



2019 Cambridge Science Festival

Cambridge Science Festival is committed to engaging the public with science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine. The Festival ran from 11-24 March and had the theme Discovery. The Festival is evaluated by the visiting public and by those who take part.

The aims of the Cambridge Science Festival are to:

- Provide opportunities for researchers and the public to explore, discuss and debate issues of scientific interest and concern.
- Promote research conducted within the University of Cambridge and partner organisations.
- Encourage young people to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics further and to consider careers in these areas.

We thank everyone who contributed to the Festival this year. Thanks to the support of the University of Cambridge and the continued generosity of our sponsors we are able to ensure that, aside from a small number of performances, the majority of events remain free.

Festival overview

- The Festival is produced by the **University of Cambridge Public Engagement team** and supported by our **sponsors and partners**: AstraZeneca, illumina, Science AAAS, Astex Pharmaceuticals, Anglia Ruskin University, The IET, Abcam, Cambridge University Health Partners, Cambridge Junction, Cambridge Science Centre, Cambridge Academy for Science and Technology, Hills Road Sixth Form College, Walters Kundert Charitable Trust, Cambridge University Press.
- The Festival comprised **375 events** and received **>65,000 public visits**.
- **~100 internal and ~40 external event coordinators** organised talks, hands-on activities, film showings, tours, performances and debates with the involvement of around **1,000 researchers**. Over **100 people volunteered** as stewards.
- The website (sciencefestival.cam.ac.uk) received **426K unique views** from programme release to Festival end.
- Bookings opened on 11 February. On this day the website received **16K unique views** and **5000 tickets** were booked in the first 30 minutes.
- Feedback was requested on booking, after attending an event and one month after the Festival. **98%** respondents rated the Festival overall as **good or very good**. **88%** rated the **event** they had attended **good or very good** and **60%** reported they had **learnt a lot** (8-10 on a scale of 1-10).
- 71% respondents attended alone or in adult groups, 28% attended as families.
- The Festival continues to appeal to new and existing audiences. In 2019 **43%** respondents visited for the first time, **28%** 3+ Festivals. Post Festival feedback suggests the mean time at Festival = 10 hrs (median 6, mode 5).
- From postcode data, the Festival continues to attract a **broad mix of urban and suburban audiences** including younger people and families. The majority came from the **Eastern Region** and **London** with a significant number of international visitors.
- Widespread media coverage led to **66 articles in print/online outlets** (+38% on 2018) and **63 radio and TV packages** (+40% on 2018) Regional TV coverage included five packages on BBC Look East. Radio coverage was primarily provided by our **Festival media Partner, BBC Radio Cambridgeshire**. This year we also **partnered with Cambridge Independent**, resulting in extensive print and online coverage. A conservative estimate is potentially 2million+ people found out about the Festival through these channels. Social media was also used extensively to share research and publicise events **Facebook followers = 10,333** **Twitter followers = 11,520**.
- 2019 marked the **200th anniversary of Cambridge Philosophical Society, 150 years** since the publication of the **modern Periodic Table** and the **25th Cambridge Science Festival**. Exhibitions and talks celebrated these anniversaries, including a talk by **Professor Yuri Organessian**, after whom the last element is named.
- Community events were held at the **Church of the Good Shepherd, Arbury** and **Storey's Field Centre at Eddington**. Increased numbers of events were held in cafes and public spaces including **Thirsty Cambridge**. These successfully brought the Festival to new and under-represented audiences.
- The second **Cambridge Gravity Lecture** was given by Nobel Laureate **Sir Geoffrey Winter**. **Professor Mary Dixon-Woods** reprised her **Harveian Oration** on improving quality in healthcare. The new **Plumian Professor of Astronomy Christopher Reynolds** spoke on black holes. Associate Director of the UK Dementia Research Institute **Professor Giovanna Malucci** discussed new treatments for dementia. **45%** of our speakers were **women**.
- **Hands-on at the Guildhall: Autism friendly hour** continued to be popular and well-received. In association with **Pride in STEM, Out Thinkers** showcased the talents of our **LGBT+ researchers**. Working with the **Widening Participation Team** we organised Festival attendance for young people as part of the **Insight Explore** and **REALISE** access projects. We discussed the **3R's of animal research** with adults and families. A special Festival event for five **Special Schools** was held in Littleport. Performance piece **Unkindest Cut** looked at how complex mental health issues can be explored using dance. This **Wellcome project**, evaluated by UWE, investigated how UK Science Festivals can work together effectively.

Selected Festival feedback

“Just wanted to say over & over & over & over again THANK YOU for the overwhelming opportunities to enjoy such spectacularly high class events, great variety of topics and for free. I enjoyed laughing and absorbing so much.”

“I have been attending the science festival since I was very young, and I feel it has catalysed my love of science (I'm going to study a degree in physics this year, so this is my last year of being able to go to events at the Festival). I believe that encouraging young people to explore science is very important for society as a whole, as a more scientifically thinking population would be able to make better decisions for themselves and the wider society, so will make the world a better place. To conclude, I am very grateful for the Science Festival and want the organisers to know that it really does make a difference to the community.”

“Well done everyone - another great event that I know requires an enormous amount of work. Overall, the two Festivals are one of the things that makes me want to live in Cambridge.”

“My daughters were very excited by this event, they buzzed at home afterwards! This event really caught their imagination. Absolutely brilliant.”

“This talk was fascinating and gave me a real insight into the depth and quality of research going on at Cambridge University.”

“Fantastic, intelligent, absorbing, entertaining, engaging, relatable - I cannot say enough good things. One of the best performances of anything I have seen.”

“Long live the Cambridge Science Festival as a window for the general public to have new insights into our changing world.”

Festival photographs



High resolution copies of these and other images are available on request, please contact us at csf@admin.cam.ac.uk

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