

OVERVIEW

The Science Festival Alliance (SFA) is a professional association of independent science and technology festivals dedicated to encouraging and supporting both new and existing festivals, and to fostering an international conversation about how to make public science events more meaningful, engaging, and instructive.

The SFA supports two types of efforts:

- **MEMBER FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES:** Events and accomplishments of the independently organized science festivals that comprise SFA
- **NETWORK ACTIVITIES:** SFA efforts that support the exchange of inspiration, advice, and resources among member festivals

SCIENCE FESTIVALS AT A GLANCE

- WHO:** Designed primarily to benefit the general public, festivals offer activities that target many audiences, from children to experts.
- WHAT:** Science festivals are multifaceted events featuring scores of programs and activities related to STEM.
- WHEN:** Recurring celebrations (usually annually) may span from a few days to two weeks.
- WHERE:** Serving a distinct region, festivals offer programs in many public venues—reaching out to people where they live, work, and play.
- HOW:** Festivals are managed by a lead institution—often a museum or university—but are massively collaborative efforts that involve many inspired organizations and individuals.



SFA MEMBER FESTIVAL ACTIVITY IN 2013

In 2013, 30 Science Festival Alliance members celebrated festivals (more than 40 are expected to celebrate in 2014). That 2013 activity by the numbers:



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|----------------|--|
| 985,134 | Total number of people who visited an SFA member festival |
| 2,649 | Total number of events and programs produced by SFA member festivals |
| 279 | SFA member festival events that drew more than 1,000 visitors |
| 28 | SFA member festival events that drew more than 10,000 visitors |
| 7,714 | STEM practitioners taking an active role in an SFA festival |
| 8,770 | Volunteers helping out SFA member festivals |
| 2,721 | Organizations collaborating with an SFA member festival |
| \$4.5M | Total funding raised to support SFA member festivals |
| 7 | Number of 2013 SFA member festivals with a budget over \$250,000 |

EVALUATION OF SFA MEMBER FESTIVALS

EQUITY OF ACCESS:

Many festival attendees have never had substantive interactions with STEM professionals. These attendees are more likely to be female and minority.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR PUBLIC AUDIENCES:

Science festival participants have high-quality experiences (96%), become more interested in science (62%), learn something new about science (69%), experience science learning as more fun (78%), and feel more connected to the science happening in their cities.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN INTERACTION:

Interaction with STEM professionals during festival events is the strongest predictor of better outcomes for attendees (attendees reporting an interaction with a science professional were 15% - 19% more likely to report positive learning impacts).

PROJECT GOALS

NSF Grant DRL-1223256, "Broad Implementation: Science Festival Alliance" was awarded in 2012 for a three-year term of collaborative research by the MIT Museum, the Franklin Institute, UC-San Francisco, and the University of North Carolina, has the following goals:

MORE SCIENCE FESTIVALS:

The Science Festival Alliance is proactively supporting the growth of new science festivals throughout the US

BETTER SCIENCE EVENTS:

The SFA is actively developing resources to support professionals in creating events that:

- Have a positive impact on **large audiences**
- **Are innovative in format and style**
- **Serving traditionally hard-to-reach audiences**, including underserved communities and the science inattentive
- Involve **STEM practitioners directly in public outreach**
- Spark both event-based and year-round **collaboration among organizations within a region**

ROBUST AND SUSTAINABLE SFA NETWORK:

An active network: development of an organizational structure that fosters a collegial community of professionals dedicated to serving their communities with live science events.

SFA RESOURCES

ONLINE: www.sciencefestivals.org
A clearinghouse of science festival information.

GET CONNECTED: connect@sciencefestivals.org
Contact us and start the conversation. Our staff regularly speaks with festival professionals worldwide.

MEETINGS: www.sciencefestivals.org/conference.html
We convene in-person gatherings of festival professionals in conjunction with science festivals and conferences (look for us at ASTC and AAAS). We also run webinars covering topics of interest to public science event professionals.



INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SCIENCE EVENTS CONFERENCE

Our conference draws event organizers from around the world and is often cited as the most important learning and networking opportunity available to science event professionals. Look for announcements soon about our next conference in June 2015.

EVALUATION OF SFA NETWORK

SFA NETWORKING WORKS:

Connections between science festival professionals coordinated by the SFA provide a unique and valuable system of support.

IMPORTANCE OF FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCES:

The single most important strategy for first-year festival organizers is to travel to and participate in other science festivals, particularly where there is an existing relationship with the festival organizers.

VALUE OF IPSEC:

The International Public Science Events Conference added value that was missing in attendees' professional association activities. Conference attendees gain:

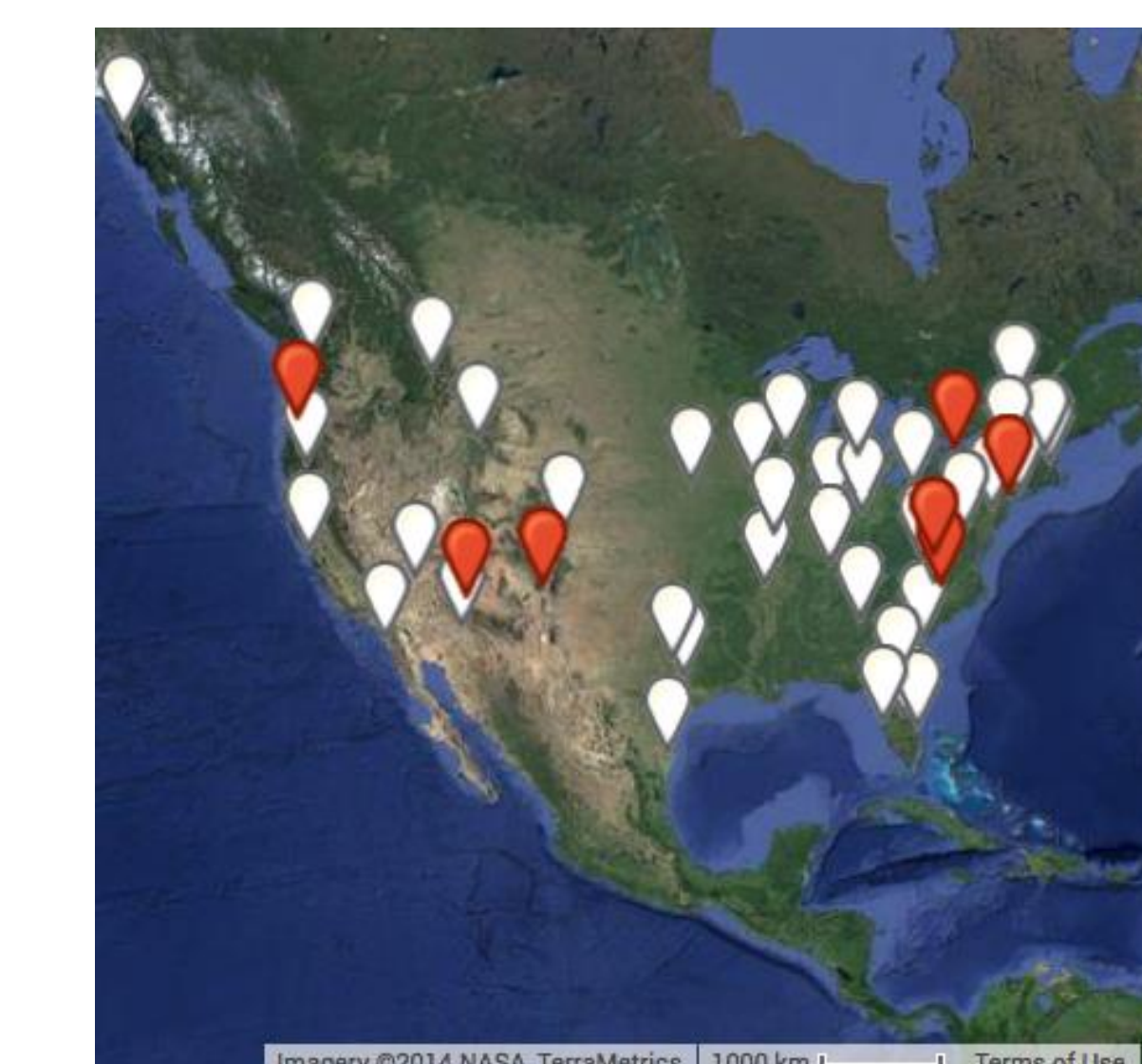
- a sense of how their work fits into a larger field and a feeling of being a part of something bigger;
- better understanding of how public engagement in science is conceptualized;
- information and resources to start or help sustain a new science festival (including evaluation resources);
- knowledge about reaching and impacting target audiences through science festivals.



SFA MEMBER FESTIVALS

Membership is free, and available to festivals meeting straightforward criteria. Festivals must provide annual updates describing activities they have participated in that support the SFA mission.

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| 7 Days of STEM September 15 – 21, 2014 Member since 2013 | Jackson Hole Science Festival October 4 – 6, 2014 Member since 2013 | SkySci September 14, 2014 Member since 2013 |
| Arizona Science Festival February and March, 2014 Member since 2011 | Jacksonville Science Festival March 6 – 8, 2014 Member since 2013 | St. Petersburg Science Festival October 17 – 18, 2014 Member since 2011 |
| Arkansas Science Festival October 3 – 11, 2014 Member since 2013 | Las Vegas Science Festival April 25 – May 3, 2014 Member since 2012 | SUBMERGE Member since 2014 |
| Atlanta Science Festival March 22 – 29, 2014 Member since 2012 | LISoundFest: Long Island Sound Science Festival October 2014 Member since 2013 | Super Science Weekend: NY Capital Region SciFest November 7 – 9, 2014 Member since 2013 |
| Bay Area Science Festival October 24 – November 1, 2014 Member since 2011 | Maine Science Festival March 20 – 22, 2015 (First festival) Member since 2013 | Texas A&M Physics and Engineering Festival April 22, 2014 Member since 2012 |
| Beakerhead September 11 – 15, 2014 Member since 2014 | MindTrekks October 2014 Member since 2014 | The Arlee Celebration Science Festival July 2 – 6, 2014 Member since 2013 |
| Cambridge Science Festival April 18 – 27, 2014 Member since 2011 | MSU Science Festival April 1 – 6, 2014 Member since 2012 | Tinkerfest May 24 – 25, 2014 Member since 2013 |
| Celebrate Science Indiana October 4, 2014 Member since 2011 | Nebraska Science Festival April 24 – 27, 2014 Member since 2012 | USA Science & Engineering Festival April 24 – 27, 2014 Member since 2013 |
| Charleston STEM Festival February 8, 2014 Member since 2013 | New Hampshire TechFest November 1, 2014 Member since 2012 | Virginia Science Festival October 4 – 11, 2014 Member since 2013 |
| Colorado Springs Science Festival October 11 – 19, 2014 Member since 2011 | North Carolina Science Festival March 28 – April 13, 2014 Member since 2011 | Waco Science Festival September 26 – 28, 2014 Member since 2013 |
| Connecticut Science Festival October 2014 Member since 2013 | Philadelphia Science Festival April 25 – May 3, 2014 Member since 2011 | Wisconsin Science Festival October 16 – 19, 2014 Member since 2011 |
| Dayton Ignite Innovation October 23 – 26, 2014 Member since 2012 | Randolph College Science Festival March 27, 2014 Member since 2014 | |
| Harmony Dark Sky Festival February 28 and March 1, 2014 Member since 2013 | Rio Grand Science and Arts Festival (RISA) November 6 – 8, 2014 Member since 2013 | |
| Hawaii Science Festival October 2014 Member since 2013 | San Diego Science Festival March 15 – 22, 2014 Member since 2011 | |
| Indian River Lagoon Science Festival September 27, 2014 Member since 2013 | SCOPE Missouri August 14, 2014 Member since 2012 | |
| Destination Imagination Innovation Expo May 21 – 24, 2014 Member since 2014 | Seattle Science Festival N/A Member since 2011 | |
| Iowa: iExplore STEM TBD Member since 2012 | Sitka Whale Fest November 6 – 9, 2014 Member since 2013 | |



GROWTH IN SFA MEMBERSHIP:

- 4 MEMBER FESTIVALS IN 2011
- 47 MEMBER FESTIVALS IN 2014