# Update for National Forum from ASDC, June 2019

ASDC – The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres

Social justice issues and STEM are still at the top of ASDC’s agenda this year, along with environment and climate issues. Many science centres are also in the middle of exciting capital projects, including twelve centres with capital investment from the Inspiring Science Fund.

Many science centres have been busy working in partnership with ASDC to deliver our National Strategic Programmes across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Each of these programmes has the strategic goal of advancing the field by pooling the very best ideas and knowledge world-wide for a specific content area, and then sharing these out nationally so families and schools across the UK can all take part. ASDC then trains staff in the charities across the UK, equips the centres and brings community and engagement teams together to create communities of practice and to share knowledge and ideas.

We are delighted to be working in partnership again with STFC for Explore Your Universe 4, with 8 centres and their community partners to pioneer new approaches to make their organisations more inclusive, and to build relationships and share approaches that last. The training academy is in June.

We also selected 15 centres on a new ‘Science Capital in Practice’ national programme, in partnership with the Science Museum, for centres to explore and pilot new approaches for our sector to become more inclusive and relevant to all communities.

We are also delighted to be working again with the UK Space Agency to run Phase 2 of Destination Space, with 13 member organisations. This phase focusses on sharing with families and children the latest in UK Spaceports (Scotland and Cornwall), satellites, the ExoMars mission in 2 years, the UK role in the Webb Telescope and a big celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Moon Landing. This month we launched [www.Moon50.uk](http://www.Moon50.uk) with the UK Space Agency, a Moon Portal that allows free upload and sharing of all the great Moon events and activities happening across the UK this year. We would be delighted if Forum members would share and use this national resource.

This follows on from Phase 1 of Destination Space where we trained and equipped staff in 20 STEM engagement organisations to deliver the Tim Peake-focussed programmes. 914,646 children and adults took part, including 80,201 people who met and spoke with a space scientist or engineer and 152,348 school students brought by teachers for curriculum-linked space workshops. 2.1 million people visited our exhibitions.

ASDC’s national environment programme ‘Operation Earth’ in partnership with NERC trained 11 science centres who together reached 201,442 people last year with the very latest in environmental science. ‘The Secret World of Gases’, created in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry involved 106,261 participants and we know activities from both programmes are still being run in centres. Of course, numbers aren’t everything, and we know that all the charities in our membership have all been delivering widely in communities.

The 2019 ASDC National Conference will this year be coming to London, hosted by the Science Museum on November 20 - 21st. It will feature a host of high-level speakers and panels, vibrant discussion tables, lightning talks and brilliant exhibitors and a lively evening event. If Forum members would like to host a discussion table on a subject of your choosing to share knowledge or ask the sector, please just ask me. Bookings open in July 2019 on the ASDC website.

As a charity ourselves, we of course have ambitions far beyond what we as a team of 3.6 can deliver.