



(DRAFT) ASDC AGM Meeting Minutes

12.00pm to 1.00pm Tuesday 9th September 2025

Fountains Church, Glydegate Square, Bradford BD5 0BQ

AGM Panel Presenting		
Shaaron Leverment	CEO	ASDC
Stephen Breslin	ASDC Chair of trustees & CEO	Glasgow Science Centre
Laurence Butler	ASDC Trustee & Museum Manager	Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum
Present		
Donna Speed	ASDC Trustee Deputy Chair & CEO	We The Curious
Victoria Denoon	ASDC Trustee & Head of Visitor Experience	W5 Science and Discovery Centre
Bryan Snelling	ASDC Trustee & CEO	Aberdeen Science Centre
Tudor Gwynn	ASDC Trustee & Operations and Projects Director	Eureka!
Bridget Holligan	ASDC Trustee & Community Engagement Manager	University of Oxford
John Bull	ASDC Trustee & Project Director	Dadu Children's Museum of Qatar
Jo Quinton Tulloch	ASDC Trustee & Director	National Science & Media Museum
Gareth McTiffin	ASDC Trustee & Director of Experiences	Techniquet
Abi Fafolu	ASDC Trustee & Founder	Lit Laboratory (Lab)
Steve Scott	ASDC Trustee & Public Engagement Lead	UKRI
Hassan Joudi	ASDC Trustee & Senior Project Manager	Innova
Vicky Hull	Business Manager	ASDC
Scarlett Li-Williams	Science Communicator & Public Programmes Manager	University of Cambridge & National Space Centre
Affelia Wibisono	Public Engagement Officer	Institute of Physics
Abi Ashton	Public Engagement Manager	Royal Observatory Edinburgh
Jess Sells	Senior Astronomy Manager	National Maritime Museum
Megan Sanders	Science Engagement Producer	International Centre for Life
Scot Owen	Centre Manager	North Wales Science, Xplore!
Jayne Chamberlain	Projects Officer	North Wales Science, Xplore!

Welcome & Chair's Report
Stephen Breslin welcomed attendees and thanked them for joining. It was noted that 13 of the current 16 trustees were present.
Minutes of the last meeting
Minutes of the meeting held at the Royal Society on 18 th November 2024 were accepted as an accurate reflection of the meeting without any comments or objections.
ASDC CEO's report of the year & future priorities
<p>Shaaron Leverment presented the CEO report. She confirmed that for 2024/25 ASDC had 51 core members, 8 National Partners and 11 Associate Members. The team included Sarah Dellar who was on secondment and finished working at ASDC in December 2024. The team during the reporting period was at 3.6 FTE but as of September 2025, changes including Shaaron Leverment increasing to 0.8FTE, Vicky Hull increasing to full time and a new joiner, Scarlett Li-Williams, means the team now has more capacity. Activities and events that took place during the reporting period included 22 online and in-person events and 4 strategic national projects. 94.6% of all ASDC members attended events during this period, with 28 membership centres running at least one project. ASDC also runs 7 Teams channels to bring together communities of practice and events reaching 638 people aim to serve all types of centres and the different teams within them. The membership survey took place for its second year receiving 40 responses. It shows audience numbers are down across the membership, impacting turnover across science museums and discovery centres. The survey aims to help ASDC listen to the membership and the second-year trend of raising concern over aging buildings and estates has ignited the campaign for 'Science Centres for our Future'. Data collection also included mapping school postcodes of over 59 thousand schools visited in the UK (reaching 63% of all UK schools).</p> <p>The 2024 conference was held in November 2024 at the Royal Society and was the highest attended to date. SL also provided an overview of projects including: Our World From Space, Mindsets+Missions (with results recently published) and EYU Valuing Inclusion. Looking ahead at future priorities, SL she confirmed a 3rd iteration of the ASDC sector survey, 'Science Centres for our Future' campaign, a continued effort to seek opportunities that diversify core and project funding streams, while confirming that a number of projects are confirmed to continue at ASDC, including two new upcoming projects including Our World From Space Phase 2 and Demystifying AI.</p>
Presentation and consideration of annual accounts for 2024/25
<p>Tudor Gwynn presented the annual accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with financial reporting standards and using an independent examiner. The headlines included a positive end to the financial year, with total income of £657k predominantly from restricted grants for national STEM programmes and a growing subscription income. Total expenditure of £606k has most costs allocated to project grants/staff alongside core activities. Net cash inflow of £43k increases cash at bank to £204,718 at year end. Funds carried forward: £240k, comprising of £233k unrestricted funds. TG commented that the work output of the team averaging 3.6 FTE, in contrast to what is spent on the team is extraordinary and very good value for money.</p> <p>The main risks presented are using unrestricted funds to support core costs. The small team works beyond capacity, but a new staff member and increased FTE are being</p>

recruited to mitigate this. The economic climate affects the whole sector. The independent auditor was happy with everything they saw and raised no questions. TG was able to confirm it was a clean accounting year and ASDC are happy with their new management accountants, Linden. The charity is in a health position going forward. The Chair congratulated the team on a clean set of books.

Election of ASDC Trustees

Laurence Butler presented this item. One new candidate was standing for election, three trustees were standing for re-election (Donna Speed, Hassan Joudi & Sheila Kanani) and one was stepping down (Savita Willmott). It was noted that only one person from each organisation can vote. Jill Farrell from Dundee Science Centre presented her manifesto as a new candidate. Donna Speed and Hassan Joudi both presented their manifesto to re-stand for election and LB read a manifesto on behalf of Sheila Kanani who was not able to attend. All present were asked to leave the room whilst voting took place. All candidates received a majority vote (from 13 organisations represented) to be elected and remain in post.

LB thanked Savita Willmott (who was unable to attend) for her contribution to ASDC over the last three years on behalf of the Board.

Abi Fafolu asked what the balance of representation was now on the Board. SL confirmed that with Jill Farrell joining, the membership we serve are better represented by CEOs.

Member's discussion

Jill Farrell asked for feedback on the roundtable which took place the previous week in the House of Commons. She commented that colleagues were very complimentary. Stephen Breslin commented that it was a great event and good to see science centres through other people's eyes and to see that there is support from across the country. He said that collectively it got the message across on the impact the sector makes alongside the challenges it now faces. SL reported that the shadow science minister and event sponsor (Ben Spencer MP) reflected how impressive the local MP support was for the event at a busy time. The next aim is to broker a conversation with DSIT with DCMS for future sustainable funding. There is hope to follow up with a Westminster debate to keep up the momentum alongside an open letter going out for signatures from across the sector to keep up the pressure. SL confirmed there is a briefing document available on request.

Close of meeting

With no further business the meeting was brought to a close.