

FUTURES2021: European Researchers' Night 2021

Work Package 3: Impact Assessment report

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This report explores the impact of *FUTURES2021* in the South West of England. In 2021 a total of **36 events** took place using a mix of digital and in-person formats, **involving over 42,000 people and 274 researchers.**

FUTURES2021 gave citizens the chance to learn first-hand about leading research taking place at universities in Plymouth, Exeter, Bristol and Bath, how it is funded, and its impact on society. Information about the contribution of European funding, research projects and academics to local areas was available online and physically, including in five dedicated EU Corners.

I wasn't expecting to be so engaged. Everything was very interesting and highly relevant to both present and future. What a fantastic way to spread these ideas!

Comment from FUTURES2021 Attendee

Management of Impact Assessment

The Impact Assessment for FUTURES European Researchers' Night 2021 was coordinated by the Deputy Head of Public Engagement at the University of Bath and the Evaluation Officer in the University of Bristol's (UoB) Public Engagement team with assistance from an external evaluation consultant and assistant.

Impact Assessment Methodology

In *FUTURES2021* the approach to impact assessment followed a hybrid of that used successfully in 2020, 2019 and 2018, that is, a mix of digital and in-person approaches to capture feedback across the mixed delivery format of the programme. The underlying principle is to ensure that as much as possible tools do not detract from participants' enjoyment of the experience but allow all those involved to give their feedback. The following evaluation tools were deployed:

- Attendance measurements via headcounts, sticker counts, digital attendance records, radio audiences, social media & website statistics.
- Pre-activity questions when booking online assessing awareness and motivations to attend
- Observation of events to assess the quality of interactions and topics of discussions
- Snapshot interviews and 'Vox Pops' (video interviews) to investigate participant experiences
- Short Postcard survey for participants to complete at in-person events, with digital version for online events
- Post-event online surveys to gather feedback from participants and researchers
- Post-event teacher questionnaire to gather feedback about school events
- Post-event debrief interviews with researchers to explore their experience
- Feedback from organisers and partner organisations
- Social media and website analysis to assess reach of marketing information

Evaluation tool templates and survey questions are included in Appendix 4 with the numbers of responses for each of the evaluation methods listed in Appendix 2. The overall response rate from the combined methods was 29%.



Figure 1. Example of promotional postcard with Online Survey link

Impact Assessment Findings

The impact assessment focused on key research questions to evaluate the outcomes and success of the Night's activities (see Appendix 1 for more details). Each question is addressed in turn below.

1. Reach: How many people, and who, interacted with *FUTURES2021*?

Event, activity and social media counts showed that there were a total of 42,001 interactions across the 36 events, and nearly 1.8 million people were made aware of *FUTURES2021*.

In this report 'interactions' are used as a general term; with 'engagements' referring to asynchronous social media, radio, and "at-home" -type activities; and 'participation' to live in-person and online events (e.g. via Zoom), with direct face-to-face or audio-visual contact between participant & researcher. It is not possible to calculate how many of these interactions were 'unique' i.e. how many people took part in more than one thing.

Participation & Engagement

Based on headcounts and attendance data at in-person and online events, 4,198 people participated in one of the 26 live *FUTURES2021* events. The most popular included the [Writing Futures!](#) creative workshops, where a mixture of online and in-person events engaged over 800 adults and children; and the large interactive research fair events in Plymouth, Exeter and Bristol ([Festival of the Sea, Pop-Up Curiosity Shop & Up Late](#)), which together attracted almost 1,000 people, largely families.

Large numbers of people (37,719) interacted with asynchronous activities via the *FUTURES2021* website, social media platforms, community radio and a large public mural. The most successful of the 10 'non-live' activities were [Nature-gram](#) on Instagram, which generated 15,112 engagements (views, likes & comments); the [Kids Invent Stuff: FUTURES Science Show](#) on YouTube with 2,498 views; [Ask Me Anything](#) on Reddit, which connected with 836 users; and the [Futures on Air](#) radio shows broadcast over the course of the weekend on 13 local stations, which drew in an estimated 17,775 listeners.

The number of members of the public and researchers involved are slightly lower than originally foreseen with a total audience of 42,001 involved compared to an original target of 50,000 and 274 researchers involved compared to an original target of 300. This was due to ongoing disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, which English schools were particularly affected by at the start of the autumn term, resulting in lower numbers of schools and students participating than in pre-pandemic times. Researcher recruitment was also affected by a combination of factors including reluctance to participate in face-to-face activities and increased work pressures post-lockdown.

Awareness Raising

The *FUTURES2021* [website](#) went live at the beginning of the Awareness Raising campaign and over the course of the campaign was viewed 9,182 times by 3,114 unique users. This is somewhat lower than the figures recorded in 2020.

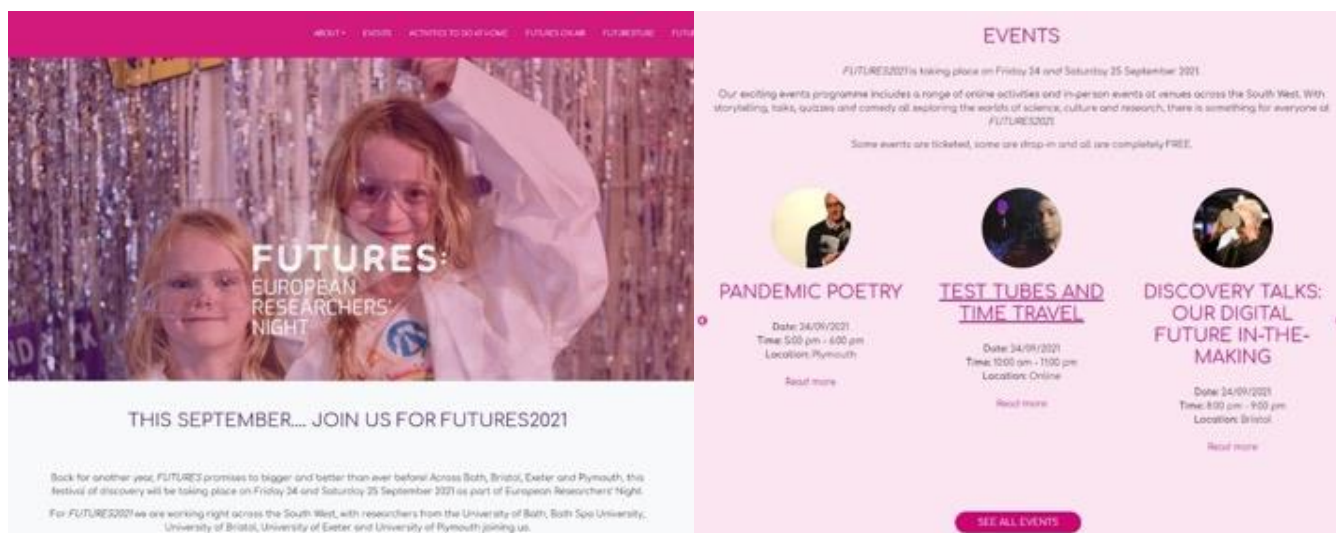


Figure 2. *FUTURES* Website home page

The *FUTURES* [Facebook](#) page gathered 61 likes, 352 fans and the 71 posts reached 197,781 Facebook users and gained 8,859 engagements (including Likes, Shares, Comments, media views and link clicks) which is higher than the previous year.



Figure 3. FUTURES Facebook page



Figure 4. FUTURES Twitter account

During the campaign the [FUTURES Twitter](#) account posted 80 tweets which reached 73,078 users, both figures being lower than in 2020. Over the time of the campaign time the account gained 71 new followers and the posts received 1,950 engagements (likes, retweets, link clicks). Demographic data from Twitter also reveals that 58% of people who engaged with content were female and 73.7% were aged 18-34. The two hashtags [#FUTURESNight2021](#) and [#FUTURES2021](#) were used 975 times during the campaign in the run up to and during the events.

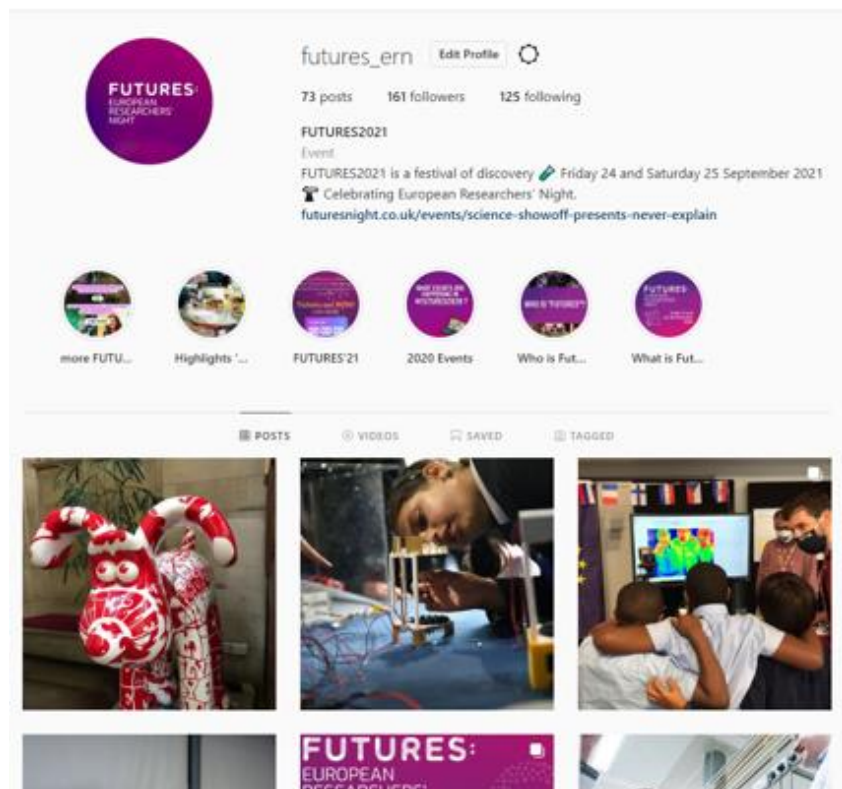


Figure 5. FUTURES2021 Instagram page

With image focused content, the [FUTURES Instagram](#) account focused on highlighting the people behind the research. Over the campaign 11,787 Instagram users were reached, much greater than in 2020, with the account acquiring 52 followers and the 48 posts gaining 109 Likes, Comments and Saves. The hashtags [#FUTURES2021](#) and [#FUTURESNight2021](#) were used 291 times by participating researchers and event attendees and gained 51,700 Likes, Comments, Video and Stories views. Demographic data from Instagram shows that 54% of people who engaged with

content were female, 29% were male and 17% preferred not to tell us their gender identity. 53.4% were aged 18-34, 33.3% aged 35-44 and 11.4% aged 45-54.

A *FUTURES: European Researchers' Night film* was commissioned during a previously funded project and was used in the awareness campaign before and during the events, being shared on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The video was viewed 1,136 times on Vimeo and YouTube.

Generally, social media channels continued to provide a valuable way of raising awareness of events and activities, particularly when targeted at specific user groups. The variety of platforms used also allowed different age-groups and demographics to be successfully targeted.

Other media were also used to promote awareness of *FUTURES2021* including press, local radio and paid for adverts. For example, it is estimated that one researcher taking part in a broadcast radio interview on BBC Radio Somerset about *FUTURES2021* reached 10,000 listeners. This kind of 'analogue' promotion reached a distinctly different demographic to the promotion carried out through digital social media platforms.

Overall, the awareness raising campaign, including paid for advertising, advertorials, online listings and community and interest emails is estimated to have reached 1,776,095 people, similar to that achieved in 2020 (1,888,863).

2. How did people find out about *FUTURES2021*?

Participants found out about the events via a variety of channels with social media playing the leading role for those booking online (mostly via a [dedicated page on the Eventbrite platform](#)). 39% of online registrations were because of social media publicity or sharing, particularly from Facebook. Email newsletters also proved effective, being cited by 15% of registrants, alongside word of mouth (which could also be social media driven). Eventbrite itself was also an important source, with 9% mentioning this way of finding out about events.

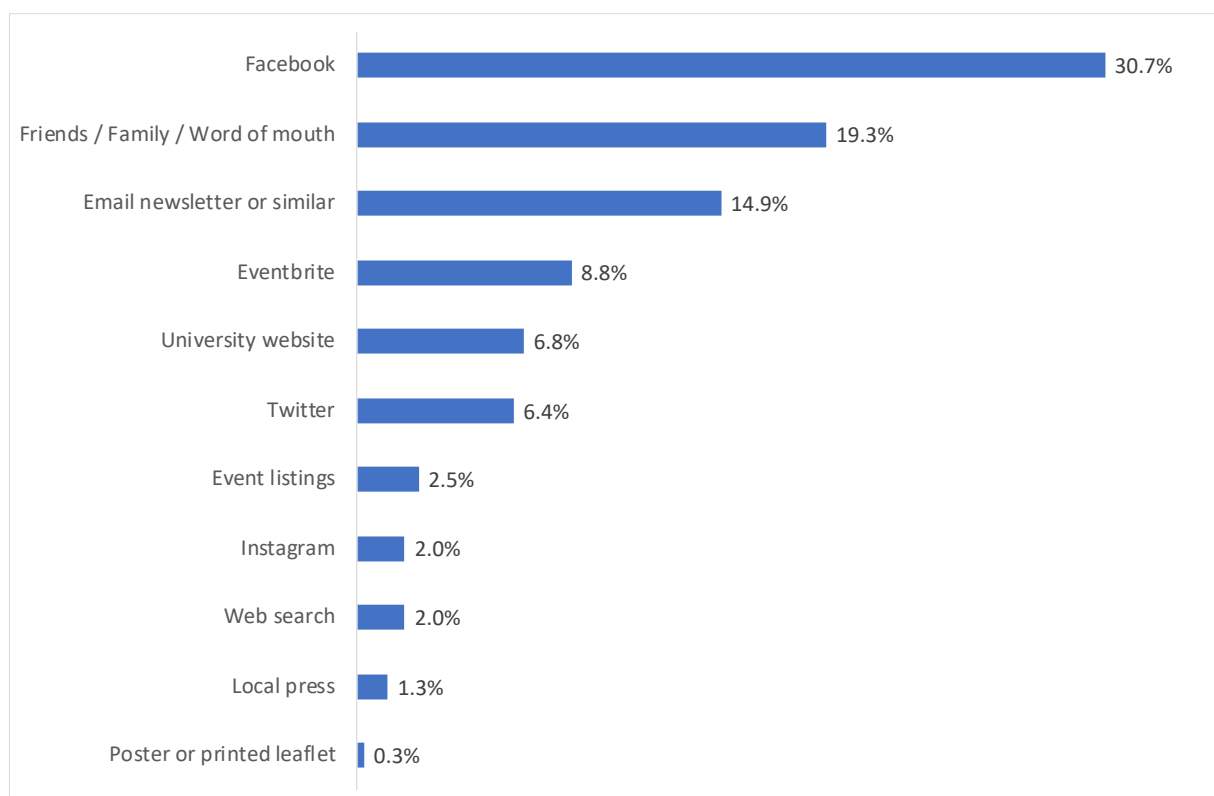


Figure 6. How participants found out about the events – Online Booking Questions

When asked why they decided to attend, those booking online were most likely to say it was because they were interested in the subject (68%), that they wanted to learn something new (28%) or that it sounded fun (18%).

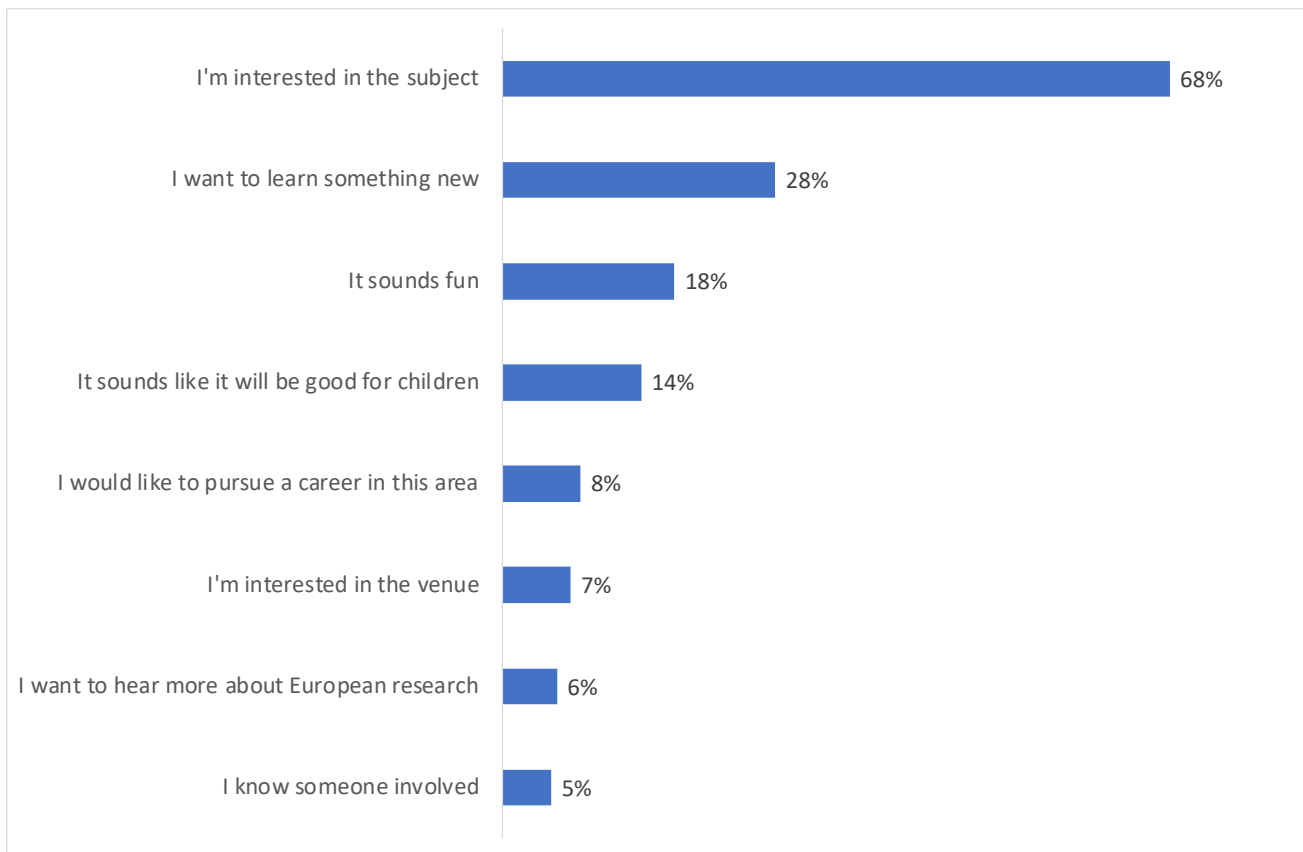


Figure 7. Why participants wanted to attend the events – Online Booking Questions

3. Audiences: Who do we reach and where?¹

The impact assessment also explored the diversity of the audiences. The events were designed to be accessible and attract a wide variety of people, with events targeted at different audiences.

While some were ‘drop-in’ style events or digital activities that required no booking, Eventbrite was used for 17 events to help track numbers and ensure events were not over-subscribed.

Demographic data was collected from 99 responses to an Online Survey sent to all those who made an Eventbrite booking, and from the quick Postcard Survey which attendees at drop-in events were asked to complete, that yielded 269 responses from 15 events.

Given this relatively small sample (368) as compared with the estimated total audience (42,001), the total ‘live’ audience (4,198) or those registering via Eventbrite (1,344 bookings by 716 people) we cannot say these figures fully reflect the profile of the *FUTURES2021* audience. However, we believe the demographic data gives a satisfactory indicator of the types of people participating.

FUTURES2021 appears to be a shared experience for many. While 35% of Online Survey respondents said they attended events on their own, 54% said they attended with family and 9% with friends.

New audiences

The Online Survey responses indicated that while there were a sizeable proportion (35%) who had previously attended events or activities run by the contributing universities, 65% said they had not previously done so.

Gender

Based on Online and Postcard survey data the majority (67%) of participants were women, and 30% were men (the remainder preferred not to say or self-identified), similar to the 63% female

¹ Activities delivered via the radio and some social media platforms are not included in this demographic analysis as it was not possible to collect this data accurately.

attendance recorded in 2020. This suggests a greater appetite or capacity among women to engage with research and STEM for themselves or their families, or a greater willingness to respond to surveys. Demographic data from the Instagram accounts which hosted **Nature-gram** content showed that 54% of engagements were with female users. School events involved roughly equal numbers of male and female students.

Age

The Postcard and Online Survey responses showed a fairly even split across age groups 26 years and older. Although younger age-groups (up to age 26) appear relatively under-represented in this sample, demographic data for the **Nature-gram** activity indicated that the majority of people (43%) engaging with this activity were aged 18-34. Additionally, the events specifically targeted at schools involved 1,339 students, aged between 6 and 18. This combined data points to activities that have attracted a range of ages, from school students to the retired. With parents and grandparents being key influencers of children, this is a positive outcome.

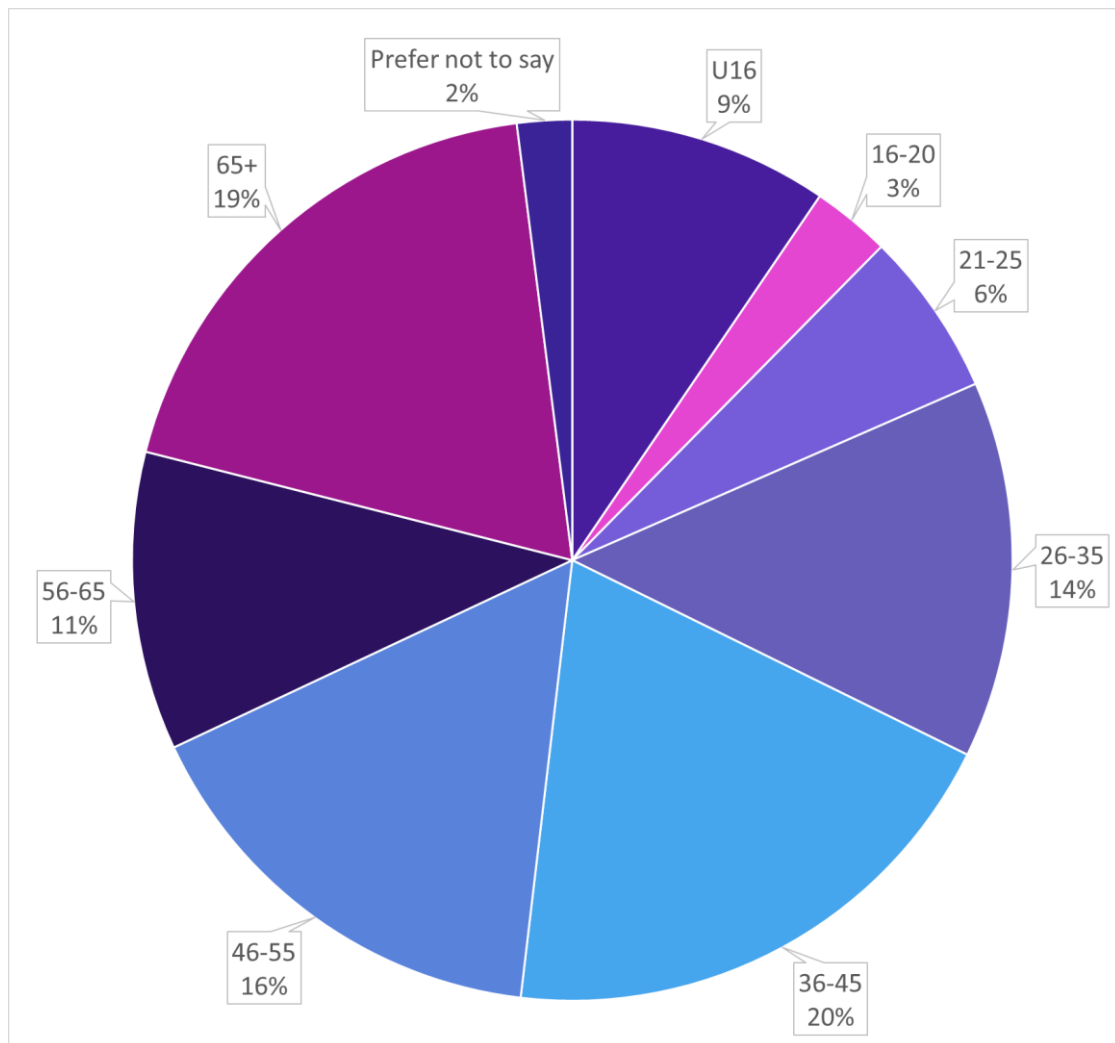


Figure 8. Pie chart showing age distribution amongst Online + Postcard Survey respondents (n=347)

Geographical spread

Access to all events was free and because much was online, available to anyone anywhere in the world. However, possibly due to locally driven publicity, the overwhelming majority of survey responses were from people giving postcodes in or adjacent to the locations where activity was taking place, namely the four university cities of: Bath, Bristol, Plymouth and Exeter, along with two towns, Bodmin and Lyme Regis, where Exeter university ran events. Out of a total of 63 responses, 47 (75% of those responding) were from local postcodes. There was a thin scattering of responses from across the rest of the UK and one from France.

Socio-economic status

The data revealed that there was a spread of attendees across a mix of socio-economic areas (according to the [English indices of deprivation 2019](#)). The participant's postcodes represent a very broad range of deprivation status, from the 10% least deprived to the 10% most deprived. Further analysis reveals that on average, five postcode areas where participants live fell within the 10% most deprived areas in England, making up 13% of respondents, with a further four postcodes within the 30% most deprived areas, making up 12% of respondents. All were in Bristol or Plymouth. What we are unable to know is the individual's deprivation status and consequently these figures can only be an estimate of the audience level of deprivation.²

While some DT & PL postcodes are far from being high areas of deprivation, they are part of small and sometimes isolated rural communities and consequently may derive considerable benefit from this kind of university led public engagement in their locality, which they might otherwise have to travel a considerable distance to access.

Postcode	UK rank out of 32,844 LSOAs*	Proportion of Survey respondents	Postcode	UK rank out of 32,844 LSOAs*	Proportion of Survey respondents
BS7	23,494	5.2%	BS3	3,472	2.1%
PL4	2,315	5.2%	BS13	344	1.7%
PL1	1,229	4.9%	BS2	1,657	1.7%
EX4	19,145	4.5%	BS9	26,487	1.7%
PL7	21,317	4.5%	DT6	14,034	1.7%
PL3	28,553	4.2%	EX2	5,374	1.7%
BS5	11,208	3.5%	BA11	11,822	1.4%
BA2	32,180	2.4%	BS10	14,739	1.4%
BS1	1,501	2.4%	DT8	21,735	1.4%
DT7	28,011	2.4%	PL9	28,017	1.4%
EX16	10,179	2.4%			

Figure 9. Table of Survey responses postcodes (*The lower the number the higher the level of deprivation, red indicates 10% most deprived, yellow indicates 30% most deprived. LSOA – Lower Layer Super Output Area)

Partner feedback from the [Up Late](#) event in Bristol suggests that it was able to attract audiences that might not usually attend such events or engage with university research.

Many more local visitors came from different parts of Bristol, which we wouldn't normally see. There were a lot of families, which is quite different from our usual out of hours events. I think the event connected with the city quite well. Partner, Up Late

Ethnicity

The overall profile of those responding to the Online and Postcard Survey have a lower proportion of self-identified ethnic minority participants than the UK population as a whole, but with noticeable differences between ethnicities. Survey responses from those identifying as Asian/British Asian (3%) or Black/ Black British (1%) are lower than that of England and Wales overall (7.5% and 3.4% respectively). However, across the South West those from an Asian background make up just 2% of the population, indicating a higher proportion registering from this group. Similarly, those identifying as Black/Black British comprise 0.9% of the South West population, lower than the proportion of survey respondents.

These figures are subject to a high level of statistical variance but given the very rural nature of the South West and the urban location of the participating universities we can conclude that *FUTURES2021* is reaching at least a proportionate non-White British audience, if not a disproportionately higher one overall among both Asian/Asian British and Black/Black British

² Whether participants were from deprived households or not cannot be established from the available data.

populations. Answers from those preferring to self-define included “Human”, European, and several people identified specifically as Cornish.

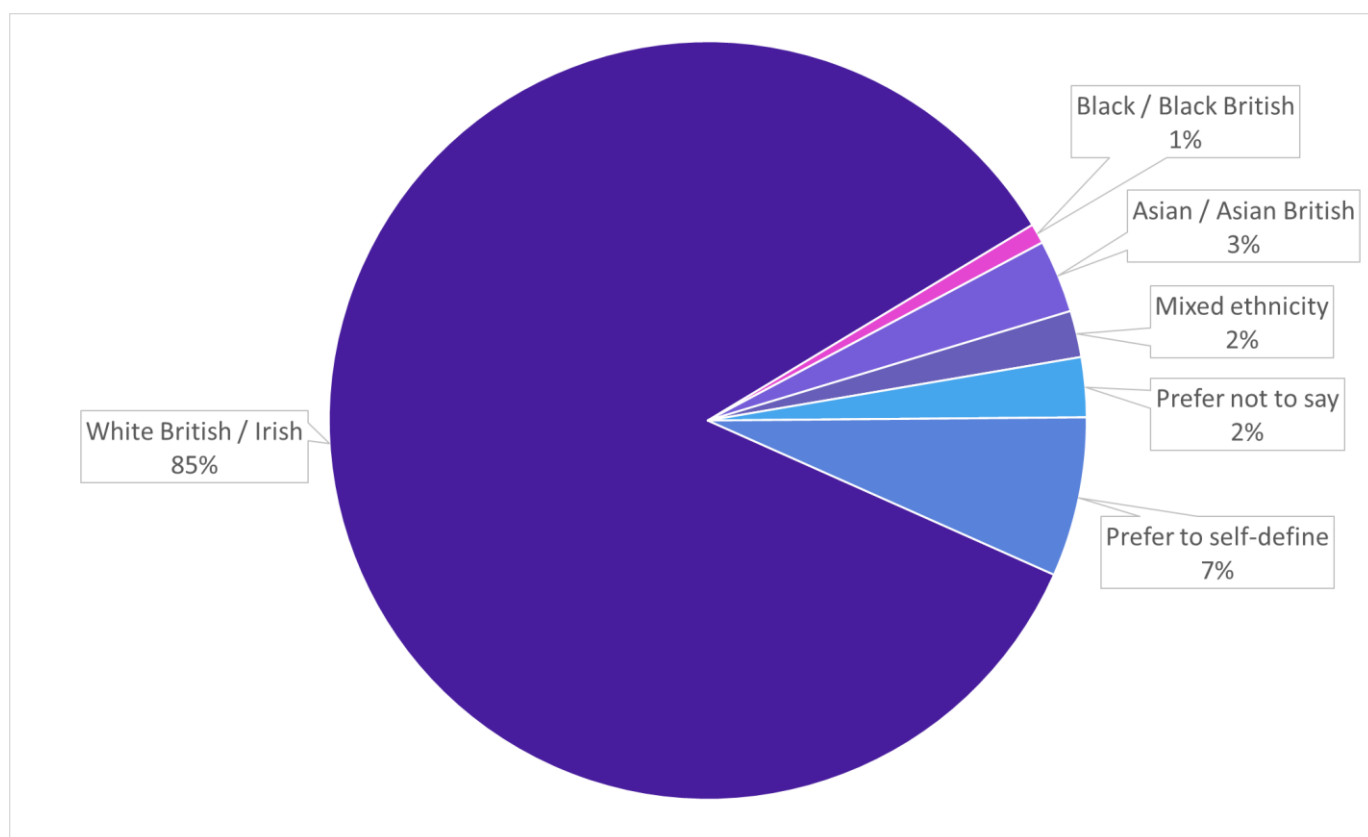


Figure 10. Pie chart showing ethnicity distribution amongst Online & Postcard survey respondents (n=353)

Schools

Reaching schools in 2021 still posed a challenge despite many Covid-19 restrictions being lifted, with schools trying to catch up on core curriculum subjects rather than take part in enrichment activities, such as those that *FUTURES2021* provides. Additionally, continuing absences due to the pandemic among both staff and pupils made attendance a great deal more challenging than in previous non-Covid years. Nevertheless, over 1,300 students aged between 6 and 18, from 22 different schools were able to participate.

All our Zones were slow again, it's so challenging for schools with up to 25% Covid-related absences amongst students and staff, plus very little supply cover. Enrichment activities are often the first thing to go in these stressful situations, as teachers just do not have the capacity to deliver them. Partner, I'm An EU Scientist

Five events were specifically targeted towards schools: *I'm An EU Scientist - Get Me Out Of Here*, *Writing Futures!* and *Discover and Discuss* were run online, the *Research Fair* and *RatLab* took place in person. Despite the challenges, teachers gave very positive feedback on some of these events, describing how their students enjoyed and benefitted from the experience.

(Students enjoyed) the different characters, the humour, the music, good that it started as soon as they went up the stairs. Teacher, RatLab

All the questions were answered really kindly and thoroughly. Pupil, RatLab

The children really enjoyed seeing and touching the science experiments and seeing the explanations come to life! Teacher, Researcher Fair

It was great to see the children enthused by the session. The children were able to discuss how a plane's wings enable it to take off. Teacher, Discover and Discuss

Exposure to 'real-life' scientists, their expertise and knowledge. Education on aspects of Science related to National Curriculum content. Teacher, Discover and Discuss

Four schools (comprising 131 pupils) participated in the *I'm An EU Scientist...* live chat events. This activity was specifically used as a way of reaching students from areas who would not have otherwise had such interactions. At least three of the participating schools have deprived or remote rural catchments and would ordinarily find it difficult to engage with university researchers.

[Our school is in] one of the most deprived wards in the UK, so we really want to give students lots of varied experiences, inspire them and raise their aspirations. Through I'm A Scientist students get to talk to a variety of researchers from different backgrounds and to ask questions on their terms. The human element is really key, the girls would not usually get to meet these kinds of people in their ordinary home lives. Teacher, I'm An EU Scientist

Teachers were very positive about the impact of the events and researcher interactions on students.

'This is the best day ever' was one of the comments I received. The children were pleased to be able to take part in a 'hands on' event. Teacher, Researcher Fair

It was really fun meeting the researcher and doing the activity. I really liked the activity and then talking to the engineer about how the wing worked. I found the activity really inspiring. All quotes from 6T children. Children's quotes, Discover and Discuss

Accessibility

FUTURES2021 aimed to ensure that all types of people can engage with the research through providing content in places and on platforms that resonate with different demographics. Some of this has been through in-person events in locations far from the universities themselves, in rural or deprived areas of the South West, while other approaches have been aimed at those who prefer to engage via social media. In particular, the Instagram and Reddit activities garnered significant engagement and very positive responses:

This is the best thing I've read all week 😊 Participant, Naturegram
Wow this looks incredible. Participant, Naturegram

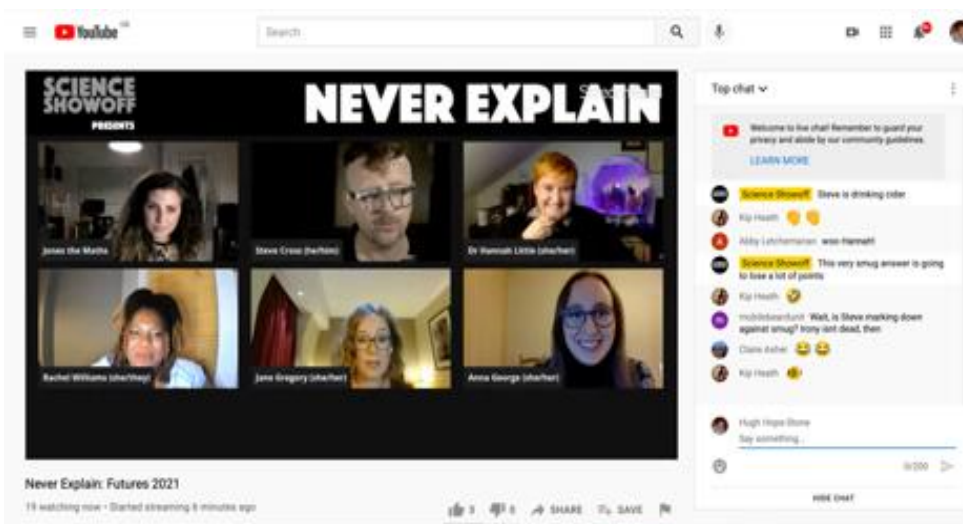


Figure 11. Screenshot of YouTube event Science Showoff

Online formats were continued partly in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, but also due to their success in 2020 in reaching those who find it harder to access physical events because of travel distances or accessibility requirements, as well as being more convenient for many to attend.

I could juggle family life with being there. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

I have a disability and using zoom allows me to attend events I would have otherwise be unable to access. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

Saved the hassle of driving to the venue and finding parking etc. Also, more relaxing as you can go and get a drink part way through. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

It's a balance, I like the convenience of online but miss the opportunity to debate with others. Attendee, Stories of Change and Naval History

4. Number of researchers involved

FUTURES2021 offered the public an opportunity to interact with 274 researchers from the five partner universities (Bristol, Bath, Bath Spa, Plymouth & Exeter) and 19 other institutions, across 36 events and activities. 29 MSCA Fellows and 29 researchers with other EU funding took part in one or more of these activities. See Appendix 1 for breakdown by university and gender.

5. Evolution of *FUTURES*

2021 is the fourth year of *FUTURES*, and it has grown from two cities to the current five institutions: Bath, Bath Spa, Bristol, Exeter and Plymouth. Despite relaxation of the restrictions imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic in England, *FUTURES2021* still faced uncertainty as to whether people were prepared to attend in person and so a mix of both online and in-person events were curated.

In 2021 there were 36 possible interactions that the public could enjoy: 18 in-person, 15 online, two blended and one on the radio. This compares with 2020 when there were 48 events or activities, all completely online, 30 of which were live and participatory. The slightly lower numbers are mainly due to how individual events were classified. For example, in 2020 each online *Discovery Talk* was classed as an individual event, whereas in 2021 several talks made up a single in-person event.

The overall number of recorded participants was 42,001, slightly lower in 2021 than 2020 (44,500 interactions). This is probably due to a combination of lower numbers of in-person attendees at some 'socially distanced' events, and a certain amount of 'zoom fatigue' relating to online events. The number is much greater than in 2019 (5,700), due to the expansion of both the consortium and the social media activity part of the programme.

Along with a mixed format approach that included activities on social media platforms, *FUTURES2021* continued with radio, something piloted in 2020 to great success. Another new element was the running of events away from the university cities themselves; this happened in the Cornish town of Bodmin and the Devon/Dorset coastal town of Lyme Regis, reaching rural communities rather than urban dwellers.



Figure 12. A musician outside the Pop-Up Shop attracts passers-by

Some activities were also delivered in high street venues, engaging drop-in audiences rather than pre-booked visitors. Whilst at times this did mean some crowding and noise issues, feedback suggests it was effective in engaging those who would not otherwise make the effort to learn about university research.

While online activities provided the potential to reach far wider audiences than in the past, smaller community events provided an opportunity for deeper engagement with local audiences in the South West.

Impact Objectives

The collated evaluation results show to what extent the impact objectives of *FUTURES* have been achieved in the fourth year.

1. Did *FUTURES2021* activities meet the needs of audiences?

Participant opinions

Both modes of delivery (face-to-face and online) received positive feedback from participants. As found in 2020, online formats enable access with minimal effort and can help with issues around childcare, physical accessibility, travel time and cost. The feedback below suggests that while for some online is an easy convenience, for others it is essential. The online component develops equality, diversity, and inclusion for *FUTURES* audiences, providing opportunities for engagement with people who find it hard to attend in person. In terms of quality, all those attending online live events said they were either good or very good and none said the quality was bad to any degree.

Can't attend in-person events due to disability, so was able to watch from home. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

Could do from home with little one asleep. Attendee, Science Showoff

I can attend from the comfort and safety of my own home. Sometimes I can attend 2 events on the same day which would be impossible if I had to travel. Sometimes speakers are from elsewhere in the world which would not be possible if not online. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

Not surprisingly there were those who would have preferred some online events to have been in-person, but the following comments indicate that there is far wider acceptance of online events than before, what was novel in 2020 seems normal in 2021. Likewise, people also appreciated in-person events more than they perhaps they once did.

Since COVID I am used to online events. Attendee, Stories of Change & Naval History

It was so lovely to come together to listen to poetry again after so long of being separated. Attendee, Pandemic Poetry



Figure 13. Some of the arts-based activities on offer at *FUTURES021*

The variety of activities and the inclusion of more arts-based events proved popular with attendees. People also particularly enjoyed being able to visit a venue for the first time, or at an unusual time,

or experience a new way of engaging with research, such as in the Immersive Virtual Reality Dome Theatre at the [Voyage of Discovery](#) event.

Took my grandson, he absolutely loved it. Excellent and well put together with something for everyone. Attendee, Up Late, Researchers' Tales & Discovery Talks

Good mixture of talks and music - it made for a good day out. Attendee, Festival of The Sea

It was lovely to have the opportunity to visit the grounds of the SS Great Britain in the evening. Attendee, Up Late

The dome was amazing! To experience a historical event I have only ever seen on TV. It was otherworldly. Attendee, A Voyage of Discovery

The science through dance - the lovely lady explained her PhD work and how it linked to the dance beautifully. Attendee, Up Late

The film was interesting and enjoyed seeing some of the methods that could be implemented. Attendee, Creative Response to Climate Change

Very interesting topics which are not available to us outside of this event. Attendee, Festival of the Sea

Participant enjoyment, learning and sharing

Audiences enjoyed participating in the events; 90% of Online Survey respondents said the events they took part in were enjoyable and 67% said they were very enjoyable. Only 7% said they were not enjoyable. All Postcard Survey respondents said the event they attended was enjoyable.

The event was fabulous, the panel discussion and the moderation were of very high quality and the mix between deep discussion, humour and entertainment (music and movie) were very well balanced. Attendee, Creative Response to Climate Change

The venue's interactive displays were great - very engaging and gave a real sense of exploring various aspects of science. These were greatly enjoyed by both the adults and child in our group. Attendee, Up Late & Discovery Talks

I had a really enjoyable and interesting evening and I hope to attend more events in the future. Attendee, Pandemic Poetry

Feedback at the events via the Snapshot Interviews told a similar story, with all those spoken to saying they enjoyed the event or activity and, in most cases, feeling they had found out something interesting as a result of attending.

The kids have really enjoyed it - amazed but tired Attendee, Research Fair

Dance was great! The researcher talked us through her research in depth, which was amazing. Attendee, Up Late

Thinking about the impact of poetry - another resource to use for these that are struggling. Attendee, Pandemic Poetry

This was really interesting and thought provoking. Fascinating considering the past and impact on the present. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

Amazing morning spent experiencing everything first-hand. All were friendly, willing to allow questions and participation. Attendee, A Voyage of Discovery

Online Survey respondents also found the research topics interesting, with 60% reporting all topics being of interest and 34% reporting that some were interesting. These results suggest the events were stimulating and attendees had a positive experience. 97% of Postcard Survey respondents said they had found out something new as a result of attending.

The event was really good and there was a lot of information in it which I wasn't previously aware for instance the impact of climate change on the sea and vice versa. Attendee, Creative Response to Climate Change

Wasn't sure what to expect and it was quite different. Some interesting life stories. Thank you for sharing. Attendee, Researchers' Tales

We attended all the talks except two. The quality and variety of information was outstanding. We left more informed about pressures on the marine environment but optimistic about the quality of research being carried out. Attendee, Discovery Talks

We found the event very informative. Each presentation was well done, the attention given to us was really good. The speakers treated the boys equally and in the same way they did with the adults around. Attendee, Discovery Talks

It was a great experience. Found out about a few new things. Great opportunity to find out about the latest research in an approachable way. Well done! Attendee, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

This was corroborated by feedback from the Snapshot Interviews.

Very exciting. Thought it would be more talks, but great to see how immersive it is. Learning about the value of technology for the future of the environment is amazing. Also liked that there is so much for kids, teaching them at an early age. Attendee, Voyage of Discovery

Learnt some new solutions to climate change. Attendee, Creative Response to Climate Change

I don't really enjoy science at school, but I found talking to real researchers and scientists interesting. Attendee, Up Late



Figure 14. Families getting 'hands-on' with research at the Up Late event

Many extended their experience and shared it with others; 66% of Online Survey respondents said they went on to discuss the ideas they had experienced with others who didn't attend, and 24% said they had found out more about a topic covered at the event they attended. Some Postcard Survey respondents also said they planned to talk with others about what they had learnt.

Inspiring concepts. Want to influence others Attendee, How Horticulture Can Help

Observation suggests that many attendees were inspired by what they had experienced and, in some cases, wished to take their learning further.

Many said they would download the app to find out more. Observation, Festival of the Sea

Many students asking teachers to teach them more about topic at school. Observation, Research Fair

Some were clearly inspired to do something significant as these quotes attest.

Collaborated with others interested in the same topics. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

Contacted edible Bristol to see how we can improve Bristol. Attendee, How Horticulture Can Help

Signposted Futures Night 2021 and the website to a Year 11 student who showed a curiosity in science and technology (I work in a secondary school). Attendee, Festival of the Sea

Visited a project highlighted during the seminar. Attendee, Festival of the Sea

Really enjoyed the event. I feel inspired to make a change. Attendee, Creative Responses to Climate Change

One audience member said they were inspired to incorporate an activity from the researcher's project into a local arts project. Observation comment, Discovery Talk

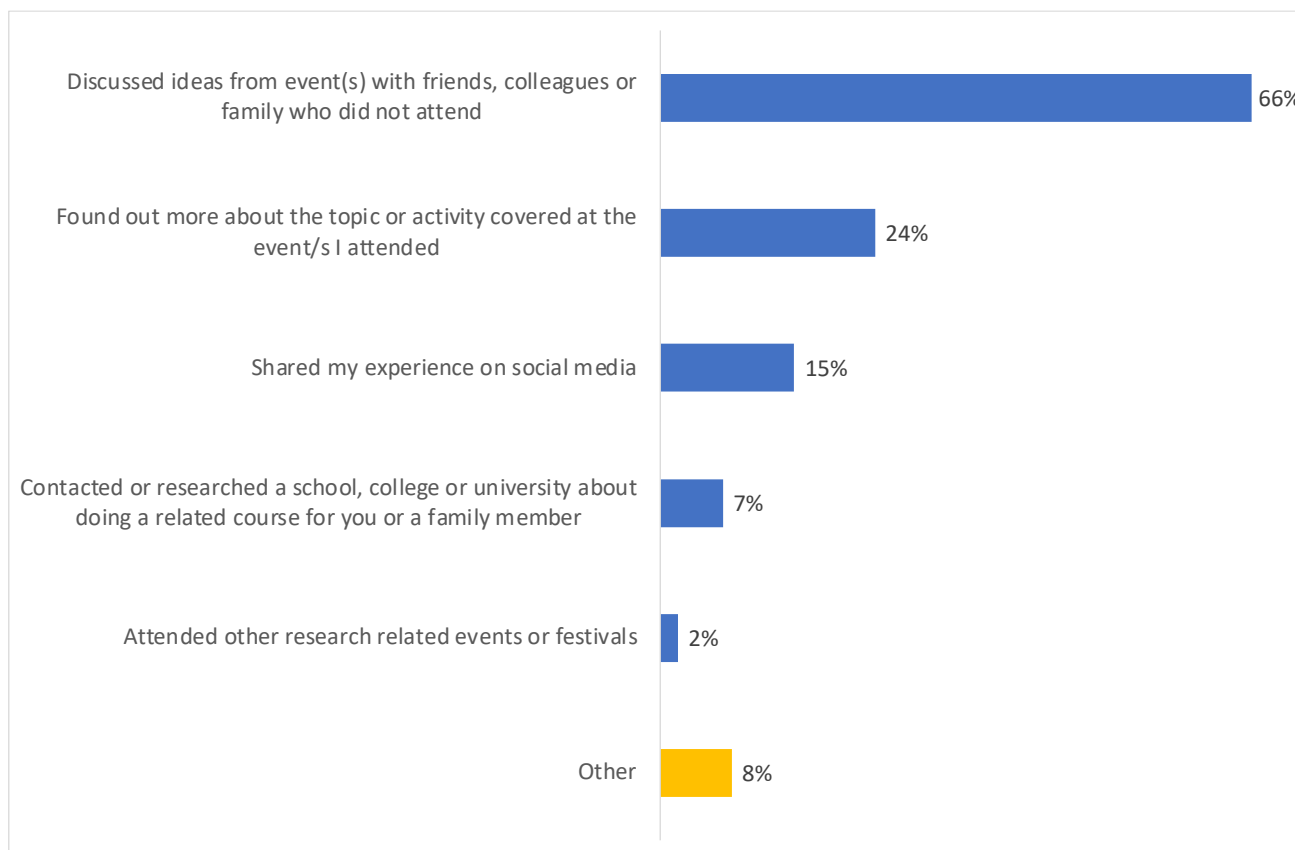


Figure 15. What participants did after attending the events - Online Survey

2. Increased awareness among the general public of the importance of research and innovation and more favourable general attitude towards its funding

In the Online Survey, when asked to choose from a selection of words to describe the events, 89% of respondents said they found the research topics presented interesting. 56% described the events as relaxed, 55% said they were organised, 48% described them as inspiring and 39% thought they were relevant.

The whole event was amazingly well organised. All the info stands were really interesting and inspiring. We loved it! Attendee, Pop-Up Curiosity Shop

The talk was very interesting. Well-structured, linking the three different locations & historical periods, and I found the speaker engaging. Attendee, Lost Childhoods

I didn't know about any of the research that was at the event. It was great talking to such knowledgeable, interesting people about their subject. Attendee, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

Such feedback was supported by the 94% of Postcard Survey respondents who thought the research topics were relevant to them and the observations made at some of the events, with audiences showing both interest in the research being talked about and very much engaged by it and wanting to access more similar content.

People finding out about things they hadn't previously - asking questions etc. Seem surprised by what research there is at university and in general. Observation, Voyage of Discovery

Surprising, interesting, fascinating are the words we keep hearing from the participants. Observation, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

A few people asked about the festival organisation and asked to have similar events more frequently. Observation, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

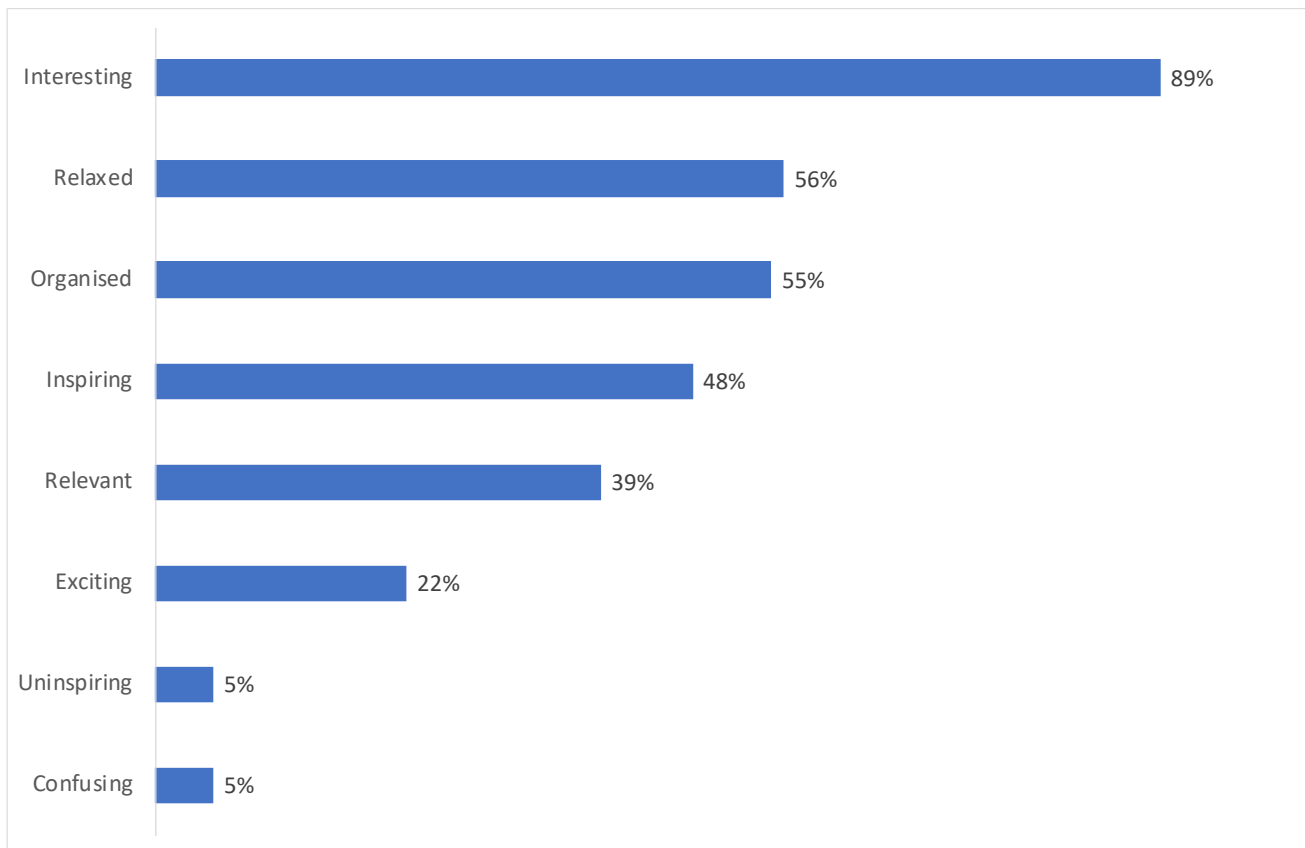


Figure 16. How participants described the events – Online Survey

Attendance at a *FUTURES2021* event boosted confidence in talking about science and other university research with friends and family; over a third (39%) of the survey sample agreed this occurred, 12% strongly agreed. 58% agreed that attendance made them think that university research is relevant to their life, 28% strongly agreed.

Researcher feedback highlighted the value of dialogue between the researcher and the public. While this may not lead to a tangible change in behaviour, the mutual exchange process led to both parties enhancing their thinking about various topics.

I always really enjoy public engagement events like this, because of the curiosity of the public, the questions, meeting people that either have experience with epilepsy or that are just interested in how to use maths in a healthcare setting. I always find it fascinating. It makes me think about what I am doing in a slightly different way as well. Researcher, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

I loved the questions I've got. It's been really lovely seeing science and art come together. I really enjoyed that. We had some wonderful musicians as well as scientists from around the country. And all the different parts of the public. I got to know families, older people. They are all here and they are asking questions. Researcher, Festival of the Sea

From observation, interactions between researchers and the public were particularly strong at some events, with the promise of further dialogue after the event in some cases. For example, the Reddit based *Ask Me Anything* generated ongoing comments over a two-day period, while the YouTube based *Kids Invent Stuff* video was receiving feedback over a month after the initial screening.

Several conversations afterwards between speakers and audience members for a long time. Enthusiastic comments and questions at the end. Good, extended dialogue between the audience and panel. Observation, Discovery Talks

Panel chair offered to work with schoolteacher in the audience, swapped details to put her in contact with researchers and eco-activists. Observation, Discovery Talks

One audience member chatted to researcher about starting a community garden and exchanged emails. Observation, How Horticulture Can Help

The **Ask Me Anything** interactions showed an interesting mix of light-hearted and serious questions, with some very in-depth queries, possibly from other researchers rather than members of the public.

What's your favourite places to go in Bath? Participant, Ask Me Anything

Will these materials have any other use... Like, detecting non-cancerous growths/diseases? Participant, Ask Me Anything

How do you fabricate your microfluidic devices? What materials do you use? What analytical techniques are you planning to use to detect the cancer markers? Participant, Ask Me Anything

3. Reduction of stereotypes about researchers and their profession

Meeting researchers face-to-face or interacting with them directly online can lead to a subtle, yet important shift in perception amongst young people and members of the public. One of the key benefits teachers identify is that their students see that researchers are 'people like them'...

The human element is really key, interacting in chat the researchers are much more relatable and attainable Teacher, I'm An EU Scientist

I like hearing stories about how people get into research and stuff. Student, Research Fair

This is also evident in feedback and observations from public and family events as well as during online activities where contact is unmediated, such as **Nature-Gram** and **Ask Me Anything**.

Very grateful to you all for opening up the uni and its people and research and passions. Attendee, Festival Of The Sea

Great showcase. Presenters were interesting and passionate about topics. Attendee, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

Loved the multiple voices. Great to see so many people enjoying poetry. Attendee, Pandemic Poetry

Additionally this kind of dialogue also highlights the many different things people do as part of their research, such as collaborating across the world and undertaking public engagement.

Research is more than writing academic papers. Attendee, Voyage of Discovery

[I didn't know about] the public engagement side of academia Attendee, Voyage of Discovery

Didn't know so much went into the work, surprised to hear about the global collaboration Attendee, Pandemic Poetry

The **Researchers' Tale** activity is also a valuable way to highlight the person behind the research, as they tell their own, relatable life story, something which often gets overlooked in engagement activities, but that is intrinsically interesting to other people.

Great! I particularly enjoyed the researchers' talks. So inspiring.

Lots of wonderful stories. Wasn't sure what to expect and was quite different.

Some interesting life stories. Thank you for sharing.

Attendees' comments, Researcher's Tales

4. Better understanding of the key benefits that research brings to society

Survey respondents reported four key benefits of attending a *FUTURES2021* event: a better understanding of a research topic (60%), a better understanding of the research that takes place at our local university (42%) an increase in interest in a research topic (40%) and a better understanding of the value of research and researchers to everyday life (34%).

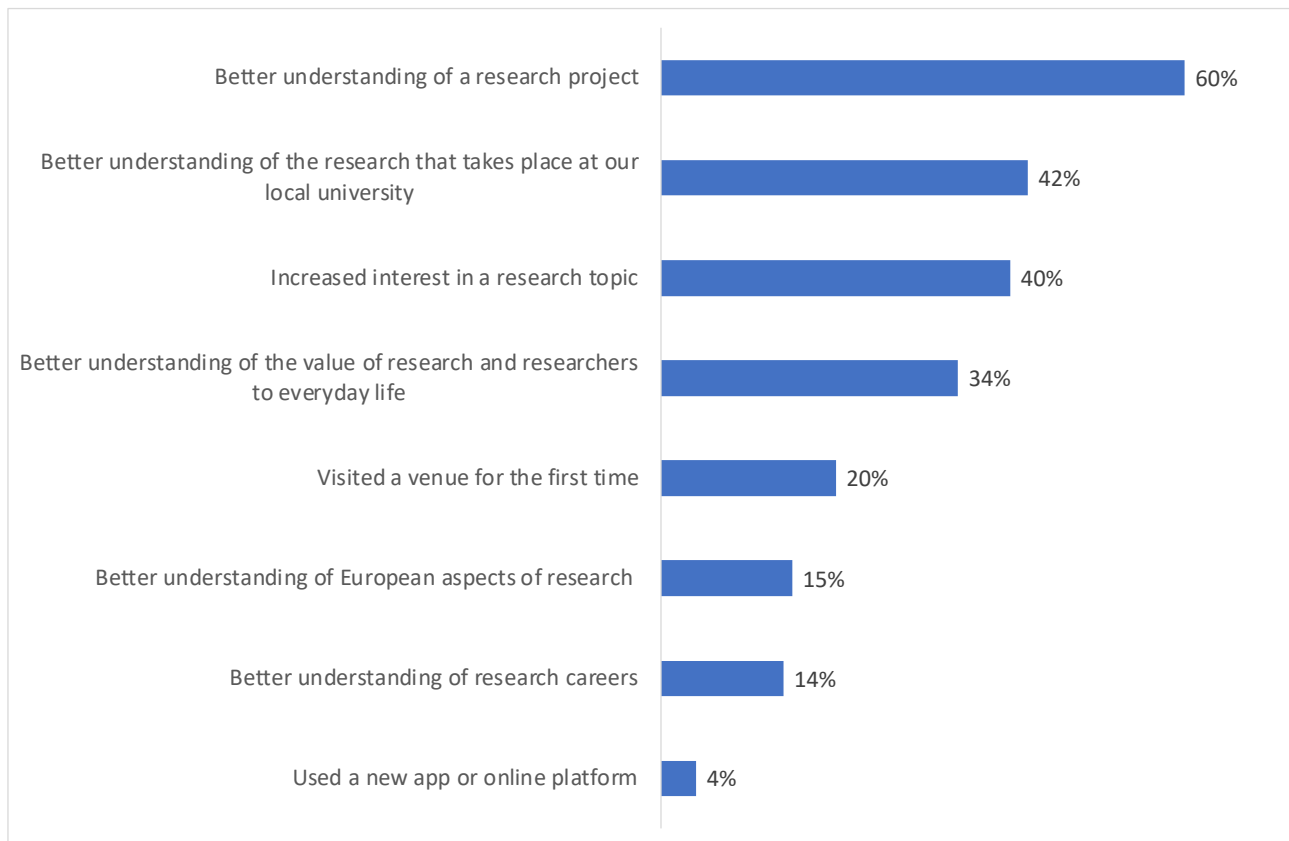


Figure 17. Benefits participants gained from attending the events – Online Survey

Comments from attendees revealed a variety of changes in understanding.

Varieties and breath of research going on is amazing. Attendee, Voyage of Discovery
Didn't know the research conducted was influencing lives and futures or trying to change people's lives in general. Attendee, Voyage of Discovery

The speakers really knew their stuff and with the help of the slides, films and visual aids made their subjects really interesting to us laymen. Attendee, Festival of the Sea

We left more informed about pressures on the marine environment but optimistic about the quality of research being carried out. Attendee, Festival of the Sea

This will help connect the university to the community. Attendee, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

By participating in *FUTURES2021*, three fifths (61%) of participants in the Online Survey agreed it had made them more curious about the research that takes place in universities.

People finding out about things they hadn't previously & asking questions. Seem surprised by what research there is at university and in general. Observation, Voyage of Discovery

I felt like I was looking into the future. Attendee, Research Fair

At the same time, researchers believe there is considerable public interest in university research, with 85% of researchers believing that there is enthusiasm from the audiences to learn more about it.

Public response has been amazing, especially interacting with children. I study penguins, and thought people would just say "oh, so cute", but they're actually interested in the science I do. That's been surprising but really, really nice to see. Researcher, Up Late.

5. Better understanding of the European Union among the general public

The European Commission branding was shown at or en-route to both in-person and online events in addition to being featured on the *FUTURES2021* website. Social media and online promotion links were made with other ERN-related accounts both before and during the Night. The online and in-person **EU Corners** were also branded clearly with ERN and European Commission logos.



Figure 18. EU Corner ready for Research Fair visitors

The music outside all day seems to be attracting at least half of the people through the doors and helps gather attention to the EU Corner as the mural drawing on the windows was also on all day behind the bands. Observation, Pop Up Curiosity Shop & EU Corner

The Online Survey showed that 15% of participants felt a benefit of taking part was a better understanding of European aspects of research, such as funding. Indeed, some commented in the Snapshot Interviews that they hadn't realised the EU still funded research in the UK.

A couple said they "had no idea this much variety of research was funded by the EU". Observation, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

Weren't aware the funding came from EU - Need a global connection to move forward - EU and everyone else need to work together - more than individual. Attendee, Voyage of Discovery
Nice to see there are still EU projects [in the UK]. Attendee, Seas the Day

Raising awareness of EU research and researchers

All events were branded as "European Researchers' Night" to ensure attendees were aware that the activities and much of the research featured were European Commission funded. However, branding during some online events was not always continuously visible (on Zoom or YouTube, for example), which may have reduced awareness of the EU element of *FUTURES*. Some of the audience feedback shows that there was genuine surprise that UK university research continues to receive European funding.

It was very interesting and [I] did not know all this was EU funded. Attendee, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

29 of 274 researchers who participated in *FUTURES2021* activities are MSCA grant-holders, and 28 hold other types of European Commission grant. Together they comprise 21% of those who took part (17% in 2020) and demonstrated the diversity of European funded research in the South West.

An estimated 1,520 people engaged with the 5 different **EU Corners** (3 in-person at Bristol, Exeter & Plymouth, plus 2 online activities), which featured 53 different researchers in total. Approximately 1,000 people saw the **EU Research Mural** in Exeter and roughly 200 participants interacted with the EU Corner interactive stands at **Up Late** and **Voyage of Discovery**. Almost 100 people interacted with the online 'corners', including the **European Discovery Map "Connected Europe"**.

Researcher feedback also suggests that awareness of EU research was raised, with half saying they thought the events brought a great deal or some credit to the EU. They thought this had happened because the public could see the direct impact of EU funding in the form of quality research and to interact directly with those conducting it. Some said there were discussions about

Brexit and the continuing role of EU funding, which may have been a surprise to many given the final exit had taken place at the beginning of the year.

Because the UK public can see how much the EU contribute to and invest in UK research. Researcher, Research Fair

By being associated with high class research. Researcher, A Voyage of Discovery

Made the public more aware of how European research funding is used. Researcher, Festival of the Sea

Promoting a positive image through the commitment from European Union to support economically and logistically to this kind of events. Researcher, I'm AN EU Scientist

There was a lot of talk about it being EU funded (in Brexit Britain, that's something people were curious about). Researcher, Festival of the Sea

How residents feel about EU research and researchers

Data from the post-event audience survey found that nearly all (93%) agreed to some extent that European research and researchers are important to the South West region and 74% agreed it was very important. Indeed, 6% of participants specifically joined an event because they wanted to hear more about European research. The level of perceived importance was similar to that in 2020.

15% said they gained a greater understanding of European aspects of research as a result of attending a *FUTURES2021* event. This was higher than the 10% recorded in 2020, perhaps suggesting that the shift back to in-person from online makes understanding easier.

Feedback from audiences also suggests they appreciated researchers taking part in *FUTURES2021* as it provides a connection with research taking place at their local university, 42% said it gave them a better understanding of the research that takes place at their local university. While *FUTURES2021* saw audiences from across the UK and internationally, the vast majority were still resident in the South West. This suggests a good appetite for understanding what research is taking place in their 'local' university and how this links to their own lives and neighbourhoods. This is important because some people feel that universities are disconnected from the general public.

One participant said "It was good to learn about Uni and research because it doesn't engage with the public much". Observation, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

I didn't know what [scientists] really do. Never really knew what happened in university, Attendee, Voyage of Discovery

[I didn't know about] the public engagement side of academia. Attendee, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

This finding is supported by researcher feedback; with 77% of researchers believing *FUTURES* brought credit to their university compared with 50% for the EU.

All the speakers at the event were from University of Exeter, they represented the university very well by being able to showcase research to the general public. Researcher, Festival of the Sea

By taking part in this event, I contributed to the dissemination of knowledge and put the name of the university contributing to the high reputation of the university. Additionally, perhaps some of the students will want to engage with the university in the future when they do their studies. Researcher, Do Try This at Home

Goes towards the aim of being a global civic university. Researcher, Do Try This at Home

6. Increase, in the long term, of people taking up research careers

Awareness of researcher and research careers

Attending *FUTURES2021* has led to many participants (34%) to believe they gained a better understanding of the value of researchers to everyday life and about research careers (14%).

People generally learning about research and what happens in uni on terms of research. They are surprised by how much goes on and seem to be learning about what uni does. Observation, A Voyage Through Change

26% of Online Survey participants said they would consider a career in research. This is possibly a reflection that many may be school students or undergraduates, but it is an indicator that the *FUTURES* events are inspiring. Nearly three times as many (68%) said they would recommend a career in research to a family member or friend.



Figure 19. Students discovering research at the Research Fair

It would also appear that at some events, those considering or just starting a research career received advice and support from researchers.

[Do you have] any advices or tips that people should know before pursuing a PhD please 🙏 Participant, Nature-gram

So beautiful!! So intelligent!! I'm going into Marine Bio next year and watching your videos gets me so excited! I may steer towards microbiology! I love being in the ocean but this seems so interesting! Participant, Nature-gram

And at a younger level, these events can provide a spark for some school students to consider an academic career they may not have considered or imagined before taking part.

It made them aware of what biomechanics is all about. It triggered a discussion about going to university and perhaps opened up their eyes to new possibilities. Teacher, RatLab

7. What was the experience of researchers participating in *FUTURES2021*?



Figure 20. A researcher talking to young participants at the Pop-up Shop

Feedback from the researchers involved was gathered by means of an online survey after the events. 44 researcher responses were received, representing 16% of the 274 researchers who took part in 14 events across all universities except Bath Spa and included researchers from other universities in London, Cambridge, and Aston.

Most of those responding (68%) had not taken part in previous *FUTURES* but all bar one, had some previous experience conducting public engagement.

Enjoyment

All researchers enjoyed taking part: 75% said they enjoyed it a great deal, 21% enjoyed it to some degree while two were unsure. All said they would take part in *FUTURES* again.

Aspects they enjoyed most focused around talking to the general public, and particularly young people, as well as getting feedback on their research from perspectives not usually heard.

Being able to engage and talk to an audience that were not experts or fellow academics. Researcher

Inspiring school children, seeing them enjoy the activities and getting to answer some interesting questions. Researcher

Reaching out to the wider community. Researcher

I enjoyed engaging with children about my field of research and encouraging them to take an interest in the sciences. Researcher

Getting feedback and fresh ideas from the public about my research. Researcher

Developing skills

Many researchers reported that taking part had helped them hone and develop their public engagement skills.

To involve children and their parents in the events to connect with researchers gave us a great opportunity to exploit/improve our public engagement skills. Researcher

*We had prepared some activities for kids, but I underestimated how smart they would be. That was the highlight for me. Because I got a lot of questions from adults, but kids actually made *me* think. So it's a good exercise to tweak how you communicate your research. Researcher, Up Late*

18 researchers who responded to the post-event survey said they had attended or received skills development, support or training from the *FUTURES* Team. 15 of the those found it useful, good quality and directly relevant to what they were planning to do at *FUTURES2021*. The remainder thought the sessions were not relevant or focused enough to what they were planning to present, or it took up too much time.

The storytelling training was excellent. Researcher, Researchers' Tales

Wow, amazing! really impressed with the training I was provided. Researcher

Most (66%) said they had received briefing materials prior to *FUTURES2021*, and all said they found such materials useful.

Impact on researchers and their research

89% of researchers said they had benefited from taking part. Importantly, 68% agreed that public engagement can improve the quality of their research, with 32% strongly agreeing.

The biggest perceived benefit from taking part was enjoyment of sharing their interest and enthusiasm for their research (82%) alongside improving communications skills (67%) and trying out new ways of engaging with the public (62%).



Figure 21. Researcher presenting to the public for the first time at one of the Discovery Talks

(I) have to do stakeholder engagement with policy, etc. so talking to public/ children is important too. Interesting to highlight what they think. Valuable aspect to add to the research.

Researcher, Up Late

[It's changed] the way I communicate the research. Because in the beginning when we first arrived, we had a script in mind about how to talk to people. But then we realised that some things were working, some things weren't working. So we changed the way we were communicating. That'll definitely help me in the future with conferences and papers as well.

Researcher, Up Late

I do a lot of work behind the computer so I don't really interact with the audience. It's actually quite nice to get some ideas, discover what people think about it, show people why it matters, that we are actually human beings as well.

Researcher, Up Late

68% said they felt more confident engaging with the public with 32% saying they felt much more confident as a result of taking part. Consequently, nearly half (46%) of researchers said they felt much more likely to participate in public engagement activity in the future.

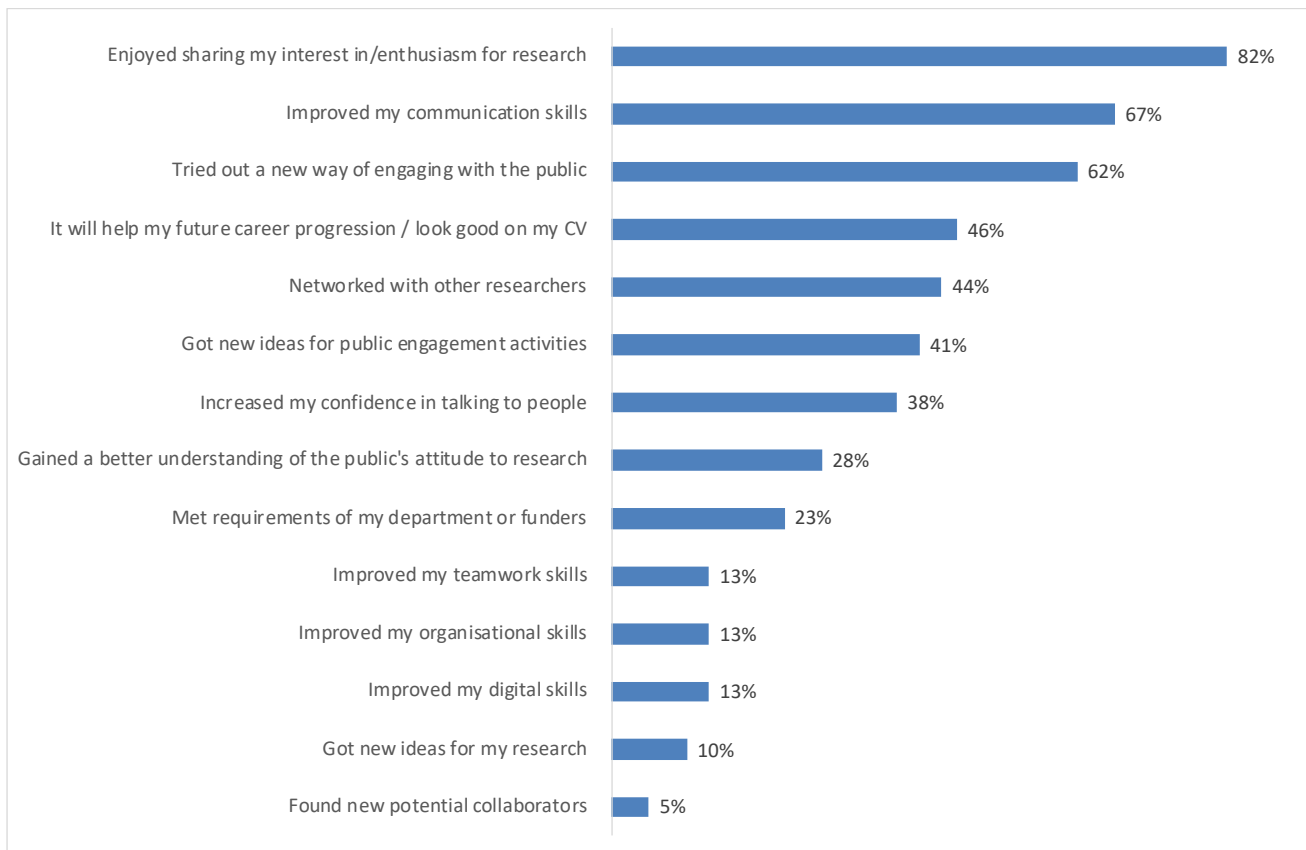


Figure 22. Chart showing perceived benefits from taking part – Researcher Survey

Impact on research institutions

Just over half (52%) believed taking part in *FUTURES2021* brought credit to their research group by showcasing their work in ways atypical to the usual academic routes, as well as building up 'credits' internally.

A well organised and atypical platform [for engagement] Researcher, A Voyage of Discovery

It has offered the space and public to engage in these difficult times where face to face activities are limited. Researcher, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

This activity counts to the total number of dissemination activities taken by researchers from the university. Researcher, Do Try This at Home

However, it is telling that around a quarter (27%) of participating researchers felt that doing public engagement was not well regarded by other academics.

8. Feedback from Partners

Feedback received from partners was generally positive, both in terms of raising their own venue's or in the case of being online, their organisation's profiles. They also perceived a benefit for their audiences with regard to connections with local universities and the research they conduct.

We would do it again, it was successful, and it got heavier footfall than our other out of hour's events. Two areas where the visitors lingered the most were the Library and Being Brunel exhibits, but traditionally visitors don't do that. So it's quite a nice way to open up our museums to the public. Partner (SS Great Britain), Up Late

There are benefits for us in being able to provide opportunities which I'm A Scientist might otherwise not be able to offer. It increases the Zone capacity, and there is also a benefit for schools to make new links with universities. Partner (I'm A Scientist), I'm An EU Scientist

9. What do we need to change for future *FUTURES* or similar events?

From the audience surveys, snapshot interviews, observations, researcher feedback and internal consortium debriefs, a number of considerations for improvement were identified for forthcoming *FUTURES* or similar events.



Figure 23. Observation in progress

Audience experience

A few events (both online and in-person) experienced **technical issues** with audio-visual and/or IT equipment. Whilst these do not appear to have significantly affected their audiences' experience, they highlight the need to ensure adequate technical support throughout.

Noise at a number of in-person events proved to be somewhat problematic, with some attendees commenting that they found it hard to hear or understand what was being said. This was sometimes due to the number of people in the venue and at other times a result of the Covid-precautions being taken (many researchers and members of the public were wearing face-coverings). Future planning should take account of the number of people expected and each location's acoustics.

A bigger venue would be better for the Pop-up Shop. Attendee, Pop Up Curiosity Shop

The only thing was that people in the pub who were not attending the event were very loud, but I appreciate that that is somewhat out of your control. Attendee, Pandemic Poetry

The **timings** of some talks were not ideal for attracting a large in-person audience. This may have been in part due to a continued reluctance

amongst many people to attend public indoor events whilst the Covid-19 pandemic continues. Activities should be scheduled at appropriate times for the target audience. Also, streaming talks online from in-person events (live or post-event) would additionally boost participation and provide an enhanced choice of attendance options.

Although most events were generally well attended, feedback suggested that the **publicity** could have been better, with more specific audiences targeted, via more prominent or different modes of advertising, for example by mailing schools directly to advertise family events taking place nearby. Venues and partners' existing local promotional networks could also be more fully utilised.

It was totally not advertised enough through schools and press. Attendee, Up Late

Clearer descriptions of the events in advance publicity would have avoided a few disappointed attendees whose expectations were not met. For them it wasn't necessarily clear who the events were aimed at or what they would involve. In particular the nature of the events, their level of interactivity, the age-group they are aimed at, and the content researchers are delivering needs to be clearly spelt out.

Would be nice to have a description about what age group the activities are targeted towards. Attendee, Up Late

Climate change is an important issue, but it wasn't very interactive or practical in confronting the issues. Attendee, Creative Response to Climate Change

A number of attendees would have appreciated receiving more detailed **advance information**, such as specific programme timings and accessibility details (e.g. seating, parking etc.)

Couldn't find out about timing of events, or whether seating was available. Both of which were essential to my participation because I can't walk far, I can't stand around, queue etc. Attendee, Festival of the Sea.

One of the aspects of *FUTURES* events which participants generally enjoy most is the chance to **interact with researchers** and ask questions directly. It is important to ensure there are sufficient opportunities which facilitate two-way engagement, especially at more traditional talk-style events, perhaps via an online Q&A tool.

Perhaps have an option to submit questions beforehand or at the event (not everyone likes to stand up in an audience). Attendee, How Horticulture Can Help

Whilst the overall programme attracted a relatively diverse audience (as discussed above) there is always room for improvement in **broadening the audience demographic**. Successful approaches have been piloted in the past, such as providing transport for community groups from deprived areas. Such initiatives could be implemented for more events.

Engagement through activities on **social media** is a valuable way of engaging a large, primarily young adult audience in a digital space with which they are comfortable. To maximise the benefit of such activities they need to be well-targeted to an interested audience, with suitable tagging and promotion through key influencers. Researchers involved also need to be made aware that the audience interaction (comments, questions etc.) may continue over an extended period of time (days or even weeks) and they should be prepared to continue interacting for longer than they may initially anticipate.

What was very noticeable is that while questions continued over the two-day period the answers stopped after 3 hours, leaving many questions unanswered. Observation, Ask Me Anything

Schools experience

A number of schools responded to requests to provide feedback and while their experiences were very positive (see earlier section) they did have some suggestions as to how events could be improved for schools and their students.

- The length of online sessions could be shorter as children quickly lose concentration
- Ensure the language, vocabulary and activity is pitched towards the right age group
- Ensure physical access is easy for children
- Ensure that content and format is appropriate for the target age groups
- Emphasise the European nature of the research and researchers
- Timing of events close to the start of term is organisationally difficult

The pig character was felt by one teacher to be rather scary for younger children. Observation, RatLab

Some stalls are too high for younger kids to see. Some language is too complicated, vocabulary should have been simpler. Teacher, Research Fair

Researcher experience

Overall researcher feedback on *FUTURES2021* was very positive, both in terms of their experience and the marketing, logistics and support they received along with the venues chosen. However, there were issues encountered that are food for thought, as outlined below.

- Pre-event communications: Provide researchers a better understanding of the venue in advance, ask for materials with greater notice, more details on what expectations for researchers are and who the audience is expected to be.

Having a better idea of the space/arrangement could have been useful to plan the material we brought. Researcher

I think you need more admin support; it seems a lot for 1-2 people to organise. Researcher

Clearer and more detailed communication about exactly what participation will entail for researchers inc. the support that will be available so we can predict more accurately the time needed to participate. Researcher

- Tailor communications about events and training to specific events or activities within events to ensure confusion does not arise.

There were too many similar events being organised at once and I found it very difficult to navigate all the emails which seemed to be sent to everybody involved in any event. Researcher

- Put researchers who will be attending the same event in contact in advance so they can better understand the context they will be working in.

A more specific overview of the rest of the participants would have been useful, as well as any links to past events' presentations. Researcher

- Better support on publicising their activity via social media.

I found there was a lot of talk on WHAT to include in our social media posts but nothing on HOW to implement it. I found myself having to take a long time to figure out how to use the different social media apps where it would've been nice to have some guidance. Researcher

- Ensure training is relevant to the activities that researchers are delivering and facilitated in a focused way.

Was a good session and the host was great, just wasn't very relevant or helpful in running the event. Researcher

The organisers need to be able to keep the focus of the session, as it's hard to fit in extra training sessions when we're all so busy! Researcher



Figure 24. Panel discussion with Researchers at Discovery Talk event with a socially-distanced audience

SUMMARY

Despite pandemic-related uncertainty before and during *FUTURES2021*, the organising consortium and partners provided a greater variety of activities than ever before for European Researchers' Night. Once again, the programme successfully engaged citizens of South West England with researchers. People were inspired, entertained, amazed, informed and educated, and went away better connected to the research happening all around them. As always, the diverse experiences are best summed up in participants' own words...

I never liked science but after this I sort of got really interested. I might do science



We wouldn't have expected to learn any of these things today but we are learning them thanks to coming in. So our horizons are being opened.



Hats off to the wonderful young students who are so passionate about their chosen field of study that they take time out of their weekends to inspire and educate others

I don't really enjoy science at school, but I found talking to real researchers and scientists interesting



I've learned that there are lots of different ways of teaching children about science, in a more natural environment way, that they feel like they're just playing and learning.

I'm really pleased to have experienced a sense of childlike wonder and awe whilst taking part in the hands-on activities... and I'm 55 years old!!



I thank you for this event. These kinds of things are so important to connect the researcher community and the public. Hopefully, there will be more events like this in the future.

APPENDIX 1: Gender-breakdown for event delivery

Participant	Female researchers	Male researchers	Female workers in overall Workforce	Male workers in overall Workforce	Total female involved	Total male involved
UOB	61	56	16	4	77	60
UOBA	11	13	2	1	13	14
UOE	30	23	2	1	32	24
UOP	17	20	12	1	29	21
BSU	7	4	1	0	8	4
Other Institutions	13	11	0	0	13	11
TOTAL	139	127	33	7	172	134

N.B. 8 researchers did not identify as male or female or choose to specify their gender

APPENDIX 2: Evaluation Response Data

Evaluation Tool	Number of Responses (2020)	
Researcher Online Survey ⁱ	44	(61)
Research Debriefs ⁱ	54	(10)
Eventbrite Registrations	716	(1,947)
Observations, Snapshot and Vox Pop Interviews	113	(31)
Public Online Survey	115	(199)
Teacher Feedback	5	(2)
Postcard Survey (print and online)	268	-
Partner & Organiser Debriefs	3	(5)
Total Number of Public Responses	1,204 ⁱⁱ	(728)
<i>Number of Participants at Live Events, not incl. Social Media activities or Radio Listeners</i>	4,198	(1,545)
Response Rate for Live Events	29%	(47%)
Comments on Social Media Activities ⁱⁱⁱ	166	-
<i>Number of Participants in Social Media Activities</i>	18,954	-
Response Rate for Social Media Activities	1%	-

i. Not included in public response total

ii. Some participants may have completed more than one form of feedback, therefore this is not the number of unique respondents

iii. Nature-gram, Ask Me Anything & Science Show Off (Kids Invent Stuff)

APPENDIX 3: Research Questions

The table below sets out the research questions used for the impact evaluation, the data analysed and the tools used to collect the data.

QUANTITATIVE IMPACT DATA		
Impact Objective	Data	Tool for collection
Number of attendees	Participant count – overall and at each event	Event registration Entry counts (e.g., stickers)
Type of participants	Participant demographics (including age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background etc.)	Event registration Event observation Postcard survey Post-event online survey
Number of researchers involved (especially those funded under FP7/H2020)	Researcher count and funding source / research project	Researcher sign-in sheets and pre-event information forms
Reach of awareness campaign (website, social media, print media)	Media circulation Social media interactions	Media contacts Universities Press Office cuttings service Google Analytics and similar online tools
Evolution over time	Numbers of attendees, researchers, events and venues involved	Comparison with previous reports
Numbers of participants reporting a positive experience at a FUTURES event	Participant opinions	Event observations Snapshot interviews Teacher questionnaire Postcard survey Opinion trees Post-event online survey

QUALITATIVE IMPACT DATA			
Impact Objective	Subsidiary Research questions	Data	Tool for collection
Increased awareness among the general public of the importance of research and innovation and a more favourable general attitude towards its public funding	Has FUTURES raised awareness of the importance of research and innovation? Do participants feel that the research presented was relevant to their lives? Do participants feel more positive about public funding of research?	Participant opinions Researcher reflections	Event observations Snapshot interviews Postcard survey Opinion trees Sticker votes Teacher questionnaire Post-event online survey Researcher survey

QUALITATIVE IMPACT DATA			
Impact Objective	Subsidiary Research questions	Data	Tool for collection
Better understanding of the key benefits that research brings to society	Do participants report a better understanding of or an increased interest in a research topic?	Participant opinions Researcher reflections	Event observations Snapshot interviews Postcard survey Opinion trees Sticker votes Post-event online survey Researcher survey
Reduction of the stereotypes about researchers and their profession	Do participants feel that researchers are 'people like me'?	Participant opinions Researcher reflections	Event observations Snapshot interviews Postcard survey Opinion trees Teacher questionnaire Post-event online survey Researcher survey
Better understanding of the European Union among the general public	Has FUTURES raised awareness of EU research and researchers? How do South West residents feel about EU research and researchers having taken part in FUTURES?	Participant opinions Researcher reflections	Event observations Snapshot interviews Postcard survey Opinion trees Post-event online survey Researcher survey
Increase, in the long term, of people taking up research careers;	Has FUTURES increased (or reinforced) awareness of research careers? Would participants be interested in taking up a research career or would they recommend it to someone else?	Participant opinions Researcher reflections	Snapshot interviews Opinion trees Sticker votes Teacher questionnaire Post-event online survey Researcher survey
Appreciation of events and intention to participate in future	Did participants enjoy their experience at FUTURES? Would participants attend a similar event in future?	Participant opinions	Event observations Snapshot interviews Opinion trees Teacher questionnaire Postcard survey Post-event online survey

QUALITATIVE IMPACT DATA			
Impact Objective	Subsidiary Research questions	Data	Tool for collection
What was the experience of researchers participating in Researchers' Night	What were the benefits for researchers? What was the impact on their research and institution?	Researcher opinions Partner opinions	Debrief interviews Researcher survey
What could be improved?	Organisation Venues Activities Participant experience Researcher experience Achievement of impact goals	Participant opinions Researcher opinions Partner opinions	All tools
Success of activities	How successful in meeting the impact aims were the events?	Participant opinions Researcher opinions Partner opinions	All tools

APPENDIX 4: Evaluation Tools

A4.1 Event Registration questions (for online bookings)

- How did you find out about this event? (please choose all that apply) *[Checkbox Options]*

Social media → What channel? Facebook / Twitter / Instagram

Eventbrite

Email newsletter or similar → Who from?

Event listings (e.g. What's On, venue's listings etc.)

Local press

Local radio

Friends, Family or Word of mouth

Web search

Poster or printed leaflet

University website

Other → Please Specify

- Why are you interested in attending this event? (please choose all that apply) *[Checkbox Options]*

I'm interested in the subject

I would like to pursue a career in this area

I want to learn something new

I want to visit the venue

I want to find out more about research

I know someone involved

It sounds fun

It sounds like it will be good for children

Other → Please Specify

A4.2 Observation template

FUTURES: European Researchers Night 2021



EVENT Observation Guide

Please use this template to record as much as possible about your observations.

These will help evaluate the effectiveness of the event as a whole and will not be used to judge individual performances.

Collated results will be used to improve the events next year and in our formal report to the EU.

We are particularly interested in the following aspects:

- *Are participants enjoying themselves and having a positive experience?*
- *Are researchers enjoying themselves and having a positive experience?*
- *Is the event and its different activities running smoothly?*
- *Are there any problems or unforeseen issues?*

What to do

- Observe the general interactions at the event, and at individual activities within that event if applicable
 - If there is an EU Corner at the event, please complete separate observation/s for it
 - If the event is long, complete a number of observations e.g. 1 per hour
 - Give a general impression of participants' overall reactions and experiences
 - Note any interesting quotes from participants or researchers
 - Comment on what aspects worked well and note anything that didn't work so well

For ONLINE EVENTS

- Observe if, when and why participants drop out or appear to disengage
- Note any technical problems
- Note any presentation or delivery problems encountered by researchers (poor sound, poor visuals etc.)
- Note any disruptive or abusive behaviour or dialogue

OBSERVATION NOTES <i>(complete one sheet per event activity)</i>		
Event:	Event Code:	
Activity (if different):		
Date:	Time:	
Format of Event / Activity observed: <i>(presentation, research fair, group workshop, busking etc.)</i>		
Enjoyment: <i>(are participants enjoying the activity and/or talking to the researchers?)</i>		
<u>Enjoyment of Activity</u> <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low	<u>Enjoyment of Talking to Researchers</u> <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Comments:		
Engagement & Interactions: <i>(how are participants engaging with the activity and the researchers?)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> High Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Medium Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Low Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Easy to engage <input type="checkbox"/> Neither hard nor easy <input type="checkbox"/> Hard to engage	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly one-way communications ○ Participants ○ Researchers <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly two-way interactions
Comments:		
Have you observed participants appearing to have...? <i>(tick all that apply and note their responses briefly)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Discovered something new <input type="checkbox"/> Changed their mind about something <input type="checkbox"/> Been surprised by something	<input type="checkbox"/> Been inspired to find out more about a topic <input type="checkbox"/> Made a suggestion about the event / activity <input type="checkbox"/> Discussed something related to Europe	
Comments:		
Any particularly positive incidents or general feedback: → <i>e.g. actions or comments by participants, participants asking for further information, exchanging contact details with researchers, children creating something that they talk about, etc.</i>		
Any problems or unforeseen issues arising: → <i>e.g. difficult access, too noisy, crowded etc.</i>		
Suggestions for improvement / changes:		

Continue notes here if required...

A4.3 Event Snapshot and Vox Pop Interview template

FUTURES: European Researchers Night 2021



EVENT Snapshot Interview + Vox Pop Guide

Please use this template to record any 'snapshot interviews' you get a chance to carry out with participants.

These will help evaluate the effectiveness of the event as a whole and will not be used to judge individual performances.

Collated results will be used to improve the events next year and in our formal report to the EU.

We are particularly interested in the following aspects:

- *Are participants enjoying themselves and having a positive experience?*
- *How do participants feel about research and researchers having taken part in Researchers' Night?*
- *Has Researchers' Night increased (or reinforced) awareness of research careers?*
- *Has Researchers' Night raised awareness of the role of Europe in research?*
- *What was the experience like, compared to a similar in-person or online event? (* see below)*

What to do

SNAPSHOT INTERVIEWS

- Circulate around the event if appropriate (e.g. visit different breakout rooms) and observe different interactions if possible
- Ask participants (individually or in small groups) some or all of the questions in the interview guide at an appropriate time, e.g. at the end of the event, activity or when they move away from an event or activity
- Record their responses (audio/video record if possible) and note any interesting quotes on the form below
- Word second to last question as appropriate * i.e. for an online event, ask what it was like compared to an in-person event and vice-versa
- For DROP-IN EVENTS ONLY, please also ask the 2 questions on the second side of the page

VOX POP INTERVIEWS (will be carried out by videographers at various events)

- Ask the questions highlighted by **[VP]**

SNAPSHOT INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP INTERVIEW NOTES *(complete one sheet per interview)*

Event:		Event Code:									
Activity (if different):		Format of activity or event <i>(presentation, research fair, group workshop, busking etc.)</i>									
Date:	Time:										
Did you enjoy the event / activity? <i>IF YES: Why and what did you enjoy? IF NO: Please tell me why not?</i>											
<p>Topics of Conversation: <i>Did you talk to any researchers? IF YES: What did you talk to them about? → Tick all that apply & double tick which topic, if any, comes up most</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Research Topic</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> the Researcher as a person</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Participants' opinions about research topic</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> European aspects of research</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> the Researcher's working life</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Research Careers</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Participants' experience of research</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please specify)</i></td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Research Topic	<input type="checkbox"/> the Researcher as a person	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants' opinions about research topic	<input type="checkbox"/> European aspects of research	<input type="checkbox"/> the Researcher's working life	<input type="checkbox"/> Research Careers	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants' experience of research	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please specify)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Topic	<input type="checkbox"/> the Researcher as a person	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants' opinions about research topic	<input type="checkbox"/> European aspects of research								
<input type="checkbox"/> the Researcher's working life	<input type="checkbox"/> Research Careers	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants' experience of research	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please specify)</i>								
Have you found out anything interesting or surprising today? <i>IF YES: What?</i> [VP]											
Have you discovered anything new about what researchers do, or the research that takes place at our local university? <i>IF YES: What?</i> [VP]											
Did you learn anything new about the role of Europe in research? <i>IF SO: What?</i> [VP]											
<p>What was this experience like for you, compared to a similar in-person / online* event? <i>Please explain your answer</i> <i>(*ask as applicable)</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Better</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Neither better nor worse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Worse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure</td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Better	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither better nor worse	<input type="checkbox"/> Worse	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure				
<input type="checkbox"/> Better	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither better nor worse	<input type="checkbox"/> Worse	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure								
Is there anything we could improve about this event / activity?											

AT DROP-IN EVENTS ONLY

prefer to read them

**** Show respondents the options below, if they would**

- How did you find out about this event? (tick all that apply)

- Social media → *What channel?* Facebook Twitter Instagram
- Eventbrite
- Local press
- Local radio
- University website
- Email newsletter or similar → *Who from?*

- Event listings (e.g. What's On, the venue's listings etc.)
- Friends, family or word of mouth
- Web search
- Poster or printed leaflet
- Other → *Please Specify*

Why were you interested in attending this event? (tick all that apply)

- I'm interested in the subject
- I would like to pursue a career in this area
- I want to learn something new
- I want to visit the venue
- I want to find out more about research

- I know someone involved
- It sounded fun
- It sounded like it would be good for children
- Other → *Please Specify*

A4.4 Public Postcard Survey

FUTURES:

EUROPEAN
RESEARCHERS'
NIGHT

11-UoB-LATE

Please tell us what you thought
of this event or activity

Did you enjoy it? YES NO

Did you find out something new? YES NO

Did this feel relevant to you? YES NO

Do you have any comments? (on the event/activity, what you enjoyed, found out, or anything else...)

Please complete both sides... Thank you

FUTURES:

EUROPEAN
RESEARCHERS'
NIGHT

11-UoB-LATE

Please tell us a little bit about yourself

What is the first half of your postcode? (e.g B53, EX21)

.....

What is your age? Under 16 16-20 21-25 26-35 36-45
 46-55 56-65 Over 65 Prefer not to say

Are you...? Female Male Prefer not to say
 Prefer not to self-define as

Which describes you best? White British / Irish Black / Black British
 Asian / Asian British Prefer not to say
 Prefer to self-describe as

Please complete both sides... Thank you

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036029.

A4.5 Public Online Postcard Poll

Mentimeter



Please tell us what you thought of this FUTURES event or activity

< EVENT NAME >

Mentimeter

Did you enjoy it?

0 Yes 0 No

Mentimeter

Mentimeter

Did you find out something new?

0 Yes 0 No

Mentimeter

Mentimeter

Did this feel relevant to you?

0 Yes 0 No

Mentimeter

Do you have any comments?

Mentimeter



Please tell us a little bit about yourself

We are asking this because we want to find out whether FUTURES events are of interest to a wide audience

Mentimeter

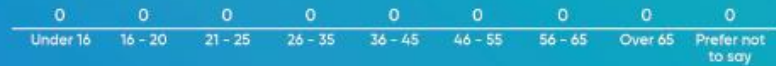
What is the first half of your postcode?

Mentimeter



What is your age?

Mentimeter



A4.6 Public Online Survey

FUTURES Night 2021 - Public Feedback

Introduction

We hope you enjoyed the FUTURES event/s you took part in recently.

We are very interested in your feedback and hope you can answer some questions in the following short survey, which will take about 10 minutes of your time.

(If you couldn't attend any events, then please let us know why, there are just a couple of quick questions to complete.)

The results will be used to help us improve events like this in the future and for a report to our funders.

Your answers will be completely anonymous. The data will be stored securely and kept for a maximum period of 2 years.

Thanks in advance for taking part, please click 'Next' to start the survey.

***** By clicking 'Next' you confirm that you have read and understood the above information and consent to taking part *****



Event Attendance

Did you attend or take part in any FUTURES events or activities, either in person or online?

- Yes
- No

Event Selection

Which FUTURES event/s did you take part in?

Choose all the location/s where you attended events (*Tip: selecting an option below will show all the events in that location*)

- Online event
- Bath
- Bristol
- Exeter
- Lyme Regis or Bodmin
- Plymouth
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the live online events that you took part in

- Researching Change through Poetry Translation (Zoom | Fri 24)
- Lost Childhoods: A Cultural History of Separation (Zoom | Fri 24)
- Science Showoff: Never Explain (YouTubeLive | Fri 24)
- The Big Regional Family Quiz (Kahoot | Sat 25)
- Stories of Change and Naval History (Zoom | Sat 25)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in Bath that you took part in

- Test Tubes + Time Travel (central Bath | Fri 24 & Sat 25)
- Run with a Researcher (Skyline Park | Sat 25)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in Bristol that you took part in

- Up Late (SS Great Britain | Fri 24)
- Researchers Tales @ Up Late (SS Great Britain | Fri 24)
- Discovery Talks: EBI & BDFI Institutes (SS Great Britain | Fri 24)
- Growing Solutions to Local & Global Problems (Wills Hall | Sat 25)
- Discovery Talks: Stories of Change (SS Great Britain | Sat 25)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in Exeter that you took part in

- Walk and Talk: Exeter's Multi-coloured History (Make Tank | Fri 24)
- Pop-Up Curiosity Shop (Make Tank | Sat 25)
- Walk and Talk: Hidden Exeter (Make Tank | Sat 25)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in Lyme Regis or Bodmin that you took part in

- Creative responses to Climate Change (St Petroc's Church, Bodmin | Sat 25)
- Festival of the Sea (Marine Theatre | Lyme Regis, Sat 25)

Please choose the events in Plymouth that you took part in

- Pandemic Poetry (The Bread & Roses Pub | Fri 24)
- A Voyage of Discovery (The Market Hall | Sat 25)
- Seas the Day! (National Marine Aquarium | Sat 25)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Did you engage with any of the following online activities?

[+ More info](#)

- Futures On Air (broadcasts on local radio stations)
- The FUTURES Science Show (YouTube)
- Nature-gram (Instagram)
- I'm A Researcher - Ask Me Anything (Reddit)
- Do Try This At Home (downloadable activities on FUTURES website)
- EU Corner (info, activities & video clips on FUTURES Website)

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- FUTURESTUBE (videos on FUTURES Website)
- Researchers Without Borders (Twitter)
- Global Science Show (Twitter)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

In which of the following ways did you take part in FUTURES events? *(Select all that apply)*

- On my own
- With my family
- With my friends
- With a school class or organised group
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Prior to FUTURES 2021, have you previously taken part in any events or activities (in-person or online) organised by one of the universities listed below? *(If yes, please select all that apply)*

- Bath Spa University
- University of Bath
- University of Bristol

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- University of Exeter
- University of Plymouth
- No

Event Quality

Overall, how enjoyable were the FUTURES event/s that you took part in?

- Very enjoyable
- Somewhat enjoyable
- Neither enjoyable or unenjoyable
- Somewhat unenjoyable
- Very unenjoyable

How would you describe the FUTURES event/s that you took part in? *(Pick all the words that apply)*

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> Uninteresting | <input type="checkbox"/> Organised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confusing | <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrelevant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed | <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Exciting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boring | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspiring | <input type="checkbox"/> Uninspiring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

If you selected Other, please specify:

Do you have any comments relating to your enjoyment of individual events or their quality?

Are there any parts of the event/s you think could be improved? (e.g. venue, online platform, accessibility, format, timings, publicity, speakers, topics etc.)

Please could you explain why you chose that answer?

How would you rate the quality of any online events that you took part in (e.g. Zoom workshops, YouTubeLive videos, Kahoot quiz, social media activities etc.)

- Not applicable - I didn't take part in any events online
- Very good
- Good
- Neither good nor bad
- Bad
- Very bad
- Not sure

How did attending an event online affect your experience, compared to similar in-person events?

- My experience was better
- My experience was neither better nor worse
- My experience was worse
- I have not attended similar events in the past
- Don't know
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Event Content

How interesting did you find the research topics presented at FUTURES?

- All were interesting
- Some were interesting
- None were interesting

Which topic did you find most interesting and why?

How clear was it to you that FUTURES events celebrate European-funded research?

[More info](#)

- Very clear
- Somewhat clear
- Not very clear
- Not at all clear
- Not sure

How important do you feel European research and researchers are to the South West region?

- Very important
- Quite important
- Neither important or unimportant

- Not very important
- Not important at all

To what extent do you feel that the FUTURES event/s you attended brought credit to the local university?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all
- Not sure

Event Impact

What (if anything) do you think you have gained from the FUTURES event/s? *(Tick all that apply)*

- Better understanding of a research topic
- Increased interest in a research topic
- Better understanding of research careers
- Better understanding of the value of research and researchers to everyday life
- Better understanding of the research that takes place at our local university
- Better understanding of European aspects of research (e.g. collaborations)
- Visited a venue for the first time
- Used a new app or online platform
- Nothing
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Would you consider a career in research for yourself?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Would you recommend a career in research to a friend or family member?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Event Outcomes

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about FUTURES

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree
Attendance has made me more curious about research that takes place in universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance has helped me be more confident about talking about science and other university research with friends and family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance has made me think university research is relevant to my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which of the following have you done as a result of attending FUTURES events? (Tick all that apply)

Shared my experience on social media
 Discussed ideas from event(s) with friends, colleagues or family who did not attend
 Attended other research related events or festivals

Found out more about the topic or activity covered at the event/s I attended
 Contacted or researched a school, college or university about doing a related course for you or a family member
 Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Any other comments?

Did you have any accessibility problems for any of the events you attended or wanted to attend?

- Yes
- No

We are sorry that you experienced problems accessing events. Please describe any issues you encountered.

Is there anything else you would liked to have seen, heard or experienced at FUTURES?

Do you have any other comments about FUTURES you'd like to share?

Finally, a little bit about you

We are asking for this information because we want to find out whether FUTURES events are of interest to a diverse audience

What is the first half of your UK postcode? (e.g. BS3, BA21) Or, if you live outside the UK, in which country?

What is your age?

- Under 16
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- Over 65
- Prefer not to say

Are you...? *If you prefer to self-define, please choose the 'Other' option and enter your answer*

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Which of the following do you most identify as? *If you prefer to self-describe, please select the 'Other' option and enter your answer.*

- White British / Irish
- Black / Black British
- Asian / Asian British
- Mixed Ethnicity
- Prefer not to say
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

If you couldn't attend

We're sorry that you weren't able to take part in any FUTURES events this year. Please could you tell us why?

- Changed my mind
- Something else came up
- Forgot about it
- Illness / Required to self-isolate
- Couldn't access the event (please give details below)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

We are sorry that you experienced problems accessing events. Please describe any issues you encountered.

Do you have any other comments about FUTURES you'd like to share?

Thank You

Thanks very much for taking the time to answer these questions!

Follow us on **Twitter** [@FUTURES_ERN](#) **Instagram** [futures_ern](#) **Facebook** [www.facebook.com/FUTURESESN](#) for updates on the next edition of FUTURES...

If you have any questions about this survey or its purpose, please contact futures-project@bristol.ac.uk

Some content from FUTURES 2021 is still freely available on our website: www.futuresnight.co.uk/futurestube if you would like to catch up with anything you missed.

www.futuresnight.co.uk

FUTURES is part of the annual [European Researchers' Night](#) programme, funded by the European Commission under Horizon2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions to celebrate the latest and most innovative research at a local and international level.

This year simultaneous events took place on Friday 24th September 2021 in over 400 cities across 30 European countries. The FUTURES Consortium brings together the Universities of Bristol, Bath, Bath Spa, Exeter and Plymouth to showcase South West research.



A4.7 Public Online Survey promotional postcard



Thank you for joining us for **FUTURES2021**, a European Researchers' Night event.

We'd love to know what you thought. Please take a few minutes to fill out our feedback survey.

bit.ly/futuresfeedback2021



FUTURES:
EUROPEAN
RESEARCHERS'
NIGHT

**Friday 24 to Saturday 25
September 2021**

A festival of discovery across Bath,
Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth and online

[Futuresnight.co.uk](https://futuresnight.co.uk) #FUTURES2021



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036029.

A4.8 Post-Event Researchers Survey

FUTURES 2021 Researchers post-event

Page 1: About this survey

Thanks for taking part in FUTURES Night and for all your hard work before and during the event!

We would like to know what you thought of the event and how we can improve our support for researchers taking part in public engagement activities.



This survey should take around 10 minutes of your time. Your answers will be submitted anonymously, all data will be held securely and treated confidentially, and no responses will be attributable to any individual person.

If you have any questions about the survey or its purpose, please contact the evaluation leader for this project, Alison Rivett <<alison.rivett@bristol.ac.uk>>.

Thanks in advance for taking part, please click 'Next' to start the survey.

***** By clicking 'Next' you confirm that you have read and understood the above information and consent to taking part *****

Page 2: About you

Which Institution are you from? * Required

- Bath Spa University
- University of Bath
- University of Bristol
- University of Exeter
- University of Plymouth
- University of the West of England (UWE)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

What is your current role at the University? * Required

- Undergraduate Student
- PhD / Masters Student
- Post-doctoral Researcher
- Lecturer / Fellow
- Senior Lecturer / Senior Fellow / Reader
- Professor
- Technical Staff
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

What is your level of experience in Public Engagement? * Required

- No experience (0 events/activities)
- A little experience (1 or 2 events/activities)
- Quite a lot of experience (3-6 events/activities)
- Very experienced (6+ events/activities)

Have you taken part in FUTURES in previous years? (Tick all that apply) * Required

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In which year/s? (Tick all that apply)

- In 2018
- In 2019
- In 2020

Page 3: Activities

Which FUTURES event/s did you take part in?

Choose all the places where you took part in events (Tip: selecting an option below will show all the events in that location/platform)

- Bath area
- Bristol
- Exeter
- Lyme Regis or Bodmin
- Plymouth
- Online event (live)
- Social Media / other online activity
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in (or near) Bath that you took part in

- Test Tubes + Time Travel (central Bath | Fri 24 & Sat 25)
- Run with a Researcher (Skyline Park | Sat 25)
- Writing Futures! (Corsham Library | Sat 25)
- RATLAB (Schools workshops)
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in Bristol that you took part in

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools Research Fair (SS Great Britain Fri 24) | <input type="checkbox"/> Up Late (SS Great Britain Fri 24) | <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers Tales @ Up Late (SS Great Britain Fri 24) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discovery Talks: EBI & BDFI Institutes (SS Great Britain Fri 24) | <input type="checkbox"/> Discovery Talks: Stories of Change (SS Great Britain Sat 25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing Solutions to Local & Global Problems (Wills Hall Sat 25) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in Exeter that you took part in

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk and Talk: Exeter's Multi-coloured History (Make Tank Fri 24) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pop-Up Curiosity Shop (Make Tank Sat 25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk and Talk: Hidden Exeter (Make Tank Sat 25) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the events in Lyme Regis or Bodmin that you took part in

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative responses to Climate Change (St Petroc's Church, Bodmin Sat 25) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Festival of the Sea (Marine Theatre Lyme Regis, Sat 25) |

Please choose the events in Plymouth that you took part in

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pandemic Poetry (The Bread & Roses Pub Fri 24) | <input type="checkbox"/> A Voyage of Discovery (The Market Hall Sat 25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Seas the Day! (National Marine Aquarium Sat 25) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the live online events that you took part in

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Researching Change through Poetry Translation (Zoom Fri 24) | <input type="checkbox"/> Lost Childhoods: A Cultural History of Separation (Zoom Fri 24) | <input type="checkbox"/> Science Showoff: Never Explain (YouTubeLive Fri 24) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Big Regional Family Quiz (Kahoot Sat 25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Stories of Change and Naval History (Zoom Sat 25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing Futures! (Schools online sessions) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discover & Discuss (Schools online sessions) | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm A Scientist: FUTURES Zone (Schools webchats) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please choose the social media / other online activities you took part in

[+ More info](#)

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Futures On Air (broadcasts on local radio stations) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The FUTURES Science Show with Kids Invent Stuff (YouTube videos) |

- Nature-gram (Instagram)
- I'm A Researcher - Ask Me Anything (Reddit)
- Do Try This At Home (downloadable activities on FUTURES website)
- Connected Europe (Padlet)
- Research That Makes A Difference (videos)
- Cabot Conversations (YouTube videos)
- EU Busking (YouTube videos)
- Global Science Show with Intersections (Twitter)
- Researchers Without Borders (Twitter)

If you selected Other, please specify:

Prior to FUTURES 2021, have you previously taken part in any events or activities (in-person or online) organised by one of the universities listed below? (If yes, please select all that apply)

- Bath Spa University
- University of Bath
- University of Bristol
- University of Exeter
- University of Plymouth
- No

Page 4: Your experience

Did you enjoy taking part in FUTURES? * Required

- Yes, a great deal
- Yes, a little bit
- Not sure
- No, not very much
- No, not at all

What was the best part of FUTURES? (e.g. things that worked really well or that you really liked)

What was the worst part of FUTURES? (e.g. any problems or things that didn't work well)

Is there anything we could do better when organising events like this in the future? (e.g. pre-event support & communication; timings; support or logistics on the day, etc.)

Would you take part in an event like FUTURES again? * *Required*

- Yes
- Not sure
- No

Why did you give this answer?

Page 5: Training & preparation

Did you attend a training session before FUTURES? * *Required*

- Yes
- No

Which training session/s did you attend? *(Please state title & date)*

Overall, how useful was the training you received before FUTURES?

- Very useful
- Quite useful
- Not very useful
- Not at all useful

Do you have any comments about the FUTURES training session/s you attended?

Did you receive any briefing materials before FUTURES? * *Required*

- Yes
- No

How useful were the briefing materials you received?

- Very useful
- Quite useful
- Not very useful
- Not at all useful

Do you have any comments about the content or quality of the briefing materials?

Is there any additional support or training which could have been provided beforehand which would have helped you better prepare for or deliver your activity?

Page 6: Outcomes

What do you think people you interacted with at FUTURES got out of the experience?

Do you feel you have benefited from taking part in FUTURES? * Required

- Yes
- No

How have you benefited from taking part in FUTURES? (select all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved my communication skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved my organisational skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved my teamwork skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved my digital skills | <input type="checkbox"/> It will help my future career progression / look good on my CV | <input type="checkbox"/> Met requirements of my department or funders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoyed sharing my interest in/enthusiasm for research | <input type="checkbox"/> Got new ideas for my research | <input type="checkbox"/> Networked with other researchers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Found new potential collaborators | <input type="checkbox"/> Generated impact for a REF Case Study or other similar purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> Tried out a new way of engaging with the public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased my confidence in talking to people | <input type="checkbox"/> Gained a better understanding of the public's attitude to research | <input type="checkbox"/> Got new ideas for public engagement activities |

- Made new contacts with the community / schools / public groups etc
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Why do you think you haven't benefited?

To what extent do you feel FUTURES has brought credit to the following groups?

The European Union

- A great deal Somewhat A little
- Not at all Not sure

How has FUTURES done this? (for the EU)

Your University

- A great deal Somewhat A little
- Not at all Not sure

How has FUTURES done this? (for your University)

Your Research Group

- A great deal Somewhat A little
- Not at all Not sure

How has FUTURES done this? (for your Research Group)

Page 7: Engaging with the public

As a result of taking part in in FUTURES do you now feel more confident to engage with the public? * Required

- Much more confident
- A bit more confident
- No change in confidence
- A bit less confident
- A lot less confident

How do you feel about taking part in other Public Engagement activities after your experience at FUTURES? * Required

- Much more likely to participate
- A bit more likely to participate
- Not sure
- A bit less likely to participate
- Much less likely to participate

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
Public engagement improves the quality of my research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

There is enthusiasm from the public to learn more about research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Researchers have a moral duty to engage with the public about the social and ethical implications of their research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My research is too specialised to make much sense to public audiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Researchers who do a lot of public engagement are not well regarded by other researchers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Page 8: Thank you!

Thanks for taking the time to answer these questions 😊

We look forward to working with you on more public engagement events soon.

If you have queries about this survey or wish to withdraw your data at any time, please contact the evaluation leader: Alison Rivett <<alison.rivett@bristol.ac.uk>>

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for updates on the next edition of FUTURES...



A4.9 Researcher Debrief

FUTURES: European Researchers Night 2021 *Researcher Debrief*



To note researcher responses immediately after (or during, if appropriate) events in a 10-20 minute informal chat. Please audio/video record responses if possible.

Feedback will help evaluate the impact of the event as a whole and will not be used to judge individual researchers' performances. Collated results will be used to improve similar events and in our formal report to the EU.

[VP] = Vox Pop question

** Please remind researchers about the post-event survey which will also be circulated afterwards*

Event Name:	Event Code:
Briefly, how do you feel the event/activity went?	
Were there any particular highlights? [VP] ... or challenges?	
Do you think there will be any impact on your research? [VP]	
Do you think there were any benefits for you? [VP]... or the university more widely? [VP]	
Do you have any other feedback or suggestions?	
Debrief carried out by:	On date:

Continue notes overleaf if necessary...

A4.10 Partner Debrief

FUTURES: European Researchers Night 2021

Partner Debrief



Suggested questions to ask event partners after the event by email or informal conversation. Feel free to only ask the questions you think are appropriate and alter the wording as necessary.

Feedback will help evaluate the impact of the event as a whole and to improve future collaborations. Collated results will be used to develop similar events and in our formal report to the EU.

Event Name:	Event Code:
Briefly, how do you feel the event/activity went? Were there any particular highlights, or challenges?	
Do you have any audience feedback that you can share?	
Did the event/s attract a different audience to your usual demographic?	
How successful was this method of engagement and would you do something like this again?	
What (if any) were the benefits for your organisation in working with Researchers / the University / FUTURES Consortium?	
Do you have any suggestions about how we could improve the event / format / organisation / communication etc.?	
Debrief carried out by:	On date:

Continue notes overleaf if necessary...

A4.11 Student Vote Online Poll

FUTURES2021 <STUDENT ACTIVITY>

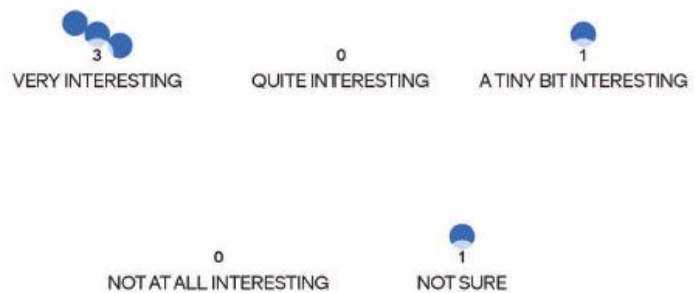
We hope you enjoyed talking to our Researchers!
Please could you now vote on a couple of questions...

(tip: to allow another person to use this device to vote
as well, open a private or incognito browser window)



Do you think a career in research would be interesting?

Mentimeter



Do you think you could be a good researcher one day?

Mentimeter



1
YES DEFINITELY

2
POSSIBLY

1
NOT SURE

0
DEFINITELY NOT



Mentimeter

Thanks very much!

IF YOU'D LIKE TO FIND MORE FUN ACTIVITIES TO DO AT HOME THEN VISIT www.futuresnight.co.uk/do-try-this-at-home

YOU CAN SEE THE VOTING RESULTS [BY CLICKING HERE](#)

(tip: swipe or use arrow keys to advance results slides)



A4.12 Teacher Questionnaire

FUTURES 2021

Event Name via *Platform*: Teacher Questionnaire



If you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions about the event you took part in on DATE, we would be most grateful. Your responses will be used to help us improve future events and in our reports to our funder, the European Commission.

Please return this sheet via email to NAME: email@address

What (if any) benefits were there for your students from taking part in this event?	
What (if any) benefits were there for you as a teacher from taking part in this event?	
What did your students enjoy most?	... and least?
Do you think the event raised your students' awareness of careers in research?	
A lot / A little / Not at all <i>(Delete as appropriate)</i> → If A LITTLE or A LOT, How did it do this? If NOT, Why?	
Do you think the event raised your students' awareness of European aspects of research?	
A lot / A little / Not at all <i>(Delete as appropriate)</i> → If A LITTLE or A LOT, How did it do this? If NOT, Why?	
Were there any particular benefits or drawbacks of taking part in this event online, as compared to a similar in-person event / in-person, as compared to a similar online event? [Word as appropriate]	
Is there anything we could change or improve about the event?	
Did you do anything else at school connected to this event?	
Yes / No <i>(Delete as appropriate)</i> If YES, what did you do? If NO, why not?	
Can you share any comments, quotes or feedback from your students about the event?	

Thanks very much 😊

A4.13 Stickers for headcounts

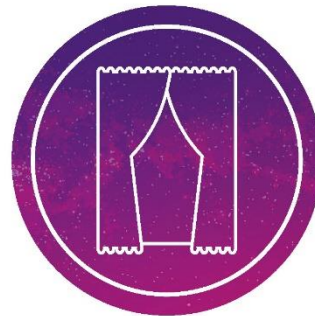
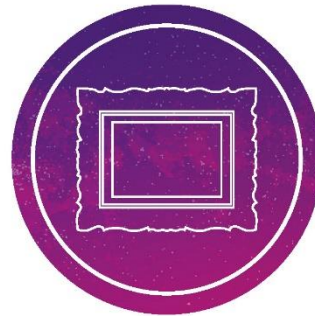


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