

## **Science and Discovery Centre Fact Sheet – October 2020**

### **The national network of Science Centres**

- The UK has a vibrant network of **60 Science and Discovery Centres**, including Science Museums, Science Centres, Discovery Centres, Natural History and Environment Centres and Learned Societies.
- Every year **25 million people visit** UK Science Centres and Museums.
- Over **half are girls and women**, and **over half are school-age children**.
- **12.3 million people each year visit their** local Science and Discovery Centres or Science Museum **outside London** in the hearts of cities and regions across the UK.
- About half of the network are **independent charitable Science and Discovery Centres** (whereas the other half are museums and learned societies).
- **Eight million schoolchildren** and adults visit the Science and Discovery Centres that are excluded from applying for central government grants (those open to heritage, museums, theatres and the arts) and are at risk.
- Before Covid-19, Science Centres were successful, innovative enterprises, earning their own income from ticket sales and science events..
- 19% of the UK population said they visited a Science and Discovery Centre once or more in the past year. 33% visited a Science Museum (2019 PAS survey on behalf of Government).
- Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic (from June 2020 survey by ASDC):
  - 96% of Science Centres do not think they can cover costs at 30% capacity (current capacity to comply with social distancing regulations)
  - 62% said they could cease to be a going concern in the next 18 months

### **About the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres (ASDC)**

- ASDC is a charity that strives to make science more interesting, open and accessible to everyone – across all parts of the UK.
- ASDC runs national strategic STEM programmes, engaging millions of children and families with science, on topics ranging from climate and environment to engineering and space.
- The Chief Executive of the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres (ASDC) is Dr Penny Fidler.
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees of ASDC is Ben Ward (also CEO of Winchester Science Centre).
- Professor Alice Roberts is Patron of ASDC.

### **Impact numbers for ASDC national STEM programmes for children**

- ASDC's National Physics and Engineering Programme 'Explore Your Universe' involved 380,987 children and adults, of whom 45,852 met and spoke with a scientist or engineer.
- ASDC's National Environmental Science Programme 'Operation Earth' ran in 11 Science Centres, with 201,639 children and adults participating in family activities and programmes. Of these 37,145 met and talked to an environmental scientist.



- During ASDC's national Destination Space programme, 914,646 children and families took part in school workshops and space activities including 75,741 children and adults who met and spoke with a space scientist or engineer. The independent academic evaluation of this programme showed that girls were just as inspired as boys with space science and engineering and there was no difference between children from all socio-economic backgrounds. A further 1.2 million people visited the space exhibitions.
- **Websites and social channels:**
  - ASDC website: [www.sciencecentres.org.uk](http://www.sciencecentres.org.uk)
  - Science Centre For Our Future website: <https://future.sciencecentres.org.uk/>
  - Twitter [@sciencecentres](https://twitter.com/sciencecentres)

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