# Update for National Forum from ASDC, June 2018

ASDC – The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres

ASDC has recently completed the delivery of several national STEM programmes and continues to run others. For the majority, there is a strong component of inclusion, sharing practices that drive towards a more equitable society, and a more inclusive approach to science and science engagement. For all ASDC programmes there is the ambition to make a step-change in the way large organisations can engage the public with that field of STEM.

For the past two years, Explore Your Universe, in partnerships with STFC, has focussed on reaching disadvantaged families, schools and communities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland with hands-on excellent science. 39,273 children and adults have taken part, from a range of communities in the top 25% on the indices of multiple deprivation, remote areas, a prison and children excluded from school. Within this ASDC programme, Postcode data analysis shows that 97% of the outreach schools taking part were in the top 25% of the IMD or geographically very remote from STEM.

This adds to the 347,008 families, school children and adults who have already taken part in these independently evaluated physics and engineering schools workshops and events of which 45,852 met a scientist or engineer. The programme has created a step-change in the way particle physics and astronomy engagement happens at centres across the UK.

ASDC also recently completed the training programme for our National Space Programme ‘Destination Space 2’ in partnership with the UK Space Agency. Events for schools and families, focussing on the soon to be announced UK Space Ports, the Mars Rover, Satellite Applications and the James Webb Space Telescope, are now being delivered. This follows on from our earlier partnership with the UK Space Agency which April data shows has now had over 900,000 children and adult participants in workshops and events, including 100,244 school children age 5-14 in school workshops and 75,741 children and adults who met and spoke with a space scientist or engineer. If we include people visiting events and exhibitions, the total is over two million. 23% of the schools taking part were from the top 20% of the IMD.

ASDC continues to lead the UK part of two Horizon 2020 programmes, one on improving gender equity in STEM and the other to increase citizen participation in the way science is funded across Europe. This is a special consultation programme requested by Horizon 2020 where the results feed into future Horizon 2020 calls. The press release has recently gone out, and H2020 are using it as they plan for Horizon Europe (the next phase of EU Science Funding beyond 2020).

Of specific note here, the first draft for Horizon Europe involved no mention of funding for Science in Society. A second draft came out last week. ASDC are working with partners across Europe to advocate for funds to be earmarked to engage people of all backgrounds with the latest issues in science, in part as a driver for a more equitable society.

ASDC also created equipment and resources to deliver a National Environmental Science Programme in partnership with NERC. We have trained and equipped 11 selected Science Centres to run the entire programme, trained 40 scientists to share their science, equipped all with resources and an ‘earthy suit’ and are developing a huge ‘earth’ artwork with artist Luke Jerram to celebrate our precious planet. (Our previous collaborative artwork ‘Moon’ has been all round the world!). This environmental programme launched in February and is now running in the Natural History Museum, Eden and other science centres, and over 100,000 children and adults will take part across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Secret World of Gases, also launched in the February half term at 9 UK centres following a year of development and training. This programme is in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry and BOC and at least 54,000 children and adults will take part this year exploring the future uses of gases and how they will be used for a greener future.

Our national conference will be in Manchester (MOSI) on 10 October 2018 with Lord David Puttnam, Prof Louise Archer, the CEO of the Social Mobility Foundation, and Lord David Willetts. Other ASDC conferences include one on Inclusion and Diversity.