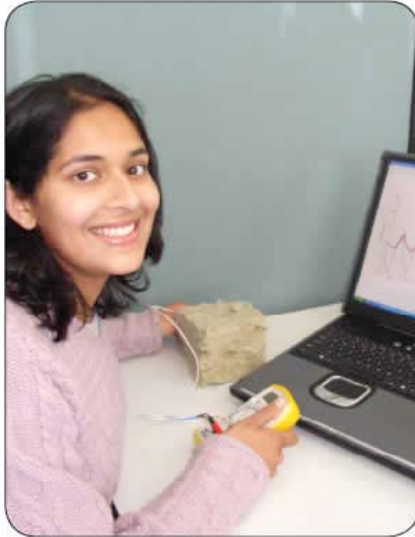


## The Scientists

Sabrina Sequeira  download



As a school child in the US, I enjoyed maths and science and so I studied mechanical engineering for four years at university. I held several engineering jobs in the US. Most recently I designed aircraft engines.

When I moved to Tasmania I bought an old, drafty house. It was quite nice in the summertime but in the winter I would freeze. So I thought to myself "hmmm... there must be a way to make an old house like this more comfortable to live in." I couldn't stop thinking about where the heat was escaping from. And that thought is what brought me to the University of Tasmania, to do research with the School of Architecture and School of Engineering.

My research involves making a house more thermally stable. That means keeping the inside of the house at a constant, comfortable temperature. Specifically, I study how the air moving underneath or around a house affects the inside temperature. So I'm determining what exactly the underneath of a house is like. Is it cold? Warm? Damp? How much does the air move around when it's windy outside? I have test houses in Launceston that I can experiment with to help me answer these questions.

I like being a research student at the university. I can go to my office when I want to, and when I just have reading to do I can sometimes do it from home. I like that I have two different schools of people available to help me. I sit amongst the engineers at the Hobart campus and when I go to Launceston to see the test houses, I visit the architects.

I also like that my research is something that affects many people in their daily lives. About 75% of all private dwellings in Australia are separate houses, and on average about 40% of the energy used in a home is to heat or cool it. So if I could help make each house work more efficiently, when applied across Australia, the savings would really make a difference.

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