

***BIG BANG:  
Celebrating the world's largest physics experiment***

**Tour Venue Summaries**



**Supported by:**



**Science & Technology  
Facilities Council**

## **BIG BANG!**

The Science and Technology Facilities Council funded a temporary exhibition at the Science Museum London running from April 2007 to October 2007 on *Big Bang: Celebrating the world's largest physics experiment*. *Big Bang!* explored the particle physics under investigation at the Large Hadron Collider project at CERN. The exhibition was well received and a full evaluation was sent to STFC in September 2007.

With continued STFC support, the Science Museum team produced a touring exhibition to take the exhibition beyond London. The touring exhibit visited Newcastle, Glasgow, Liverpool and Bristol between December 2007 and December 2008. Further details are below and in the attached documents.

## **VENUE 1**

Centre for Life, Newcastle

### Dates

14 December 2007 to 10 March 2008

### Visitor Figures for hosting period

71,452

### Press

- Press release

### Marketing

- Website
- Inclusion in listings information despatched weekly
- Joint promotion with the Empire Cinema in Newcastle – child free vouchers for anyone seeing the Golden Compass
- Email to customer data base (20,000)
- On site promotion on power points

### Events

- **Durham University** physicists had a day's training at the Centre for Life and then staffed the exhibit during the 7 days of February half term

### Host Remarks

- "Big Bang was a most pleasant exhibition to host at the Centre for Life, it was reliable and easy to install and dismantle and covered an area of science very different from our main exhibitions, which was well received by visitors. We were also able to use it to run very successful Meet the Scientist activities with physicists from Durham University during half term, which was an added bonus" Ian Simmons, Science Communications Director.

### Visitor Feedback Available?

- Did you see the Big Bang exhibition during your visit? (If yes) would you rate it very good; average; poor? 43 people said yes, they had seen it. Ratings were a mix of very good and average.

## **VENUE 2**

Glasgow Science Centre

### Dates

14 March 2008 to 23 June 2008

### Visitor figures for hosting period

- Science Mall (14 March – 23 June) = 50,952
- Education Science Mall = 13,350

### Press

- None

### Marketing

- Website

### Events

- **Glasgow University** Lectures delivered in the Scottish Power Planetarium and Science Show Theatre (topics including the Runaway, Universe, Angels & Demons, Hunting Higs)
- **Busking delivered on the Science Mall Floor beside the exhibit** with activities including colouring in, quiz relating to the exhibit, universe on a balloon busking and clanger hangers (see separate events listing.)
- **Madlab workshops** delivered in the Floor 2 Lab
- **Launch Event**

### Host Remarks

- Activities were well delivered although the content was a little difficult for our younger visitors. This was reviewed after the first weekend of activity (May 3 & 4) and amended for the closing weekend (21 & 22 June)

### Visitor Feedback available?

- None

## **VENUE 3**

Liverpool World Museum

### Dates

27 June 2008 to 22 September 2008

### Visitor figures for hosting period

- 139,000 visitors to the exhibition during its showing at World Museum, which works out to 72% of the total visitors to the venue
- BA conference (10,000) people

### Press

- Press release

### Marketing

- Website

- Events leaflet
- Internal signage
- Listings in Liverpool.com magazine

#### Events

- Liverpool University staffed the exhibition 6 and 20 August and 6-7 September

#### Host Remarks

- Host venue for big switch on
- “Big Bang was an excellently designed exhibition. The content and interpretation was pitched to appeal to a wide audience range, and was well received by our visitors. The exhibition structure was very well designed for touring to several venues. Logistically the project was managed well, with good communication, planning and clear information. As with all partnerships, there was a process of learning to work with each other. The relationship we built enabled us to resolve the few problems that did arise, and I hope is something we will be able to build upon – I very much enjoyed working with the Science Museum and would be interested in working together on future projects.” Mary Hesling, Touring Exhibition Officer

#### Visitor Feedback available?

- Yes (see the attached document).

### **VENUE 4**

Explore @ Bristol

#### Dates

26 September 2008 to 18 December 2008

#### Visitor figures for hosting period

26,573

#### Press

- None

#### Marketing

- Website
- Events leaflet

#### Events

- Science Café – the Science Café event which accompanied the Big Bang exhibition was a great success. We had 96 visitors (average for a Science Café in Café-AT-Explores is 31) which made for a busy evening. Normally, this many visitors would be detrimental to the Science café experience, but having the exhibition open and having six scientists on hand made it a real success. There was a good mix of people including 6<sup>th</sup> Form students, Science Café regulars and those new to Science Café and Explore. Helen Heath and 5 colleagues took part: Helen gave an introduction to the Large

Hadron Collider and her colleagues took questions. The visitors enjoyed their time in the exhibition with many taking the opportunity to talk with the scientists.

- Questions from the audience included the following:
  - What is antimatter?
  - Is it [LHC] all about Higgs boson?
  - How long will it take [to find an answer to Higgs' question]?
  - What if theory is wrong?
  - What is it for?
  - Would any of this change if the 'big bang' theory were false/would these experiments have different outcomes?
  - What is the difference between dark matter and anti matter?
  - What's it like being a scientist working on LHC?
  - Could we create a black hole?

#### Host Remarks

- Overall, we were pleased with the event: it was lively busy and certainly stimulated discussion about particle physics.

#### Visitor Feedback available?

- None provided

