**Project Inspire:**

**A Digital Engagement and Innovation Programme**

**for UK Science Centres**

**Announcement of Grants**

**March 1 2021**

**The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres (ASDC) is delighted to announce the eight UK Science Centres selected for our Project Inspire: Digital Engagement and Innovation Programme. This project is in collaboration with the Inspiring Science Fund, a partnership between UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Wellcome.**

Projects from eight UK Science and Discovery Centres have been selected to receive grants of £15,000 to develop new and creative digital ways to engage and involve under-served and under-represented communities and audiences with STEM.

The selected Science Centres were chosen from a host of applicants from across the UK to join this one-year national Digital Innovation and Engagement Programme, which includes Science Centres being given training and support through a series of masterclasses and ideation sessions, bringing in the latest knowledge and expertise, as well as the funding of £15,000 to develop and deliver their individually co-created digital innovation projects with their communities.

**The eight selected Science Centres are:**

1. Glasgow Science Centre
2. Dundee Science Centre
3. Kielder Observatory on the English – Scottish Border
4. Techniquest in Cardiff
5. The National Space Centre in Leicester
6. Science Oxford
7. We the Curious in Bristol
8. Winchester Science Centre

Proposals from these eight Science Centres were selected for the Digital Engagement and Innovation Programme because their projects demonstrated plans and ambition for inspirational digital practice that would change the way they involve under-served and under-represented communities and audiences with STEM.

The projects range from co-creating inclusive digital community platforms with youth groups and university teams and home-start in Dundee to bringing under-represented voices through story-telling and lived experience into the climate conversation for bespoke climate cafés in Glasgow in the run up to COP26.

Other selected centres include Kielder Observatory in Northumberland (very close to the Scottish border), situated in the largest expanse of dark night sky in the whole of Europe. The team there will co-create a project with communities in Sunderland focussed around observing space using the non-visual means of a radio telescope, so communities can drive the telescopes. The National Space Centre in Leicester will work closely with local groups with special educational needs and together co-create new Space Clubs.

Project Inspire is a one-year national Digital Engagement and Leadership Programme for UK Science Centres, led by ASDC. The project has been developed by ASDC following consultation with the sector and has two strands which together will support selected Science Centres to adapt and grow during this time of change, and help them to innovate with their communities.

The two Project Inspire strands are:

1. The Digital Engagement and Innovation Programme for Science and Discovery Centres to develop new and creative digital ways to engage and involve under-served communities and audiences with STEM.
2. The ASDC Leadership Programme to nurture and support emerging Science Centre talent to become the inclusive and dynamic leaders of the future. Details will be launched in Spring 2021.

Project Inspire is a collaboration with the Inspiring Science Fund, a partnership between UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Wellcome.

Information for Editors

Project Inspire

‘Project Inspire: The Digital Engagement and Leadership Programme for UK Science Centres’ has been made possible through the support of The Inspiring Science Fund – a partnership between UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Wellcome.

The Programme vision is to inspire and support UK Science Centres to engage and involve under-served communities and audiences with STEM in new and creative digital ways, and to develop new practice in emerging leadership that embraces the values of inclusivity equity and innovation. The overall grant fund for this programme is £120,000.

ASDC

The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres aims to democratize science. We bring together over 50 of the nation's major science engagement organisations and work towards a society where people from all backgrounds and all communities of the UK are involved, intrigued and inspired with the sciences. This is more important than ever, with the pressing issues of both Covid and Climate Change. We bring together our membership to play a strategic role in the Nation’s engagement with science through conferences, knowledge-exchange meetings and training, and we create and deliver national STEM programmes which have engaged millions of children and adults with the latest science.

The past year has been a huge challenge for UK Science Centres, with many having to close for much of the year. Prior to Covid-19, the UK’s Science and Discovery Centres and Museums engaged 25 million people each year with the wonders of science through their community and school programmes, interactive exhibitions and STEM programmes.

Wellcome

Wellcome supports science to solve the urgent health challenges facing everyone.

We support discovery research into life, health and wellbeing, and we’re taking on three worldwide health challenges: mental health, global heating and infectious diseases.

We are a politically and financially independent global charitable foundation.

UKRI

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) creates knowledge with impact by investing over £8bn a year in research and innovation through the UK’s nine leading funding councils.

The Inspiring Science Fund

The Inspiring Science Fund, a partnership between UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Wellcome, has invested £30 million in science centres across the UK, enabling them to revitalise their public offer and to develop more sustainable STEM engagement programmes for the future.

For your website

**Please adapt this announcement highlighting your own project and add to your website:**

Logos for UKRI and Wellcome should both be included, with UKRI’s appearing first.

Wellcome branding guidelines and logos can be accessed here:

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding/guidance/logo-usage>

<https://www.ukri.org/about-us/brand-guidelines/brand-essentials/>

For credits

[Your project] has been made possible through the support of the Inspiring Science Fund – a partnership between UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Wellcome.

Images

Please use an image from your own centre or the image below.

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