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Making science accessible to enquiring young minds is child's play in new IMAS exhibition

Children have helped researchers communicate their Antarctic and Southern Ocean science especially for enquiring young minds – and it's the focus of a new exhibition opening today in Hobart at the IMAS gallery.

“This exhibition is about turning the spotlight on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, to highlight how important these remote places are as global climate drivers, and the changes the region is currently experiencing that will ultimately affect us all,” said co-curator, Dr Pat Wongpan, who is a quantitative sea ice biogeochemist and ecologist at the University of Tasmania's Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS).

The exhibition features nine articles written by Hobart-based scientists using language and graphics that are accessible for young readers. Children worked with a science mentor to give authors tips on how to improve their articles before they were published in the [Frontiers for Young Minds journal](#).

“It really is science for kids, edited by kids,” Dr Wongpan said.

Exhibition visitors will experience complex earth system topics made simple, like the changes in the Antarctic ice sheet and sea ice, ocean and atmospheric circulation, and Antarctic biodiversity.

“Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are such remote and inhospitable places, so polar research can sometimes struggle to attract the same public interest as more visible fields of marine science like reef ecology or fisheries,” said IMAS sea ice biochemist Associate Professor Delphine Lannuzel, who helped curate the exhibition.

Along with the easy-reading science, a tent showcasing Antarctic-themed artefacts will allow visitors to experience the spirit of polar expeditions, while artwork by Hokkaido University researcher Dr Yoshihiro Nakayama, Dr Wongpan, Assoc Prof Lannuzel and collaborators from torinoko store in Tokyo will explore what a wax candle and the Antarctic ice sheet have in common.

“The wax candle is a powerful representation of the fragility of the Antarctic ice sheet to irreversible melting,” said Assoc Prof Lannuzel.

“It's all part of sharing our science with a wider audience, and especially enquiring young minds, in a really accessible way – which is so important to build understanding about this awe-inspiring environment and the challenges it faces.”

Dive in: [opening times, booking group visits and more are available here](#).

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