

The Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity



What is the Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity?

The Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity is a week-long festival of events, bringing Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths to the Nottingham public. Taking place at various locations throughout the city and its suburbs, the Festival of Science and Curiosity is about inviting the people of Nottingham to share what they know, to ask questions about what they would like to know and take an active role in finding out the answers.

The festival gives an opportunity for all the different institutions in Nottingham to engage the public with their work and inspire more people to take an interest in STEM in a creative way.

Who is it organised by?

The Festival is organised by the Stemcity partnership, which is a collaborative initiative led by Nottingham City Council and delivered by educational organizations, industry specialists and citizens who work together to increase the culture of science and technology learning in Nottingham. The Festival is a key element of the community engagement initiative of this partnership and is led by a committed steering group.

What are its principles and aims?

The Festival of Science and Curiosity is based on the principle that science is creative and has to be part of our cultural lives, not remote, hidden away or only conducted in labs. The Festival seeks to take science, technology, engineering and maths out from behind closed doors and into local communities, where people can engage and interact with them. All people, especially children, are naturally curious and the Festival seeks to encourage everyone to express their curiosity and ask questions. The Festival actively avoids simply being an academic-led science fair by engaging citizens as active participants who have the confidence, courage and freedom to explore their own interests and develop projects that are meaningful to them.

What does it involve?

The Festival is now a week-long event which takes place over February half-term, running Wednesday to Wednesday. There are three sections; schools-focused activities, which take place during the last few days of the February term, public activities, which take place over the weekend, and community-activities, which take place in local libraries throughout the greater Nottingham area during half-term.

Activities involve hands-on workshops, talks, make-your-own activities, exhibitions, quizzes, experiments, outreach and young person-led project showcases. These take place in various locations across Nottingham, including both the city centre and its suburbs.

Achievements

Estimates for numbers of people engaged across the entire 2017 Festival are 2500+ minimum. Feedback from participants across all venues was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of those asked stating they agreed or strongly agreed with the statements 'I've enjoyed the event' and 'I would like to see more events like this'. Organisers in venues found running activities to be a great way to reach families and get people interested in STEM in a creative, fun way.

Key Priorities for 2018

Key points of focus for the 2018 edition of the Festival are:

- Developing projects which allow young local people to curate their own projects and activities during the festival
- Furthering the community element by building on activities in local libraries and community centres and developing citizen science projects
- Expanding communications and marketing to achieve a broader and larger audience
- Growing networks, partnerships and volunteering to increase the size and scope of the festival
- Formalising existing volunteering opportunities for science communicators and students



Want to find out more?

For more information about the Festival of Science and Curiosity and how to get involved, please contact:

Jon Rea, jon.rea@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Megan Shore, megan@ignitefutures.org.uk

