



Chinchilla Community Commerce & Industry Inc

"the building blocks of our community"

Chinchilla Sands Megafauna STEM Centre

SUMMARY

Driven by requests and interest from the Chinchilla Community, Schools and Businesses the CCCI is investigating the need for and benefits of a specialised STEM Education Centre in Chinchilla. Motivated by the rich and diverse Megafauna finds from the Chinchilla Sands geological formation and the many industries utilising the Natural Resources of the greater Western Downs operating from Chinchilla.

ISSUE

- Queensland Students & Teachers need more opportunities for inspiration and practical application of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).
- STEM has been identified by the Queensland Government as a vital area of focus for Queensland Students
- Chinchilla's fossil sites are considered to be scientifically significant among experts in Australia and internationally.
- Planetology, Natural Resource/Mining industries and Agriculture provide a broad scope of practical applications of STEM to students and the wider public.

BACKGROUND

Chinchilla locals Cecil & Doris Wilkinson have been collecting fossils from around Chinchilla for 30 years they have donated the majority of their collection to the QLD Museum. One of their dig sites close to the town of Chinchilla and is considered to contain the most significant Pliocene fauna in the country being the best known, most researched and most studied site of its age in Australia. Chinchilla has close proximity to the Surat Basin Coal Seam Gas Developments.

RATIONALE

- STEMS is of vital importance to our children's education and is becoming a more and more important area of focus
- Chinchilla is ideally located amongst rich Megafauna fossils of the Chinchilla Sands, Coal and CSG resource industries and high value farming primary production areas which provide opportunities to demonstrate practical applications of STEMS learning.
- Chinchilla has a growing young population demonstration strong growth in school enrolments whose students would benefit from the proposed STEMS Education facility
- The STEMS Centre would also offer opportunities for wider public access to the facility having knock on benefits through increased tourism.

RECOMMENDATION

That funding be sought to design, build and operate a STEM centre in Chinchilla using the linkages between the areas rich megafauna history, farming and Resource Industries to educate Students (Primary School, University & beyond) providing practical linkages and applications for STEM Education programs.

CONTACT

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