third day, we finally visited WEHI (Walter and Eliza Hall Institute). We began with a smoke ceremony to welcome us onto Melbourne land, then took group photos before heading inside. The WEHI scientists introduced themselves and explained the exciting activities planned for us.

After a delicious lunch, we visited the University of Melbourne—River's favourite part of the trip! The campus was huge, and we spoke with staff and students about the many opportunities available. Some of us stayed behind afterwards to ask more questions. Later, Miss Trinity showed us around the colleges. Wesley even went for a run on the track before we all returned to the hotel. That evening we had dinner together in the city.

Back at WEHI on day four, we listened to inspiring talks from scientists who shared their challenges and achievements. Afterwards, we toured the engineering labs, where we saw a 3D-printed model of a human cell, very interesting!

We also had the chance to meet Aboriginal interns at WEHI, who shared their stories and experiences. That evening we enjoyed an Italian dinner on Lygon Street.





On the fifth day, we spent most of the morning at the Royal Children's Hospital. It was an incredible experience as we got to meet some of the staff who work there and learn about the amazing work they do every day to help sick children. We were given a session on stem cells, where we discovered how they can be used in medical research and treatments to repair or replace damaged cells in the body. It was fascinating to see how science is being applied in real life to make such a big difference. We were also shown some of the advanced technology and equipment used in the hospital, which gave us a glimpse into how modern medicine is constantly evolving. This visit inspired many of us to think about careers in health and medical science, as we could see how much impact this kind of work has on people's lives.

In the afternoon, we visited University High and took part in a CSI-style DNA investigation. We worked in groups to solve a mock crime using questioning, blood testing, and fingerprint analysis. It was a fun and hands-on way to see how science is used in real investigations. Later, we attended a celebration lunch, followed by dinner and then an exciting - but freezing - AFL game at the MCG to end the night.

We would like to give a huge thank you to Miss Triny and Mr French for organising and supporting us throughout the trip, as well as to the Deadly Science Program for making it all possible. This experience has opened our eyes to so many opportunities and inspired us to think differently about our futures. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime adventure that we will always remember.

