

# Midlothian Science Festival

## Midlothian Science Festival 2013 EVALUATION REPORT



For further information on this report please contact:

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## Executive Summary

Midlothian Science Festival ran for the second time from 5<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

The majority of funding was 'in-kind' in terms of venues and staff time. The main cash funding was received from The Scottish Government Science Festivals funding. Other cash was received from partners, of which many more joined this year, and included for the first time local businesses.

In 2013 Midlothian Science Festival became a registered charity SC044130 and a company limited by guarantee SC446006.

### The Festival at a Glance

- 70+ public events including family drop-ins, films, talks by scientists, book groups, author talks, outdoor activities, exhibitions, a rocket building competition.
- 19 + School events including workshops, travelling exhibitions, shows and teacher training.
- **Over 6000 visitors attended events** (1728 schools, 4308 public).  
**A six-fold increase on last year!**
- Cash cost of approx. £10,000
- Midlothian Science Festival has 3 directors / trustees who gave over 100 hours of their time on organising and running the festival:
  - Philip Wark, Library Services Manager, Midlothian Council
  - Fiona Maher, Arts & Creativity Team Manager, Midlothian Council
  - Sarah Keer-Keer, Outreach and Communication Manager, Wellcome Trust Centre for Cell Biology, University of Edinburgh
- There was one paid member of staff, a part-time Freelance Festival Manager Iona Beange, who was paid for a portion of the hours she worked. The other hours were kindly volunteered.
- 2 further members joined the core committee on a regular basis – Library Manager Rachel Archibald and Public Engagement Professional Kathleen Pullen.
- The Festival Committee were provided in-kind by their organisations including Midlothian Libraries, Midlothian Arts and Creativity Team, Midlothian Ranger Service, University of Edinburgh, Roslin Institute, EAE of Loanhead, Edinburgh Science Triangle, (and many more).

- Over 125 volunteers helped with events during the festival. These people came from a range of organisations including industry, higher education institutions and colleges (staff and students), and 'other groups'. At least 7 of these were STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) Ambassadors.
- 17+ library staff contributed to events at all levels, from participating on organising committee, to organising their own local events.
- 25+ venues were involved, including libraries across Midlothian, Vogrie Country Park, The Lasswade Centre and Rosslyn chapel.

## **Events**

**There were more than 70 public events at Midlothian Science festival including:**

- 5 Gala days, which attracted over 100 people each
- 24 Library events
- 12 Outdoor events
- 14 Events for adults
- 6 Exhibitions
- 2 Competitions
- 3 Book Clubs
- 6 events from outside providers (Dr Bunhead and ComputerXplorers)
- 4 Other events

**And 18 school events:**

- 11 workshops at primary schools
- 6 workshops at secondary schools
- 1 high school teacher training event

## Magical Moments

Numbers never tell the whole story. Many magical moments took place across the festival. Some examples include:

- "I am just about to finish my degree as a mature student. I wished I had done it straight after school. Events like this will help my son avoid the same mistake"
- One lady to parasitologist "at school we had to choose between Art and Science. I chose Art and I think it may have been a mistake. It is too late to retrain?"
- A lot of young people [were] engaging and discussing options for future education i.e. one girl told me that it had broadened her idea of the possibilities for further education – *volunteer at Science Alive Gala day*
- From Bonnyrigg librarian 'After The Big Squeeze demonstration, several young people (who don't normally engage) went online to look up how the stuff worked!'
- Daughter: "I want to be a Scientist" Mum: "I thought you wanted to be a popstar"
- The Gala day at Danderhall engaged 196 people- a record number for this library in one day. It led to some new library members and people are still talking about it. The community were so inspired by the day that a 75 yr old women on crutches came along just so she could make tea for the volunteers.
- I felt I had to contact you to say how much we have enjoyed our 1st Midlothian science festival. My daughter Maisie is 6 years old and we have had the best fun ever this week, and all our on doorstep in Midlothian.

It has to be said its difficult to say who has had the most fun this week as Maisie and I both loved our adventures out. It was so great to be able to attend such an affordable array of quality events in the local area. We had hoped to get away on holiday this October break but it has to be said we have had the best fun ever and here in Midlothian. I am sure such a programme of events takes mammoth energy and enthusiasm and a very big thank you from Maisie and I for a very memorable, fun and educational week. We hope you have the energy and funding opportunities to make this an annual event. Many thanks.  
*MJ, Newtongrange*

## **Partners**

This year we made a concerted effort to get more local partners involved in the festival, including partners from businesses. We increased the number of partners from approximately 7 to 24. We now have three tiers of partner, depending on the value of their contribution with principal partners giving the most value to the festival.

### **Principal partners**

- Midlothian Libraries
- Wellcome Trust Centre for Cell Biology
- The Scottish Government
- The University of Edinburgh
- Midlothian Council

### **Major partners**

- The Roslin Institute
- EAE
- The Royal Observatory  
Edinburgh Visitor Centre
- AOC Archaeology
- Midlothian Ranger Service
- Edinburgh College

### **Normal partners included**

- Artemis Intelligent Power
- EAE distribution, EDF Energy
- Edinburgh Science Triangle
- GMP Print Solutions
- IKEA
- Lab in a lorry
- MacTaggart Scott
- Midlothian Tourism Forum
- Roslin Biocentre
- Rosslyn Chapel
- Sci-FUN
- Stewart Brewing
- Wind Prospect

### **Other organisations and people who got involved**

Midlothian Arts & Creativity Team  
University of Edinburgh, Schools of  
Biology, Physics, Neuroscience,  
Geosciences, Chemistry, Maths,  
EPCC & SIBE  
GMP Print Solutions  
Moredun Research Institute  
Midlothian Voluntary Action  
Museum of Communication  
Moorflix community cinema  
National Mining Museum Scotland  
Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh  
SRUC, Scotland's Rural College  
Penicuik Community Development  
Trust and the Pen-Y-Coe Press  
Forest Research

Bagatelle  
Botanica Mathematica  
Robokid, Heriot Watt University  
Sing London  
STFC, Lunar Loans.  
Newbattle Abbey College  
Forestry Commission  
Lewis Hou  
Castle Rock Edinvar

