

MEDIA RELEASE

THE STAGE IS SET FOR A FEAABULOUS ADVENTURE INTRODUCING PRISCILLA

Melbourne, Australia. Tuesday September 17, 2019

Can a sleek, sporty, Aussie outback Queen, steal the crown from the seemingly unconquerable Dutch champions, in this year's Bridgestone World Solar Challenge?

That's the question Australia's first national, five state, five university collaboration, known as The Australian Technology Network (ATN) Solar Car Team, hope they can answer with a resounding yes. At her launch today, the hot pink spotlight shone on *Priscilla*, a high-tech, aerodynamic, carbon fibre solar electric sports car, as she emerged, chrysalis like, from under her sparkling silver cover for the first time.

ATN Executive Director, Luke Sheehy, said the realisation of *Priscilla* was the result of an incredible collaborative effort from five of Australia's most innovative universities: RMIT University; UTS; University of South Australia, Curtin University and QUT.

'Our journey started more than two years ago, when a bold plan was hatched to develop a multi-disciplinary project that represented the values of the ATN as a new generation of universities focused on industry collaboration and real-world research. As the concept of building a Cruiser Class solar car to compete in the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge took shape, ATN realised the project could positively impact Australia's role in future technology development, and at the same time give students the opportunity to be work-ready, global thinkers with the enthusiasm to challenge technology boundaries,' Mr Sheehy said.

Speaking at today's launch, Bridgestone World Solar Challenge Event Director, Chris Selwood AM, said it was exciting to see this ambitious project come to life.

'When I first heard about the idea of five universities designing and building a solar car in five separate states, I wasn't sure how they'd get it done. The scale and logistics of the BWSC is not to be underestimated. To be successful in the Cruiser Class, you need a lot more than speed, you need energy efficiency, practical 'real car' features and the added subjective judging component of market desirability,' Mr Selwood said.

'ATN has certainly embraced the concept! As you prepare to take on some fifty other teams, seven of them flying the Aussie flag, I wish you every success on the road to Adelaide and beyond,' Mr Selwood said.

Team Manager Anna Lidfors Lindqvist, said *Priscilla* was custom designed and built by the team to be fast when she needs to be, but always strategic in her energy consumption.

'*Priscilla* has a top speed of 130 kilometres per hour, but ours is a race of strategy over speed. We need to meet very tight time windows at control stops. We can drive 1200 km without external charging, even in poor weather; this is much more than electric vehicles on the market today,' Ms Lidfors Lindqvist said.

'*Priscilla* is smart too. With a traditional electricity supply system, generators adjust their output to match the demand from every-day appliances. With the future smart grid, these

appliances will adjust their load to match the availability of cheap, renewable energy from the grid. We have developed control systems that allow Priscilla to decide the best time to charge. We won't be using this feature during the BWSC, as regulations tell us when to charge, but we'll be demonstrating this type of EV charging early next year, she explained.

As to the story behind the name, Ms Lidfors Lindqvist acknowledged, Garry McQuinn, Producer RGM Productions and his Priscilla design team in the UK, for their design advice and allowing the team to channel the adventurous spirit of this much-loved iconic stage and screen production, The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert.

Speaking from the UK, Mr McQuinn said from the outset he loved the idea of naming the car Priscilla.

'Our quirky Aussie outback story has a life of its own – its travelled around the world. I'm thrilled we have another vehicle to carry the Priscilla name, which to us represents both adventure and inclusivity, two qualities synonymous with this event' Mr McQuinn said.

Ms Lidfors Lindqvist also paid tribute to team sponsors, supporters and industry partners: Bridgestone Australia for supplying low-rolling resistance Ecopia tyres; Valour Sport for high-tech, high-performance sportswear; Motorsport Hauler for Priscilla's custom-built trailer; PACCAR Australia for their commitment to our driver training program; our official Pizza Base HQ - Crust Pizza; and Brumby's Bakery for keeping our team fuelled and fed on the road to the BWSC19.

'We can't wait to introduce everyone to Priscilla, the solar electric car people will want to drive,' Ms Lidfors Lindqvist concluded.

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Media background

2019 Bridgestone World Solar Challenge (13 – 20 October)

The world's biggest solar challenge began in 1987 and is a 3,000-kilometre endurance adventure that occurs once every two years. The BWSC has become the world's foremost innovation challenge with teams from around the world vying to become the first to deliver sustainable solar powered electric vehicles. Teams are striving to make the Darwin start line on Sunday 13 October, in their bid to deliver the world's most efficient solar electric car. Three classes of vehicle, Challenger, Cruiser and Adventure, will take on the Aussie outback in a contest of endurance, strategy and innovation. The elite Challenger Class is conducted in a single stage from Darwin to Adelaide and 2019 will see the fourth running of the Cruiser Class, created to encourage the green to the mainstream by designing practical electric vehicles where success is judged on a range of design and performance measures. The Cruiser Class solar car category is unique to Bridgestone World Solar Challenge - it is the race within the race. The stage is set for a total eclipse of past events and achievements. For event details go to: www.worldsolarchallenge.org

ATN Solar Car Team

Five States. Five Universities. One Team. Australia's only national team with a vision to design and build a sustainable solar electric car that people will want to drive. The ATN Solar Car Team is a blend of industry expertise and undergraduate students, postgraduate researchers and faculty members from five of Australia's most innovative and enterprising universities: UTS, RMIT University, University of South Australia, Curtin University and QUT. For team details go to: www.atnsolarcar.com.au

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