

2021 Edinburgh Science Festival programme launches

Edinburgh Science has revealed the programme for its annual Science Festival, the world's first and still Europe's biggest. This year the festival moves away from its usual Easter holiday dates to take place – online and in person – between 26 June and 11 July, celebrating the power of science and the power of connecting through science.

The theme for the 33rd Festival, with Cirrus Logic as the Headline Sponsor, is One World: Science Connects Us, a fact drastically highlighted by the Covid-19 virus: whether we are talking to friends on the other side of the world or

following the guidance from epidemiologists, helping us navigate the world shattered by a global pandemic, we are all bound together by science.





With programming for the planet one of the Festival's longstanding objectives, the Edinburgh Science team will connect Festival audiences to a world-class line-up of speakers and events highlighting the urgency of taking action to combat the climate crisis, which remains one of the defining challenges of this century.

As we prepare for the next UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties and the world's attention turns to Scotland, Edinburgh Science seeks to lead the way to COP26 with its 2021 programme, as well as through other work out-with the

Festival, including the Climate Opportunity Ideas Factory, a series of regular meetings of senior representatives from business, third sector, higher education, public sector and government, all with the aim of supporting Scotland's Race to Zero through impactful science-based projects and initiatives.

Whether it is a Science Day Out or a Science Night In, the 2021 Festival has everyone covered. Offering 220 events, tours, discussions, workshops, downloadable resources and interactive experiences, the Festival takes place both online and in person with over 80% of the programme available to audiences free of charge – and the digital programme available to anyone in the world! – truly connecting all the sci-curious minds around the globe.

With 60% of the Festival's speakers women this year, Edinburgh Science Festival leads the way to gender balance as it confirms its role of a champion of the achievements of women in science and science communication.



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The festival organisers say under-representation of women in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and stereotypes persists, despite many long-standing initiatives to boost young women's interest. The Festival's 2021 programme not only gives female scientists, engineers, science communicators and explorers a platform to share their knowledge and passion with the world, but also shines a special light on their achievements through a series of ambitious events and exhibitions (see Women in STEM section).

The challenges of the past 14 months have made many of us realise the importance of and the connection to our immediate surroundings – our local community and our city. Edinburgh Science can return to presenting live events this year as it recognises the importance of Edinburgh's recovery as the Festival City to the local people.

Science Festival events, walks, exhibitions and tours have a truly city-wide presence, thanks to the Festival's long-standing programming partners: National Museums Scotland, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Dynamic Earth, Royal

Zoological Society of Scotland's Edinburgh Zoo, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University, Royal Academy of Engineering, British Ecological Society and others.

Amanda Tyndall, Edinburgh Science's Festival and Creative Director said: "It is an understatement to say that it has been an exceptional year; a year that has shown us just how intimately interconnected our world is. We share one world and need to innovate and collaborate to tackle global challenges and embrace the opportunities ahead. In in a spirit of optimism, resilience and hope – our 2021 Festival explores new ideas and formats that ensure audiences can safely get their science fix this summer."





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Some of this year's programme highlights include:

- [Pale Blue Dot](#): celebrating Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters 2020/21, this large-scale exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland delves deep into the science, beauty and mystery of our oceans.
- [Edinburgh Medal](#): Prof. Heidi Larson, the Founding Director of the Vaccine Confidence Project at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, is this year's Edinburgh Medal recipient.
- [Women in STEM Art Trail](#): featuring large-scale graffiti portraits of female STEM professionals, the Trail takes over 9 iconic locations around the city as it highlights the achievements of 9 inspiring women.
- [In Memoriam](#): Artist Luke Jerram's latest touring artwork commemorating those lost in the pandemic and honouring NHS staff and volunteers is presented for the first time ever in Scotland, at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.
- [Human Nature](#): this is a large-scale photography exhibition on Portobello Promenade exploring the human connection to nature and its fragility.
- [SciMart](#): everyone's favourite SciDay Out is back and

this year's SciMart connects the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh visitors to local inventors and food producers.

- **Online talks:** Festival presents a series of fascinating talks available for free on its YouTube channel, exploring such topics as the Covid-19 pandemic, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, women in space and animal conservation.
- **Festival guest speakers:** as always, the Festival connects its audiences to an inspiring array of global voices. This year's line-up includes Dr Emily Hepburn aka The Psychology Mum, science presenter Greg Foot, queer ecology scholar Dr Nicole Seymour, ethical hacker Rupert Goodwins, conservationist and environmentalist Mya-Rose Craig, inventor Alison Grieve and post-conflict trauma expert Thanos Karatzias, among many others.
- **Family:** known for its world-class science offer that since 1989 has inspired millions of children in Scotland and around the world, the Festival presents digital workshops, talks, downloadable resources as well as walks, exhibitions and interactive experiences around Edinburgh to keep young minds both busy at home and inspired by the great outdoors.

For more detailed 2021 programme info
www.sciencefestival.co.uk