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CATALYST New Format

The ABC is committed to increasing its investment in science with the *Catalyst* program returning in 2017 as an internally commissioned production, but with a revised format.

Under the proposed plan, a series of 17 hour-long documentaries will be created to replace the existing 30-minute magazine-style program, which launched in its current format in 2001.

The hour-long focus will enable *Catalyst* to explore a range of science ideas in depth, using leading expert subject presenters, rather than a fixed ensemble of science reporters.

The *Catalyst* team will also deliver short form content around each issue and throughout the year to increase the ABC's digital science offering on and off ABC platforms.

Catalyst will be co-located with other Science Units in Radio and Science Online to foster collaboration and ensure editorial excellence with greater promotional synergies.

The review of the program is in line with ABC TV's strategy to reach a broader and more diverse audience with distinctive, Australian content that is accessible and durable.

Catalyst will recruit an experienced Executive Producer to manage a small internal production team.

The Director of ABC TV, Richard Finlayson, said the proposed change in direction was driven by changing audience demands.

"*Catalyst* has made a huge contribution to science communication over 16 years. But, audiences can now get instant access to quality content anywhere in the world and we must ensure our programs can have the greatest possible public impact.

"Under this model, we will encourage excellence by allowing the best minds in Australia to pitch their science ideas no matter how local or how global."

Up to 9 ongoing staff members may be affected by the proposed changes. Consultations have begun with the ABC offering alternate positions for some staff.

Media Contact: Nick Leys 0413 621 484
leys.nick@abc.net.au