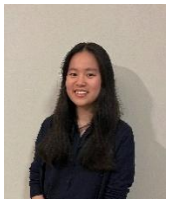
Maeve Burchell: Engineering a Sustainable Future



Growing up in Adelaide, Maeve Burchell developed a lasting curiosity about how the world works. Science and space captured her imagination, while buildings, mathematics, art and design gave that curiosity both practical and creative directions. Engineering brought those interests together.

Maeve is studying Civil Engineering with Honours at Adelaide University, specialising in infrastructure. Her degree has strengthened her interest in the systems and structures that shape everyday life, and she is preparing to begin a graduate role after completing her studies. She is particularly drawn to structural and transport engineering.

Transport has become a stronger interest after Maeve attended the 2026 TPA national conference. She sees thoughtful transport planning and infrastructure as central to creating places that are safer, more connected and more sustainable.

That commitment extends to some of the defining challenges facing the built environment. Maeve is concerned with the need for sustainable infrastructure and more responsible use of resources. She is also alert to the industry changes created by artificial intelligence, recognising that technological progress is inevitable but its environmental and societal costs must be considered.

Away from engineering, Maeve enjoys travel, art and photography. She also likes spending time out and about with her dog, which provides a welcome balance to study. With graduation approaching, she is beginning a career that brings together her analytical strengths, creativity and interest in building more sustainable communities.

What I gained from the Conference

As I approach the end of my Civil Engineering degree, the conference provided valuable insight into graduate roles and career pathways through presentations and conversations with industry professionals and students. A key takeaway was the importance of human behaviour in transport, particularly through discussions on walkable, cycling-friendly cities, safety, accessibility, and the influence of local culture on transport planning. I also enjoyed the industry debate and road safety presentations, which highlighted the complexity of transport issues. Attending alongside fellow students made the experience an encouraging introduction to professional conferences, and I am grateful for the knowledge and connections gained.