QANTAS HOLDS TECH TALK IN THE SKIES DURING AUSTRALIAN START-UP FLIGHT

News / Airlines

Qantas coordinated the world's first in-flight Tech Talk on flight flight 73 departing from Sydney to San Francisco, as part of an initiative to promote the strengths and capabilities of Australian innovators in technology and science helping them make links in Silicon Valley.

Called 'Ideas That Travel' the Tech Talk was coordinated in partnership with TEDxSydney and will feature four Australian technology and science innovators who share their vision for the future of technology and design in a series of talks held in the nose of the Qantas B747.

"The talks will be live-streamed to passengers via the in-flight entertainment system and available online following QF73's arrival into San Francisco," the airline states.

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“This is the perfect route for a world-first,” said Qantas Group Executive Brand, Marketing, and Corporate Affairs Olivia Wirth. “We all know about the impact of the California tech boom, but what’s really exciting is the growing number of Australians doing business with Silicon Valley on the one hand, and building a home-grown Australian culture of entrepreneurialism on the other.”

Silicon Valley Tour

Ten Australian tech entrepreneurs and start-ups selected by innovation hub The York Butter Factory, and Australia’s leading supplier diversity organisation, Supply Nation, will be on the flight headed for a tour of Silicon Valley to advance their start-up businesses.

Participating in the San Francisco tour will be key executives from Australian start-ups in the travel sector and beyond including Drawboard, Beanhunter, Electrify, CarCloud, Omny, Frank Body, HC Building and Construction, Fields Group, Muru Group, and Gilimbaa Pty Ltd.

They will tour the headquarters of Google, Twitter, Facebook, Khan Academy and Silicon Valley Bank and will participate in workshops at the Singularity University to advance their business plans and explore new business opportunities.

“One of the reasons we re-launched flights between Sydney and San Francisco was to support growing business travel driven by the tech boom, and we’re looking forward to playing our part in strengthening the ties between innovators on both sides of the Pacific,” Wirth added.

The TEDx speakers presenting during the flight were announced as:

Jo Burston, CEO and Founder of Rare Birds who promotes opportunities in entrepreneurship for women.

Associate Professor Michael Biercuk – Experimental Physicist and Director of the Quantum Control Laboratory within the ARC Centre of Excellence for Engineered Quantum Systems at the University of Sydney. Professor Biercuk runs a research group which is developing techniques to control and exploit quantum mechanical phenomena as power sources, enabling a new generation technologies.

Marita Cheng – CEO and Founder of 2MAR Robotics and developer of Aiopoly who runs both a robotics company and an artificial intelligence company.

Jeremy Howard – CEO and Founder of Enlitic a startup which researches recent advances in machine learning to develop modern medical diagnostics technologies.

18 FEBRUARY 2016

SOURCE: RUNWAYGIRLNETWORK
ARTICLE LINK:
https://mfa.50skyshades.com/news/airlines/qantas-holds-tech-talk-in-the-skies-during-australian-start-up-flight

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