



## Disease Zone

### Summary report – March 2013

This report has been compiled by the *I'm a Scientist, Get me out of Here, Australia* team as a summary of zone activities and outcomes. It contains moderator observations and analysis of web statistics for the March 2013 Disease Zone.

Disease was the busiest zone this season, with a record breaking 399 questions asked in the Ask section. Together with the 21 Live Chats, *I'm a Scientist* provided the platform for students to ask each of the five scientists in the zone any science related question on their minds. The zone scientists included Yagiz the synthetic biology PhD student, Miranda the superbug microbiologist / biochemist, Katelin the PhD student studying ankylosing spondylitis, Kate the medical science honours student, and Cindy the multiple myeloma researcher in the final throes of her PhD. Even with so many areas of expertise covered, the fast paced Live Chats fired some interesting questions that challenged their scientific knowledge, opinions and typing speeds.

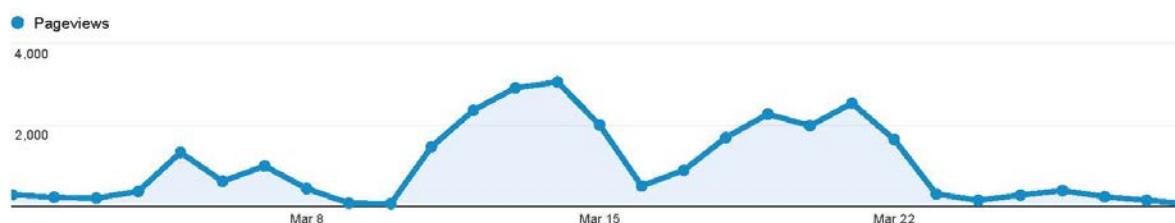
### Statistics

Zone page	Pageviews
Total Zone	29,481
Zone homepage	1,931
ASK page	2,090
CHAT page	2,303
VOTE page	1,836
List of questions	1,097
Yagiz Alp Aksoy	102
Miranda Ween	1,152
Katelin Haynes	594
Kate Skulte	862
Cindy Lin	602

Table 1: Pageviews of the *I'm a Scientist* Disease zone

Number of . . .	Disease Zone	Average (per zone)	Whole event
Registered students	288	250	751
Questions asked	1110	728	2,138
Questions approved	399	267	800
Answers given	811	634	1,902
Comments	157	148	444
Votes	468	306	919
Live chats	21	16	49
Lines of live chat	6,301	4,703	14,110
Schools	8	7	19

Table 2: Key engagement statistics from the *I'm a Scientist* Disease zone, compared to the average per zone and whole March 2013 event.



Graph 1: Pageviews of the *I'm a Scientist* Disease zone from March 1–29 2013 – including the week prior to, and after the two-week event.

## **Popular topics and words**

The Ask section hosted a record number of questions from students with great threads of follow-up comments and questions. One of the most popular questions in terms of pageviews was [Can your blood type also help you get this terrible disease?](#) leading to a long thread about multiple myeloma.

Students displayed a significant interest in scientists specific job roles and one of the questions on the top of students lists was [Why did you become a scientist?](#), asked by 38 students within the zone. It was great to see the variety of reasons why scientists followed their career path, and the different stages in their education that the passion for science took hold.



Diagram 1: A word cloud of the 50 most popular words used by students within the ASK section of the *I'm a Scientist Disease* zone. The more prominent the word, the more frequently it was used by students

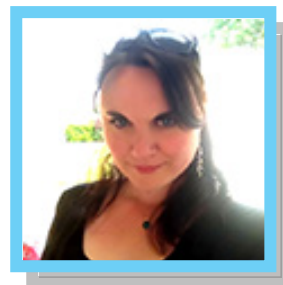


Diagram 2: A word cloud of the 150 most popular words used by students and scientists during the Live Chats in the *I'm a Scientist Disease* zone. The more prominent the word, the more frequently it was used.

The live chats were very busy and often had at least 3 scientists answering questions. Looking at the most popular words used within student's questions (diagram 1) and during live chats (diagram 2) we can see that *disease*, *cancer*, *experiment* and *job/work* featured high in their conversational vocabulary with the scientists.

### ***Scientist winner: Miranda Ween***

Miranda is a researcher with expertise in microbiology and biochemistry, working on how to use the properties of superbugs against them. Miranda made it to each and every Live Chat session and answered all of the questions posed to her by the students, even when home sick with the flu. She plans to use her prize money to fund school groups to participate in science outreach delivered by the Mobile Science Education team.



### ***Student winner: april7***

Student *april7* was nominated by the scientists in the Disease zone for posing some very good questions in both the live chats and the ASK section of the *I'm a Scientist* website. *april7* asked a total of 12 questions including "[What's the best question anyone has ever asked you](#)" which really got the scientists thinking, and "[can you give me a description of your labrotory?](#)".

### ***Event sponsors***

Thank you to our partners for supporting *I'm a Scientist, Get Me Out of Here!* in Australia:

- Major partners TechNYou for supporting the pilot in June 2011, both the May and August/September 2012 events, and this March 2013 event.
- Zone supporters the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARES) and the Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations (CRDC) for sponsoring the March 2013 Agriculture Zone.

### ***Final thanks to the scientists***

The success of the *I'm a Scientist* event is thanks to the scientists who volunteer their time to chat to students online and answer their science questions. A thanks also to the scientist's associated organisations for supporting them in taking part.