



Festival of Science 2007 Evaluation Executive Summary

The overarching aim of the Festival is to provide an interdisciplinary platform for organisations engaged with all branches of science, engineering and technology to interact with a wide range of audiences and to deliver a high quality celebration of science in all its aspects with excellent media coverage.

During the week of the Festival there were over 170 different events providing more than 200 visitor opportunities throughout the week with some smaller, more informal events being repeated several times during the week due to their popularity. Average attendance at events was good, and many aspects of media coverage broke previous records.

Attendance figures

More than 55000 attendances at events, with around 14000 people attending ticketed events and 4100 school children in special programmes.

The programme

There were 87 events on the university campus and 84 throughout the city. Some exhibitions provided several individual exhibits or interactive activities.

The breadth of subjects under discussion during the Festival meant that there was something of interest to a range of different groups and sectors. Topical subjects included the problems and opportunities of immigration in 'Migration: Britain at the crossroads'; the energy crisis in 'How science helps UK renewables', 'Keeping the lights on: are we doing enough?' and 'Nuclear Swords into energy ploughshares' amongst others. The Festival also offered the opportunity to look at areas as diverse as anthropological and sociological research into the role of family in influencing children's behaviour to the impact the world largest physics experiment (the Large Hadron Collider) will have on our understanding of the Universe and our place within it.

The redesigning and refocusing of the Festival printed programme helped to encourage more local residents to attend events on the University campus. Last year for the Festival in Norwich 72% of tickets sold by the local ticket outlet – the Tourist Information Centre – were for events taking place in the city. This year, the opposite was true with 73% of all tickets sold through the city centre location, York Visitor Information Centre, being for events on the campus

Outreach

Almost 100 people from groups who would not normally attend a science event came to a family day on Saturday 15 September. Funding from Awards for All allowed us to provide transport, lunch and a special science show for disadvantaged groups. These included people attending parental support service at North Yorkshire Children's Centres, children involved in the national children's charity NCH and people from the SureStart scheme.

Conclusion

In spite of lower financial support locally than in previous years and a consequent reduction in some of the planned events and promotional activity, the BA Festival of Science achieved its overall objectives and delivered a high quality event with outstanding media coverage.