



# International Public Science Events Conference

## FINDING OUR OWN CENTER OF GRAVITY

June 1 – 2, 2015  
MIT Media Lab  
75 Amherst St.  
Cambridge, MA

#IPSEC2015

Follow up with conference sessions you liked or missed, keep conversations going, and find out about future public science events meetings:

[www.sciencefestivals.org](http://www.sciencefestivals.org)



**Credits:**

2015 International Public Science Events Conference

**Produced by:**



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MONDAY, JUNE 1

9:00 – 10:00 AM

The State of Science Events: Critical Reflections From Across the Sector

Multipurpose Room

Whether it’s called a “rolling panel” or “cascading conversation,” we think we can fit 10 panelists and 8 fast-paced conversations into a one-hour session covering some of the most important current issues for science events

Panelists: **Julie Fooshee**, Coordinator, Science Festival Alliance; **Ann Grand**, Research Fellow, University of the West of England; **Ivvet Modinou**, UK Science Festivals Network & Head of Engagement, British Science Association; **Annette Smith**, Consultant, science: education:governance; **Monae Verbeke**, Research Associate, University of Warwick; **Jessica Sickler**, Managing Director, Lifelong Learning Group; **Cat Aboudara**, Innovation Project Manager, Smithsonian, and Co-Boss, Nerd Nite DC; **Rabiah Mayas**, Director, Science and Integrated Strategies, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago; **Ben Lillie**, Artistic Director, The Story Collider; **Jamie Bell**, Director, CAISE

Moderator: **Ben Wiehe**, Manager, Science Festival Alliance

10:15 – 11:45 AM

Science Events Expo

Winter Garden

Meet the whole conference as we all showcase our events and programs. Exhibitors will switch halfway through this session to give everyone a chance to present.

11:45 – 12:45 PM

Lunch

Winter Garden

1:00 – 2:00 PM

Edutainment and Science Events

Multipurpose Room

Entertainment gimmicks or the best classroom they never had? Explore the balance between entertainment and education in this debate-style session.

Session Leaders: **Darcy J. Gentleman**, Director of Speaker Preparation, thirst. LLC; **Kishore Hari**, Director, Bay Area Science Festival, UC San Francisco

The Art and Science of Training Scientists

Lecture Hall

This session will impart some of the lessons learned through years of training scientists to communicate and engage with public audiences. AAAS will share research about scientists’ motivations for participation in public outreach, and ways in which AAAS has translated this research into practical activities and structures for scientist training.

Session Leader: **Jeanne Braha**, Public Engagement Manager, AAAS

The Science of Marketing

Silverman Skyline Room

Once you have the idea for your science event, you need to get the idea to your community. We’ll get you on your way to proper branding, promotion and a marketing plan.

Session Leaders: **Kacie Baum**, Science Outreach Programs Coordinator, University of Nebraska Medical Center; **Meisa Salaita**, Co-founder and Co-director, Atlanta Science Festival

2:15 – 3:15 PM

Metrics for Success: Evaluation of Science Events

Multipurpose Room

Join us for a lively discussion about data and methods. We will share data from recent science festivals and discuss novel methods we use to assess our events’ impacts.

Session Leaders: **Denise Young**, Director of Education and Planning, Morehead Planetarium and Science Center, University of North Carolina; **Savita Custead**, Director, Bristol Festival of Nature; **Katherine Nielsen**, Co-Director, Science & Health Education Partnership, UC San Francisco

Using Events to Transcend Cultural Barriers

Lecture Hall

How do you turn over the keys to your event to the community you serve? What do you have to give up when you do this? It may turn out that the product is not as important as the process.

Session Leader: **Holly Truitt**, Director, spectrUM, University of Montana

Communicating Science Workshop

Silverman Skyline Room

Scientists and engineers often find that they need to discuss complicated scientific findings in a clear, concise manner with members of the public. In this two-hour workshop, the Center for Public Engagement at AAAS will teach you how to design and implement communications trainings for scientists specifically for in-person events. Limited to 20 participants.

Session Leader: **Linda Hosler**, Public Engagement Program Associate, AAAS

3:30 – 4:30 PM

Connecting Your Event DNA to Your Audience

Multipurpose Room

You’ve held the inaugural event, and it looks like it is becoming a tradition. What now? What are your questions on taking your marketing and branding to the next level? Hear from PR and Marketing experts from the science event world about what works, what fails, and so much more.

Session Leader: **Gerri Trooskin**, Director of Strategic Partnerships, The Franklin Institute; and invited guests

Fresh Thinking: New Ideas in Sponsorship

Lecture Hall

Fundraising is a contact sport and new ideas are key to staying ahead. We’ll focus on specific examples, creative ideas, actionable concepts, and trends across events that keep donors coming back year after year.

Session Leader: **P.A. d’Arbeloff**, Director, Cambridge Science Festival (US); and invited guests

Communicating Science Workshop (continued)

Silverman Skyline Room

6:00 – 10:00 PM

Conference Dinner

Abigails, 291 Third St, Cambridge

The conference dinner has become an IPSEC tradition. Join us all for free food, a cash bar, and no speeches!

Conference nametag provides admission to restaurant.

TUESDAY, JUNE 2

9:30 – 10:30 AM

Enduring Events

Multipurpose Room

What does it mean for something as seemingly fleeting as an event to have an enduring legacy?

Panelists: **Amanda Tyndall**, Deputy Director, Edinburgh International Science Festival; **Bonnie Stevens**, Coordinator, Flagstaff Festival of Science; **Meri Jenkins**, Program Manager, Adams Arts Program, Massachusetts Cultural Council; **Russ Campbell**, Communications Officer, Burroughs Wellcome Fund

Moderator: **John Durant**, Director, MIT Museum

10:45 – 11:45 AM

Is This Thing On?

Multipurpose Room

There is an emerging trend of events mixing science and culture in ways that create multiple routes into engagement for audiences and scientists. In this session we’ll explore successful methods to earn that engagement, from mixing science with comedy or storytelling, to integrating real-time feedback, and ask questions about what’s missing and how to develop these ideas further.

Session Leaders: **Chris Duffy**, Producer/Host, You’re the Expert; **Ben Lillie**, Artistic Director, The Story Collider

International Observe the Moon Night (InOMN)

Lecture Hall

InOMN is an annual, international celebration of lunar and planetary science and exploration. One day each year, we invite the entire world to unite by looking up at, and learning about, Earth’s nearest neighbor. Come learn more about InOMN, meet fellow InOMN hosts, share stories about your InOMN events, or come to learn how you can host a future event, feature InOMN in a science festival, or otherwise share InOMN with your community.

Session Leader: **Andy Shaner**, Education and Public Outreach Specialist, Lunar and Planetary Institute

Getting to Launch: Event Timelines and Planning

Silverman Skyline Room

A successful science event requires careful organization, attention to detail, and rigorous commitment to timelines. From initial site selection to day-of execution, explore different models for planning and organizing your event.

Session Leaders: **Laura Heisler**, Director of Programming, Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation; **Laura Diedrick**, Public Programs Specialist, Smithsonian Marine Station

11:45 – 12:45 PM

Lunch

Winter Garden

1:00 – 2:00 PM

Theater of the Unexpected: A Collective Brainstorming Session

Multipurpose Room

Join us for a free-wheeling group discussion about the core components of public science events and how they can be applied in unconventional ways. Are there ideas that you’ve always wanted to try in a public setting? Any that you’ve heard about and want to adapt? What can we learn from events that aren’t science related? There will be lots of spitballing in this hour (spitballs not included).

Session Leaders: **Jonathan Frederick**, Director, North Carolina Science Festival; **Sung Kim**, Coordinator, Cambridge Science Festival (US)

Embracing the Message That Matters

Lecture Hall

Many science events are fantastic celebrations of science and technology, but that celebration presupposes an audience ready to celebrate. So how does our messaging need to change when we reach out to those who don’t self-select for science, and to what extent is that messaging pre-determined by where we show up and who we partner with?

Session Leader: **Cynthia Kramer**, Executive Director, SCOPE

Unleashing Volunteers

Silverman Skyline Room

Volunteers are the lifeblood of events, from managing logistics to driving attendance. This is a discussion around innovative volunteer programs, volunteer professional development, and how to provide supportive management that unleashes volunteers’ energy and creativity.

Session Leaders: **Cody Kangas**, Director, MindTrekkers, Michigan Technological University; **Kathleen Szczepaniak**, Lead Street Team Member, Arizona SciTech Festival

2:15 – 3:15 PM

Getting Back to the Roots of Science Cafes: Creating Value and Impact

Multipurpose Room

Science cafes have been on the scene for almost two decades, spreading like wildfire across the world. However, in recent years there are signs that many cafes are no longer conversations about science, and have become more like lectures. We’ll discuss this change, highlight innovations from the field, and ask what it will take for the movement to persist.

Session Leaders: **Michelle Hall**, President. Science Education Solutions; **Ann Grand**, Research Fellow, University of the West of England

A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats: A Conversation on Regional Collaboration

Lecture Hall

Science events have shown that they have the power and flexibility to unite science stakeholders. Yet, there is still more we can do to build and strengthen regional collaborations. Join a conversation about strategies that help to build trust and to ensure that all partners share in a collaboration’s successes.

Session Leaders: **Chris McCreery**, Director, Northern Ireland Science Festival; **E. Howard Rutherford**, Co-Founder, St. Petersburg Science Festival

Science Not included...Until Now!

Silverman Skyline Room

Do you run programs that engage the public with science at non-science events? Do you show up to sporting events, art installations, fairgrounds, or grocery stores and explain the science behind football, dancing, tractor pulls, or the world’s best guacamole? Are you interested in starting a program that engages people where they already are? Join a discussion about current programs and explore ways to start your own science intervention.

Session Leaders: **Ellen Dowell**, Curator & Creative Producer, Einstein’s Garden, Green Man Festival; **Jesse Billingham**, Science on the Street Coordinator, MIT Museum

3:20 – 4:00 PM

The Future of the Science Events Sector

Multipurpose Room

Public science events are not new, but the awareness that they comprise a distinct sector of science communication is. Now that we’ve shown sufficient critical mass to pull off our own conference, where might we go from here?

Session Leader: **Kishore Hari**, Chair, IPSEC 2015 Program Committee; **Dane Comerford**, Public Engagement Manager, University of Cambridge; **John Durant**, Director, MIT Museum