



NOTTINGHAM FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE AND CURIOSITY

10 - 17 FEBRUARY 2021

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS



THE NOTTINGHAM FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE AND CURIOSITY 2021 NEEDS YOU!

The Nottingham Festival of Science and Curiosity takes place each February and is a collaborative partnership that includes NTU, UoN, Nottingham City Council and educational and cultural organisations, and is curated by Nottingham-based charity Ignite!. The festival aims to create a platform for researchers from all disciplines to engage with their local communities and provide opportunities for everyone in Nottingham to share and celebrate what makes them curious. The festival has a strong focus on community engagement, and especially works to deliver events and programmes for participants who don't traditionally engage with academic research. In previous years we've had activities that range from poetry workshops to sensory science installations, film screenings to live-coded music performances. We use 'science and curiosity' in the loosest possible way; arts, social sciences and architecture are just as welcome and engineering, health sciences and psychology.

Over the past few months we have all been adapting to lots of changes to the way we're living and working. We believe that at a time like this, the festival has an even more important role to play to improve public understanding of research and provide opportunities for all children to engage with science and express their curiosity.

At this stage, we're inviting people who want to contribute to the festival to get in touch with us through this expression of interest form. You might have a really clear idea of what you want to do, or you might not really be sure yet. Both are fine! The festival is a collaboration, and we will work with you to develop an idea into something really exciting and engaging.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Workshops

Workshops will be for smaller groups (maximum numbers TBD) that could take place over a couple of hours. These will be free and open for pre-bookings to allow us to monitor numbers, and will be in venues like libraries across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. Workshops are an opportunity for rich, deep engagement, and for participants to develop not only their interest and competencies in STEM, but also softer skills like communication and teamwork. You can determine the age group (we've worked with everyone from under 3s to groups for older people) and number of times you deliver the session to different groups, and we can work with you to design an effective workshop. Workshops may need to be transferable to an online format if possible.

Drop-in

We're not sure yet if we'll be able to run bigger drop-in Science Fun Day style events, but we are discussing our options with potential venues like the Victoria Centre Market, where we held the 'Curiosity Market' in 2020. Regular activities will have to be adapted to allow for cleaning, social distancing and other restrictions, but could still be highly interactive, fun and engaging.

Talks/Panel Events

These could be for adults or young people, and might take place either in person in city centre and other venues, such as Wollaton Hall, Green's Mill or Mansfield Library, or online using software like Zoom or YouTube. It could be a single talk followed by a Q&A, or a group of speakers discussing a particular theme. In the 2020 festival, we had talks about 'Are we addicted to the Internet' and 'The Future of Energy', which were interdisciplinary and involved researchers from both UoN and NTU as well as industry professionals. We can help you curate a panel around a specific theme, and we're particularly interested in themes that foreground the role of science in our everyday lives. We'll work with you to ensure that online talks are just as engaging as they would be if delivered to an in-person audience.

Online Content

We're keen to hear ideas for digital content, like games, challenges, citizen science activities, worksheets, videos, livestreams and other interactive content.

Anything else!

We love big creative ideas, so please do get in touch with us to work up an idea with us. You may wish to try an experiment in science communication, pilot an idea across different disciplines, push the boundaries of public engagement, try something new, combining your passion for art, performance or technology! We are open to ideas that surprise and delight.

SCHOOLS PROJECTS

Our schools project this year is called Curiosity Projects; pupils from primaries, secondaries, FE colleges and alternative provision schools will be conducting their own science research projects based on the questions that matter to them. Once we know what the groups will be researching, we will be pairing them with specialists in this field. These 'Scientists in Residence' will be asked to work with the group (through Zoom or Teams) to support their investigation and advise on experiments they might want to try out or research they might want to look at. The projects will be presented by the schools at the Real Science in Schools Symposium during the festival, and Scientists in Residence will be invited to attend. Scientists in Residence will need to complete an Enhanced DBS check. If you're interested in taking part in this aspect of the Festival programme, please complete the relevant section of the form.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Our Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan is informing the way the festival operates at all levels, from board governance to communications, volunteer recruitment to audience development. This Action Plan will shortly be available to read on the festival website. Part of this action plan is increasing the representation of scientists of all ethnicities across our programme, and to reflect more closely the communities we engage with. We are especially keen to hear from researchers from groups underrepresented in their field, to provide training for people who have not been involved with public engagement before, and to provide a platform for discussing issues of inequality in STEM.

DEADLINE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The deadline for submissions is Friday 13th November 2020. For more information, or if you've got any questions, please get in touch with the Festival Producer Megan Shore:
megan@ignitefutures.org.uk