

# Astronaut Andy helping kids aim for the stars

**MILES KEMP**

ADELAIDE'S own astronaut, Andy Thomas, has launched a South Australian-based space foundation – named in his honour – to capitalise on the city becoming home to the Australian Space Discovery Centre.

Backed by \$900,000 in State Government funding, the Andy Thomas Space Foundation will encourage space study in SA, beginning in primary school. It will offer scholarships for international training and industry experience.

Dr Thomas described the foundation as a “great milestone” that would open “myriad options” for young people to become inspired about space.

“It will help them define their future career goals and help establish them on a good education path,” Dr Thomas said from the US, where

earlier this week he watched his wife, Shannon Walker, and three other astronauts leave on a NASA/SpaceX mission to the International Space Station.

Foundation chief executive Nicola Sasanelli said long-term funding would come from membership fees, philanthropic donations, grants and revenue from public events.

Premier Steven Marshall was to launch the Foundation at Lot 14 this morning but, because of COVID-19 restrictions, instead issued a statement hailing the new foundation as “a great asset to supporting the State Government’s commitment to growing SA’s space industry”.

Mr Sasanelli said the foundation aimed to generate career opportunities for SA school leavers and promote local innovation and economic growth.



**Adelaide astronaut Andy Thomas.**