

## Press Release

### **The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres calls for urgent funds to secure the future of over 40 regional Science Centres**

#### ***Science Centres For Our Future***

**27th May 2020.** The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres ([ASDC](#)) has today called for urgent funding to support over 40 of the UK's Science Centres based in our cities, towns and regions, so they are able to survive the impacts of Coronavirus. To highlight the crucial role that UK Science Centres play in making science accessible to all, they have launched a nationwide campaign which is being supported by some of the UK's leading science advocates including Professor Alice Roberts and Chris Skidmore, MP.

The *Science Centres For Our Future* campaign ([#ScienceCentresForOurFuture](#)) supports ASDC's submission to government, asking it to urgently grant £25 million in Emergency Resilience Funding to secure the future of UK Science Centres. Without this funding many regional Science Centres may not survive six months.

Before the widespread closures necessitated by the pandemic, they were successful, independent education charities, earning their income by delivering inspirational school science workshops, science activities for communities and families, supporting local teachers, and working closely with children in many of the most disadvantaged areas of our cities. Together they welcomed 13 million visitors every year, mainly to venues outside London and all of whom paid to get involved with hands-on science.

Since closure, their income has been cut off, future events and bookings have been withdrawn, and, as hands-on fully interactive venues, they may be amongst the last of the last visitor attractions to re-open.

Science Centres bring alive science, technology, engineering and maths in a way that supports school science and delivers brilliant science and technology experiences to children, families and schools especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are essential in helping everyone understand the science that drives our lives, as well as supporting and inspiring our next generation of scientists.

In addition to their important work in educating today and in inspiring future generations, these 40 charitable enterprises bring huge gains to local culture and economies. They employ over 5000 people, turnover £200 million and act as accessible science hubs in their regions.

Dr Penny Fidler, CEO of ASDC, highlights:

*"As a nation and as a global society we have some major challenges ahead, especially in relation to climate and coronavirus. To solve these challenges we need an entrepreneurial and*

*scientifically engaged society. Science Centres unlock science for people locally, making it accessible and interesting to millions of children and adults each year. Without support we will start to lose these popular cultural resources that offer access into science for all.”*

Alice Roberts, Professor of Public Engagement in Science, University of Birmingham and ASDC Patron, adds:

*“From the Glasgow Science Centre to the Eden Project, from the Centre for Alternative Energy to the Centre for Life in Newcastle - our Science Centres and museums are important as places where people can learn about many different branches of science, get inspired, and satisfy their own curiosity. These centres support hands-on learning for*

*children, all the way through to lifelong learning for adults. Like many other cultural institutions, Science Centres are struggling at this time - they need our support. I hope the government can help them survive, so that they can continue their crucial work, making science accessible for everyone.”*

Ben Ward, Chair of the ASDC, adds:

*“Science Centres are a vital part of the government’s recovery from this pandemic and will be essential in preventing and mitigating future crises. Our future needs young people with the skills to help prevent and solve future challenges, from the climate crisis to those we cannot yet foresee. Science Centres inspire, educate and inform the general public about cutting edge science. The UK has a world-renowned network covering all areas of the UK that, if lost, will seriously impact a generation of young people and our economy.”*

The public is being asked to support the Science Centres For Our Future Campaign in two key ways:

- Share your Science Centre photos and share your science memories on social media, using the #ScienceCentresForOurFuture
- Write to your local MPs asking them to support funds for your local Science Centre (find a downloadable email template on the campaign website [future.sciencecentres.org.uk](http://future.sciencecentres.org.uk)).

With one voice championing the Science Centres, ASDC wants to let the government know how important these charitable STEM enterprises are to our regions, and ask the government to save over 40 of these vital cultural and community resources, thousands of jobs, millions of annual visits and billions of individual discoveries.

**ENDS**

**For further information or to interview Dr Penny Fidler or Ben Ward, please contact:**  
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- **To find out more about Science Centres For Our Future, check out the campaign landing page [here](#).**
- **To access to Science Centres For Our Future Google Drive with video clips, logos and images please click [here](#).**

#### **About the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres**

The ASDC membership is made up of over 60 of the nation's largest publicly accessible Science Centres, discovery centres, environment centres, science museums and scientific bodies, based in our cities and regions across the UK

Together 20 million people of all ages and backgrounds choose to get involved with science at one of the UK's science and discovery centres and science museums each year, this includes 13 million people to the science centres outside London. Together, our vision is for a society where people of all backgrounds and in all parts of the UK are inspired and involved with the sciences.

[www.sciencecentres.org.uk](http://www.sciencecentres.org.uk)

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