

# News story: UK science centres to receive funding boost to inspire more visitors to explore and discover science

- £13 million to be invested in 6 science centres across the UK to engage more people with science as part of our modern Industrial Strategy
- new immersive technology, refurbished visitor hubs and a new community hub will aim to attract new, diverse visitors to the centres
- the successful Science Centres in Scotland, Wales and England will also use the funding to develop sustainable business models to ensure continued success for years to come

6 Science Centres across the UK today received a £13 million injection of funding to help attract thousands of new visitors:

- Catalyst in Widnes
- Dundee Science Centre
- Eureka! Mersey
- Glasgow Science Centre
- The National Space Centre in Leicester
- Techniquist in Cardiff

These Centres will all receive new funding after presenting exciting plans to connect with audiences and communities who don't currently visit science centres or engage with learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The funding will help each centre create new learning activities to help reach audiences, improve their facilities and develop sustainable business models.

The new funding will be delivered through the Inspiring Science Fund, a joint initiative by Wellcome and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The Inspiring Science Fund aims to support under-served and underrepresented audiences, delivering science learning and engagement opportunities that are accessible to all through Science Centres around the country.

Announcing the funding, Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

We want to bring the wonders of science to as wide an audience as possible and that's why it is at the heart of our modern Industrial Strategy. Today's investment will help inspire people from across the country to learn about the truly amazing benefits that science and technology has on all our lives.

Simon Chaplin, Director of Culture & Society, Wellcome, said:

At Wellcome we focus on people, and our public engagement activity is about helping everyone to play their own role in improving health. The Inspiring Science Fund enables science centres across the country to bring science, health and research closer to public. We're looking forward to seeing how the successful centres develop and how they use this funding to involve ever more people in science in a way that is relevant and useful to their own lives.

## **Notes to editors**

Information about the successful centres:

### **Techniquist – £3,000,000**

In Wales, The Science Capital will see a transformation of Techniquist, extending it into a contemporary STEM hub, and diversifying its audiences. It will house innovative new content, developed with businesses and academics at the forefront of STEM in Wales and supported by a programme of community co-production, highlighting the role STEM technologies shape the future of our society.

### **The National Space Centre – £1,880,000**

In the Midlands, the National Space Centre's Extended Reality for New Audiences project will engage disadvantaged young people from diverse communities in Leicester in STEM subjects using exciting new immersive technologies.

### **Eureka! Mersey – £3,000,000**

In the north west, Eureka! will open a second visitor attraction on the Wirral, extending their discovery-based approach for children and young people across the Mersey region. Eureka! Mersey will be a £11 million reinvention of the existing Spaceport attraction, creating a 21st century science and discovery centre for 0-14 year olds.

### **Catalyst – £754,600**

Catalyst Science centre in Widnes will launch "Catalyst for a future generation", exploring ground-breaking thinking about the relationship between science and wellbeing. Involving the community and local partners in the design of our spaces and exhibits, Catalyst will inspire a future generation of scientists across the north west and beyond.

### **Dundee Science Centre – £1,455,440**

In Scotland, Dundee Science Centre will be transformed into an inspiring community hub and lifelong learning resource that brings people together and

builds capacity within the region. The spaces and programmes will be co-designed with local communities and will feel welcoming, safe and accessible for all. It will be a unique platform to co-create and disseminate new, innovative methods for science engagement.

## **Glasgow Science Centre – £2,876,401**

Glasgow Science Centre (GSC) will use the Inspiring Science Funding to develop its indoor and outdoor exhibition spaces, facilities and organisational culture to ensure that the centre grows to become as inclusive, diverse and exciting for as many communities and people possible.

## **Further information**

### **Inspiring Science Fund**

The Inspiring Science Fund is co-funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Wellcome. BEIS' role will transfer to UK Research and Innovation in 2018. The scheme supports science centres to rethink what they do and what they offer to the public. The aims of the fund are to revitalise the offer of existing science centres through capital development, such as new exhibition spaces and learning centres, and the opportunity to develop meaningful engagement with under-served and underrepresented audiences. This opportunity to refresh how science centres are operating will lead to more sustainable business models, and contribute to science centre sector development through shared learning.

### **The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy brings together responsibilities for business, industrial strategy, science, innovation, energy and climate change. The Department is responsible for: developing and delivering a comprehensive industrial strategy and leading the government's relationship with business; ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean; ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation; and tackling climate change. The Inspiring Science Fund administration will soon transfer to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

### **Industrial Strategy**

Our [modern Industrial Strategy](#) sets out a long term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how we are building an economy/a Britain fit for the future – how we will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

### **Wellcome**

Wellcome exists to improve health for everyone by helping great ideas to thrive. We're a global charitable foundation, both politically and

financially independent. We support scientists and researchers, take on big problems, fuel imaginations, and spark debate.

## **UKRI**

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the new funding organisation for research and innovation in the UK, will succeed BEIS as co-funder of the Inspiring Science Fund later in 2018. UKRI brings together the 7 UK research councils, Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England, working closely with its partner organisations in the devolved administrations.