

It takes a year to research and plan the Oxford science and ideas Festival.

13,500 people at IF Oxford in 2018

760 contributors took part in 2018.
To get involved, **18–28 October 2019**
visit: if-oxford.com

Festival impact

Audiences responded well to the new branding and increased range of topics, sharing a broad range of reasons for visiting the Festival.

Our approach to marketing, ticketing and using venues across Oxford helped attract people with a spread of geographic and demographic backgrounds.

Event formats like city-wide tours, performances and interactive experiences appealed to family or adult groups and also to people attending on their own.

The Festival is a place to discuss science and ideas with researchers, artists, innovators and people from diverse communities; we facilitated 50,000 conversations with Festivalgoers at events in 2018.

We asked visitors why they came, what they thought, what they want, and we will seek further evidence of impact in 2019.

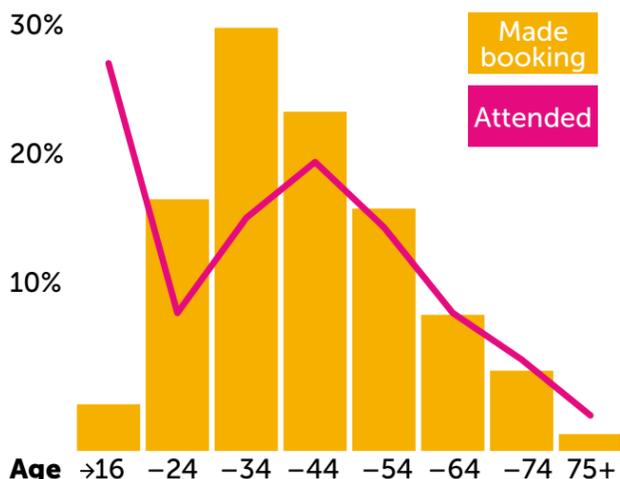
1,263 people completed the pre-Festival survey – 46% of ticket orders.

575 people gave event feedback

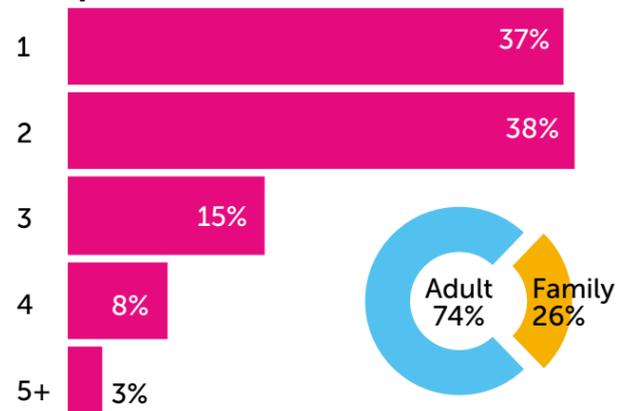
476 new people agreed...

...we can contact them again.

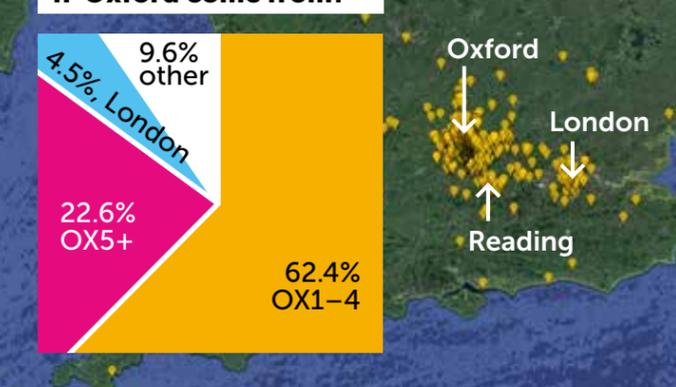
Festival demographics



Group size



Where did visitors to IF Oxford come from?



The Festival experience and impact



"So much variety." (70) age

"This is the best thing to do in Oxford. Your brain lights up for the evening." (Anonymous)

"Amazing festival, I'm so grateful for the opportunity it gives me and my children to learn about science, and especially the science going on in Oxfordshire." (43, 13, 11)

"Proud to be from Oxford." (17)

The diversity of our volunteers, speakers and venues is reflected in our audiences, with 82% of visitors 'new' to our Festival in 2018.



We challenged neuroscientists to rethink how they described epilepsy research, then supported them to use a ball pond to explore brain chemistry in one of our zones.



The Black Panther zone in Blackbird Leys was one of a dozen events helping establish new relationships in southeast Oxford, now about 10% of our audience.

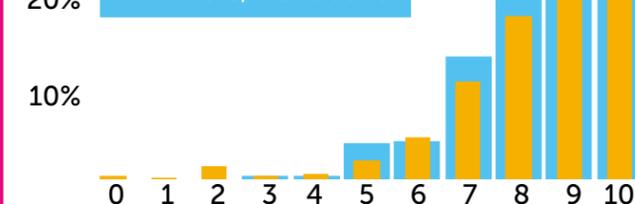
By redefining headline events for our science festival, we became recognised by arts organisations as a significant cultural provider in the city.

200 Years of Frankenstein spliced literature with cutting edge-life science and VR. This encouraged Oxford institutions to work together in new and effective ways.

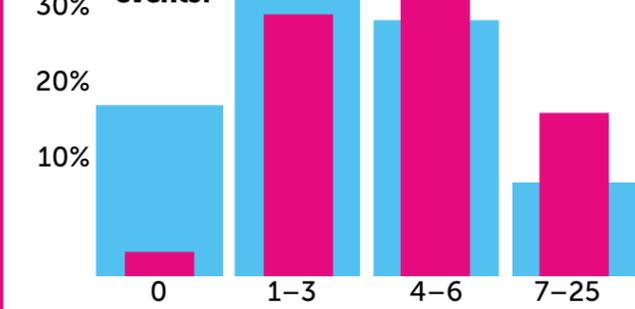


What did people think?

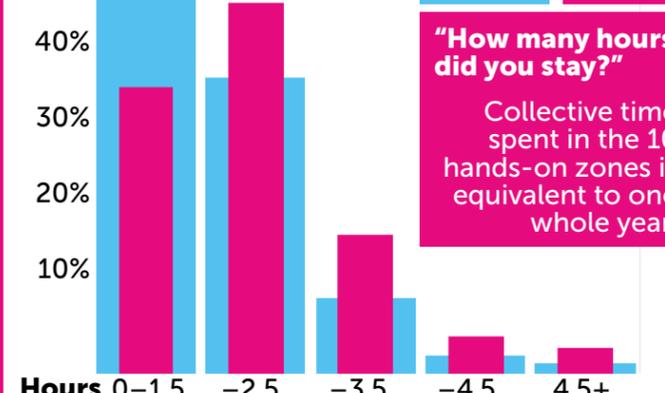
On a scale of 0–10 (10=excellent), 90% of visitors rated the event they attended, or IF Oxford as a whole, 7 or above.



"How many researchers did you speak with at Festival events?"

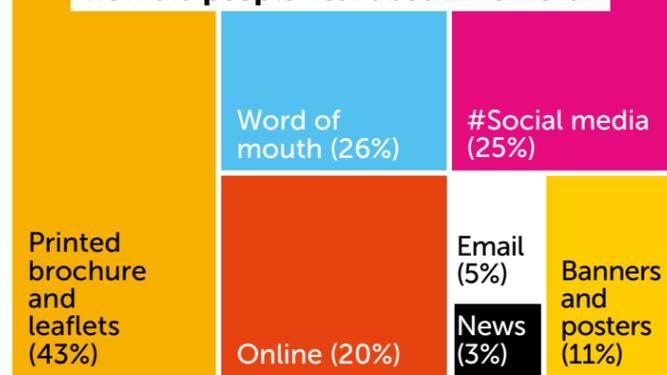


"How many hours did you stay?"

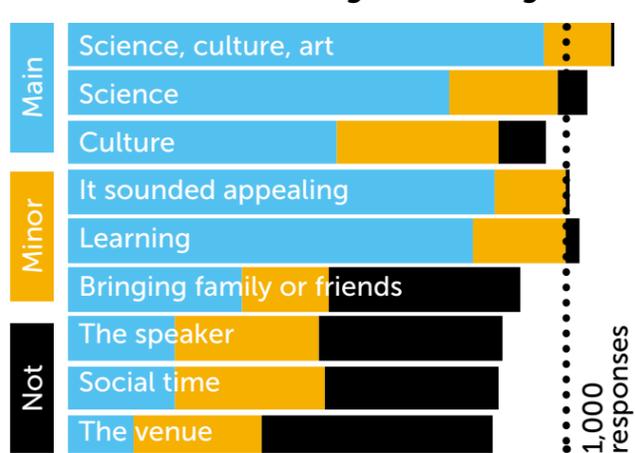


Marketing and visitor motivation

How did people hear about IF Oxford?



Reasons for booking or attending



34% said they had used PWYD



Our new ticket method **Pay What You Decide (PWYD)** brought in an equivalent income to 2017 and was a contributing factor to growing and diversifying the audience in 2018.

...and, depending on survey type, an extra 10–30% said they may use PWYD later.

We consider PWYD a success and some Festival partners are now planning to use it for their year-round events.

Overview of IF Oxford 2018

13,500 visitors to IF Oxford 2018 came to:

100 events **11** days **33** venues *Tens of thousands of conversations...*

550 researchers in 10 hands-on zones and **180 presenters** at other events **2** year-round staff supported by **32 volunteers**

one big thank you! to contributors from the **165 teams** at **63 organisations:**

University of Oxford	76
Communities or individuals	31
Companies & Charities	19
Science Oxford	7
Oxfordshire County Council	7
Universities outside of Oxford	7
British Science Association	7
Oxford University Press	6
Oxford Brookes University	5

Many successes; more to do

We set out to create a new type of science and ideas festival; one that brings together subjects in innovative ways and includes new voices to describe the richness of innovation in Oxford.

IF Oxford 2018 was produced in association with Science Oxford and its principal supporter was the University of Oxford, together with many other sponsors and contributing partners.

Over the Festival's 11 days, 13,500 people came to 100 events held in 33 venues, meeting 760 contributors. Eight out of ten people were new to our Festival and 10% came to activities in southeast Oxford.

In exit surveys, 90% of Festivalgoers said both their event and the Festival itself was good or excellent, with hundreds using our new Pay What You Decide (PWYD) scheme, donating to IF Oxford 2019.

This short report summarises some events, feedback and impacts to build on next time:

18–28 October 2019.

If you value what we do, get involved with:

- **sponsorship** so IF Oxford can thrive
- **volunteering** to create the Festival experience
- **contributing** ideas and content to share.

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→ cathy.rose@oxscifest.org 01865 810 016

Content

50,000 printed items including 17,500 64-page booklets

14 press releases **60k** web visits

35 PVC banners around Oxford

Marketing

7k items posted to home addresses in Oxfordshire

Coverage

12 news and printed articles

270,000 Twitter views

4 radio **1** TV

Impact

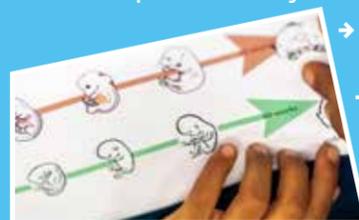
25+ third-party blog articles

Oxford Mail, Experience Oxfordshire, BBC radio, OX & Silva Magazines, Computer Weekly,

Science Oxford, Pick Magazine, Oxford Times, Round & About, Oxford Student, bbc.co.uk, Daily Info, CBS

Over 84 hands-on activities in 10 zones:

- material properties of diamonds, a neuroscience ball pond and a virtual reality room in Oxford Town Hall highlighting dementia, nuclear fusion and physiological responses to music at Explorazone;
- *Black Panther*-inspired green screen filming, tissue engineering and jet engines in Blackbird Leys at the same time as bridge building and plumbing workshops in the City of Oxford College;



- a physics open evening demonstrating how fundamental research shapes our lives today;
- a new play inspired by Frankenstein's themes, embryo formation viewed with VR, a living library of researchers, and letterpress printing contrasted with single-molecule microscopy and synthetic biology.



"The 200 years of Frankenstein event inspired the Bodleian Libraries and Museum of the History of Science to work together in a new way, combining history and the present day through literature and drama, technologies of printing and cutting-edge life science research."

Education Officer, Bodleian Libraries

60 talks, workshops and tours

Discussions filled pubs, churches, bookshops, a gym, graveyards and the city's streets. Conversations developed over dinner and drinks, children gathered for science stories and thousands joined Facebook Live for a data-led healthcare discussion in the Sheldonian Theatre.

Festivalgoers pitched maths against sport with an interactive penalty shoot-out. They discussed protein and performance with bodybuilders and the reform of the Gender Recognition Act with a drag queen.



17 performances and exhibitions in 13 venues

Oxford Playhouse hosted the acclaimed *8 Minutes*, an hour's description of solar physics from STFC through choreography.

We commissioned a UK tour of a mental health and dance installation. Elsewhere, comedy, exhibitions, music, and the annual poetry competition (with our youngest performer!) approached everything from maths, philosophy and geography to criminology.

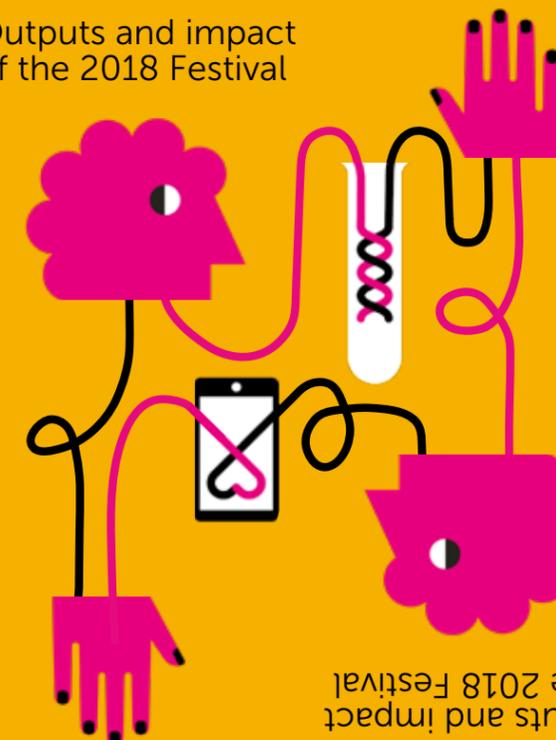


"The festival gave a social scientist and musicians the chance to work with a group of young people with a complex story to tell. On stage, we all saw how music is such a powerful way to explore ideas, emotions and pressures of living in the world."

Rodney P, British hip hop artist

OXFORD SCIENCE + IDEAS FESTIVAL

Outputs and impact of the 2018 Festival



Outputs and impact of the 2018 Festival

OXFORD SCIENCE + IDEAS FESTIVAL

Thank you

The Festival sends huge thanks to its collaborators, supporters, and talented individuals who volunteer to make the Festival possible. It could not happen without their time, creativity and enthusiasm.

In association with:



IF Oxford 2018 was supported by:



Principal supporter:



UK Research and Innovation



Waterstones

IF Oxford is organised by Oxfordshire Science Festival, Charity number 1151361, with Trustees and a small team that work year-round to produce the Festival.

Festival Director: Dane Comerford **Events Manager:** Cathy Rose
Trustees: Ian Thompson, Jennifer Bardsley, Georgina Ferry, Anne Osterrieder, Lesley Paterson, Tim Hart.