

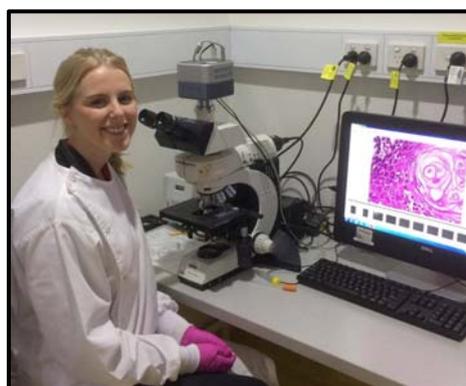


# national science week 2017

## Catherine Foster

### *Why am I too tired to do my homework?*

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Did you know our brain is the fundamental thing that allows us to be the dominant species? Otherwise we would be like a jelly fish, just letting the current take us anywhere. The brain is the most complex organ in our body and operates everything! So why wouldn't you want to study it?!

I've lived in Hobart, Tasmania, my whole life but have travelled all around Australia and overseas to New Zealand and the Fijians Islands. I've always had a need to learn about things that are unknown and I enjoy the challenge of thinking about new possibilities.

I study the brain and how it controls everything we think and do, at the University of Tasmania's School of Medicine as an Honours Student in Medical Research. My fascination with the brain started in college, when another student came and spoke about her work in discovering whether mouse behaviour can be altered by being in a fun and interactive environment, compared to a dull environment. I was hooked!

I wanted to discover cures for diseases and illnesses, and so I decided to study medical research at university. Now I am currently working on how fatigue (being really tired) affects the brain and how damage to the blood-brain barrier may be causing fatigue, leading to a change in behaviour and an inability to transport glucose into the brain which is essential for normal brain function.

I can't wait to see what the future holds for me and my research. I am looking forward to graduating with a Bachelor of Biotechnology and Medical Research with Honours and hope to start research for my PhD next year, otherwise to travel the world learning new things about the brain.



For further information: [www.utas.edu.au/medicine](http://www.utas.edu.au/medicine)