



Public Awareness of Research Infrastructures

Using travelling exhibitions to reach national audiences

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2015

Where we are

UK Astronomy Technology Centre
Edinburgh, Scotland



Polaris House
Swindon, Wiltshire



Chilbolton Observatory
Stockbridge, Hampshire



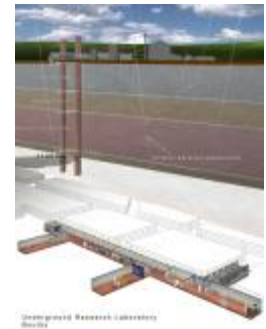
Daresbury Laboratory
Sci-Tech Daresbury
Warrington, Cheshire



Rutherford Appleton Laboratory
Harwell
Didcot, Oxfordshire



Boulby Underground Laboratory North Yorkshire



...and internationally



Science & Technology
Facilities Council



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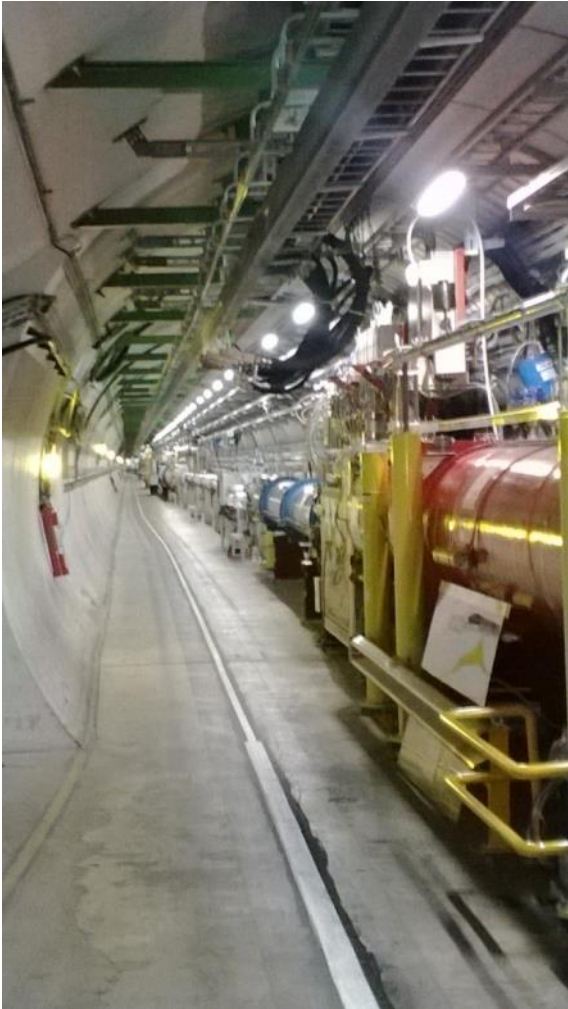
“The achingly glamorous world of big science”





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“Hard to move” science



LHC @CERN

Diamond Light Source,
Oxfordshire



ALMA, Chile

ISIS
neutron/muon
facility,
Oxfordshire





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Need national reach

- Don't re-invent the wheel – use existing networks
 - Partnership with Association of Science and Discovery Centres to deliver hands-on physics activities
 - Eg, Explore Your Universe – very positive evaluations



- Big Science needs BIG EXHIBITS
 - Sense of scale is important to aid awareness



- Particle Physics – “LHC on Tour”
 - Cardboard for transportation but still life-size mock-up of CERN tunnel with supporting displays

- Astronomy – “Seeing the Universe in All its Light”
 - ¼ scale model of VLT telescope, hands-on equipment, digital displays



Initial laser proposal

- **Goals:**
 - Raise awareness of how UK laser-based technologies are promoting sustainable development, and providing solutions to global challenges in energy, health, defence, environment and social sciences
 - Improve public and political understanding of the central role of lasers in the modern world
- **Partnership with UK laser community**
 - Staffing by PhD students and early career researchers from local universities, supported by Research Council staff
- **STFC as primary funder and lead**





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First outing

Try to re-
create the
sightlines of a
real lab



Ulster Museum, Northern Ireland Science Festival



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Not just for kids.....



Exhibit had to appeal to key 16+ and older audiences: we wanted to provide a fun way of engaging around careers and wider impact



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.....but also for kids.....

Aaron Scott, RAL apprentice



School groups would always be a STEM target: we needed to ensure relevance to curriculum, and provide support for teachers



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.....and Science Ministers too!

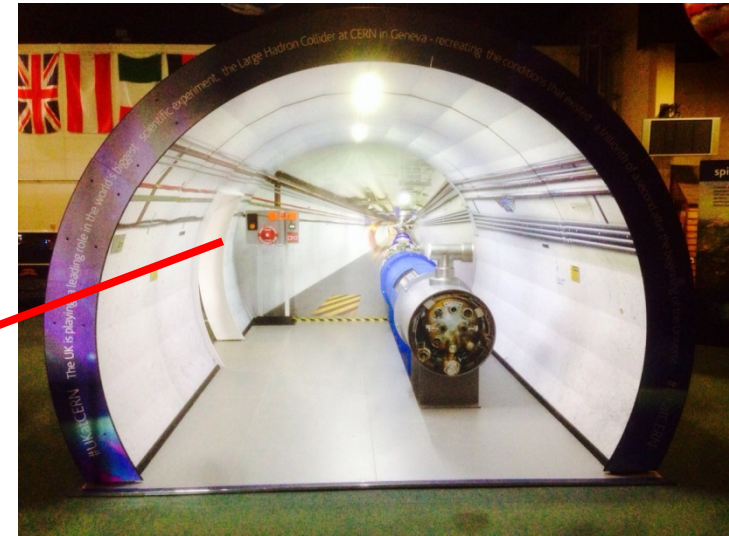
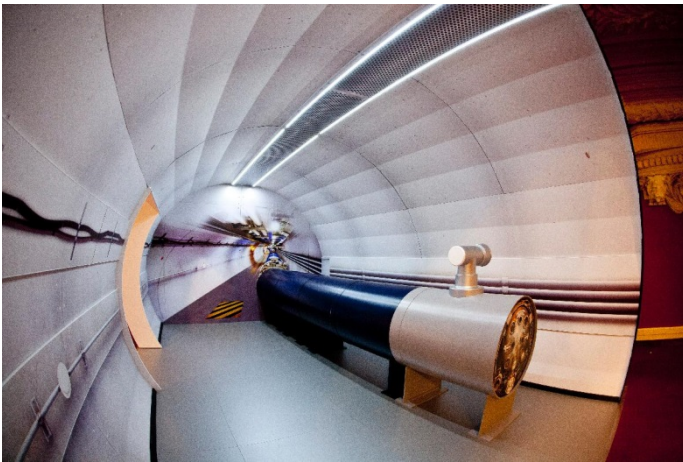
STFC's Silke
Zollinger

Science minister's
daughter

Science minister

Governments have been supportive of science investment but austerity is the new black: we had to include examples of 'real world' benefits

Lessons learnt



More realism

- LHC 2nd version has safety equipment, STOP button, better lighting and cabling, cut-out showing the inside of the magnet sections

Hands-on activities:

- Lasers roadshow has three times the number of hands-on activities than original roadshow



Impact

- More than 800,000 people across the UK have visited the roadshows since July 2012
- Extremely high evaluation scores from visitors
- Even stronger partnerships with our research communities
- Large cohort of PhD students and post-docs trained and available for further activities
- Resource now available for science centres for longer term loans





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Questions?