

# 1. The Inspiring Science Fund

## Background

In 2014 BEIS ran a Public Consultation on proposals for long term capital investment in science and research, specifically the allocation of £5.9 billion of research capital funding between 2016 and 2021.

ASDC submitted a Proposal for the creation of a new 'Inspiring Science Capital Fund' for UK Science Centres. This was as a result of discussions between ASDC and the then Science Minister David Willetts and his colleagues in BEIS (then BIS). The ASDC Proposal to create this new Capital Fund was then included in the Capital Consultation for public comment.

Following several years work between ASDC and BEIS, this proposal was approved, and Wellcome delightfully then joined as a partner, bringing £10 million to supplement the £20 million from BEIS. Wellcome then opened and administered the scheme. Applications were taken in two rounds and were awarded as detailed in the following table.

## Centres with investment through the Inspiring Science Funding

All centres will have completed their programmes and expenditure by March 2021 (unless extensions are issued due to Covid-19)

1. Aberdeen Science Centre	Round 1	<b>£2,999,700</b>
2. We The Curious (formerly At Bristol Science Centre)	Round 1	<b>£3,000,000</b>
3. International Centre for Life	Round 1	<b>£2,592,235</b>
4. Thinktank	Round 1	<b>£1,411,150</b>
5. W5, Belfast	Round 1	<b>£3,000,000</b>
6. Catalyst Science and Discovery Centre	Round 2	<b>£754,600</b>
7. Dundee Science Centre	Round 2	<b>£1,455,440</b>
8. Eureka!	Round 2	<b>£3,000,000</b>
9. Glasgow Science Centre	Round 2	<b>£2,876,401</b>
10. Techniquest	Round 2	<b>£3,000,000</b>
11. National Space Centre	Round 2	<b>£1,880,000</b>
12. Techniquest Glyndw	Round 2	<b>£1,750,000</b>

# Map of the 12 UK Science Centres funded by The Inspiring Science Fund

Science Centres with Investment from the Inspiring Science Fund

Inspiring Science Fund Centres



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

© The Association for Science and Discovery Centres, October 2019



## Eligibility Criteria: Which Science Centres could apply?

The Inspiring Science Fund was created in 2015 initially to support the UK's world-leading Science Centres with capital investment, as since their creation they had been mainly ineligible for capital investment from the other cultural funds such as HLF and the Arts Council.

Science Centre's were eligible to apply for funding if they could show:

- They attract a minimum of 30,000 public visitors a year
- They have a STEM venue that is accessible to the public and / or schools for most days of the year.
- They have been in existence for at least one year
- They have a proven and viable business model
- Although the centres do not need to be a member of the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres, applicants will need to demonstrate how they are sharing knowledge, best practice and the latest ideas with colleagues nationally in an on-going and effective manner.
- Zoos are not the target for this programme.

**For clarification the following organisations will not be eligible to apply:**

- UK national museums, and museums sponsored by central Government
- Projects eligible for capital funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery Fund, Arts Council England, Arts Council for Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Creative Scotland.
- Capital projects dedicated to engaging the public through historic collections.

**Applicants will need to demonstrate that they are:**

- Open to all and informed by their partners and audiences.
- Open to working with partners and other centres to explore new ways of working with communities.
- Keen to develop opportunities to work with arts and other partners (STEM to STEAM) approach, and trial innovative new ways for working.
- Keen to explore what others might consider unexpected, disruptive and exciting approaches.

**Summary by Dr Penny Fidler, 2020**