

The Josh Award 2020

Applications are now open for the Josh Award, which celebrates the fantastic work being done by science communicators across the UK.

Do you have an idea for a show-stopping science communication activity? The Josh Award can provide the platform, experience and support to help you bring it to reality.

What is the Josh Award?

The Josh Award is a national prize for early-career science communicators who are passionate about continuing to work in this field in the future, including students, volunteers, researchers or creatives. As well as recognising the achievement of talented individuals, the award is a long-term project that offers the opportunity for winners to deliver an activity at Manchester Science Festival, develop their communication skills and gain access to professional networks.

The winner is selected based on their own potential and the potential of their proposed activity, which can be anything from an installation, to a hands-on workshop or a live performance. Last year's winners, Ben and Fred, wowed audiences with a science-themed juggling show. More information about previous winners can be found [here](#).

What is the prize?

Winners will be provided with up to **£2,500** to develop an activity for Manchester Science Festival 2020, with support from the festival team. They will then deliver their activity at the festival, between 23 October and 1 November. (Please note this budget includes all expenses, i.e. resources, travel and accommodation, and will be agreed and held by the festival).

Winners will also receive a year's paid membership to the BIG STEM Communicators Network, including free attendance to the annual BIG Event, which takes place from 22–24 July in Cardiff (together worth around £300). At the BIG Event, they will be able to present to and network with a diverse range of science communication professionals. They will also receive the Josh Award trophy, which they can keep for two years until they hand it over to the next winner.

The Award also provides opportunities for personal and professional development, including a personal prize of **£2,000** from the Josh Award Foundation, audience engagement training with the [SMG Academy](#), and the chance to advise on the development of the programme for Manchester Science Festival 2022 as Science Communicator in Residence.

Who is it for?

The Award is open to any individual or group in the early stages of their science communication careers who are UK residents. This includes researchers who have recently changed careers, university students, or artists that communicate science through their work. You could be a hobbyist, freelancer, volunteer or work full-time or part-time at an institution.

You don't have to be a science communication expert to apply. The selection panel is looking for a well-thought-out idea for an innovative activity, and winners will be supported throughout the process of developing it for the festival.

How do I apply?

Applications open 3 March 2020 and close at 10:00 on 14 April 2020. To apply, either complete the online form on the [Science and Industry Museum website](#), or complete the downloadable version and email it and any supporting documents to msf@scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk. All applicants will be notified of the final decision in the week commencing the 18 May 2020, and unsuccessful applicants can receive feedback.

How are winners selected?

Winners are chosen by a panel with members of the Josh Award Foundation, Manchester Science Festival, the BIG STEM Communicators Network and last year's winners. The decision is based on how well the application demonstrates the following four criteria:

- *Ability*. The **applicant's** potential to develop and deliver an innovative activity that showcases best practice in contemporary science communication
- *Learning*. The **applicant's** ability and desire to reflect on and evaluate their work and share their learning
- *Audience*. The **activity's** potential to engage an audience through creative, accessible and participatory learning. Activities that are accessible to audiences who might not typically engage with science are welcomed, but this is not a requirement
- *Vision*. The **activity's** potential to support the vision of Manchester Science Festival to be the most innovative, popular and inclusive science festival in the UK

What happens after?

Winners are expected to:

- Develop and deliver an activity in person at Manchester Science Festival 2020
- Meet deadlines and make themselves available for key dates agreed in advance
- Participate in relevant personal and professional development opportunities provided by Manchester Science Festival and the Science Museum Group
- Attend and deliver a presentation about their activity at a BIG Event or Little Event
- Meet the Josh Award Chair and accept their trophy and prize from the Josh Award Foundation

Winners have the opportunity to:

- Have their activity feature as a case study in the BIG newsletter
- Be part of the selection panel for the Josh Award 2022
- Participate in the development of Manchester Science Festival 2022 as Science Communicator in Residence
- Attend BIG Event 2022 to hand on the Josh Award trophy to the next winner

The general timetable of events for the winner is:

- **June – August 2020**: Attend two planning meetings Manchester Science Festival team in Manchester and any relevant personal and professional development opportunities
- **22-24 July 2020**: Attend BIG Event and present their winning activity
- **August – October 2020**: Finalise activity and attend any further development opportunities
- **23 October – 1 November 2020**: Deliver activity at the Science and Industry Museum, Manchester
- **November-December 2020**: Review and de-brief project and share any learning via BIG
- **March 2021 onwards**: Advise in the development of Manchester Science Festival 2022

About Josh

The award is inspired by and named in memory of Josh Phillips, who was the first Science Communication Officer at the Science and Industry Museum and proposed the first Manchester Science Festival. Josh was a loved, respected and highly talented individual, whose outstanding career is commemorated with this award. Josh was also the Chair of BIG, the UK's premier science communicators network, at the time of his passing.

About Manchester Science Festival

Manchester Science Festival is an entertaining and inspirational celebration of science, produced by the Science and Industry Museum, part of the Science Museum Group. Since 2007, the Festival has inspired visitors with ideas and innovations that have the potential to change our world. After thirteen annual editions of Manchester Science Festival between 2007 – 2018, the event changed to a biennial format in 2020.

Manchester Science Festival has received several awards and nominations in recognition of its ambitious programme and is one of the most popular festivals of its kind in the UK, entertaining and inspiring thousands of people. From art commissions to immersive experiences, outdoor events to live debates and lots of opportunities to play, the new-format Manchester Science Festival will inform, engage and ignite curiosity.

About BIG

BIG is the skills sharing network for individuals involved in the communication of STEM subjects. BIG runs regular events and training courses on issues relevant to science communication and informal science and maths education. Our annual conference - The BIG Event - is regarded as one of the best science communication conferences in the UK and is the source of best practice skills-sharing and networking.

Members of the BIG community have access to news, discussion forums, training and events offering networking and sharing of information and views, as well as many other benefits, such as free entry to UK science centres and museums.