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NSW Division



Dr Vanessa Pirotta,
Chief Scientist, Wild Sydney Harbour. Chief Data Scientist, Rapiscan Systems, Honorary
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As one of Australia's leading wildlife scientists, Dr Vanessa Pirotta merges cutting-edge technology with conservation science. From using drones to collect whale snot to developing AI tools to combat illegal wildlife trafficking. A passionate communicator, Vanessa has been recognised as one of Science and Technology Australia's Superstars of STEM, the Australian Financial Review's Top 100 Women of Influence, Women's Agenda 2024 Emerging Leader in Science and in 2025, Vanessa was named the NSW Premiers Woman of Excellence. As the lead scientist for the citizen science project Wild Sydney Harbour, she connects communities with marine life while promoting the fusion of Indigenous knowledge and Western science. Vanessa is also a proud author of educational children's and adult books, which illuminates her vision for STEAM being part of the everyday.

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