

2025 – 2026

Science is for everyone





Hello and welcome to our review of the last year at We The Curious.

It's been a while since we published an impact report and it was wonderful to be 'back on our feet' for our 25th birthday. Since opening in 2000, we've welcomed over seven and a half million visitors through our doors. An extraordinary milestone, made even more meaningful by the incredible support of our communities and the joy of welcoming people back in our 2024 reopening, following the fire in 2022. It feels like a moment to celebrate everything we have achieved together and to look ahead with renewed ambition.

In our 25th year we continued to create inspiring science experiences with and for people across Bristol. We launched our biggest-ever schools pledge, grew our volunteer community, and strengthened the foundations of the organisation for the years ahead.

Science is so much more than textbooks and laboratories - it's woven through our culture, creativity and everyday lives and it belongs to everyone.

I've seen that when we welcome different voices, experiences and questions, science becomes more accessible, relevant and powerful, shaped by and inspired by people. It creates opportunities for everyone to belong, playfully explore their curiosity, and imagine and build a better future together.

Donna Speed, CEO



Image credits: Lisa Whiting

What if everyone was included, curious and inspired by science to build a better world together?

This question sits at the heart of our vision. It challenges us to imagine the world we want to create and guides our work as an educational charity. We do this through five key pledges:

/ Cultivating curiosity

Championing question-asking, the joy of the process and imagining different futures together.

/ Open up science

Giving everyone the opportunity to be part of science research, improving outcomes for everyone.

/ Including everyone

Our commitment to promote equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work, from accessible spaces to recruitment.

/ Strive for sustainable futures

We're on a critical journey to decarbonise by 2030.

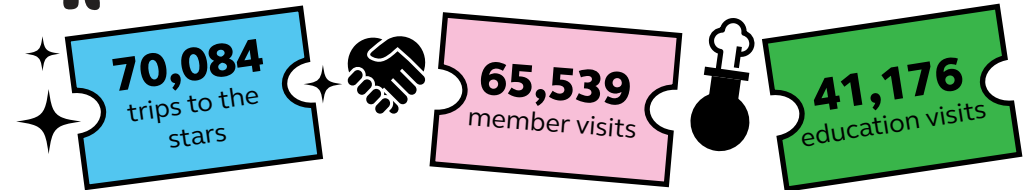
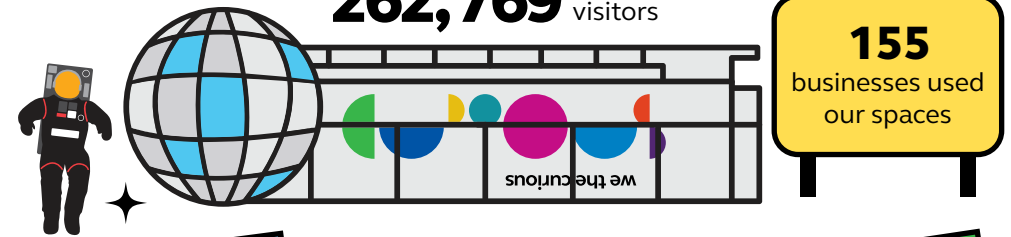
/ Build resilience

Adapting and innovating to become a more resilient charity for our community.

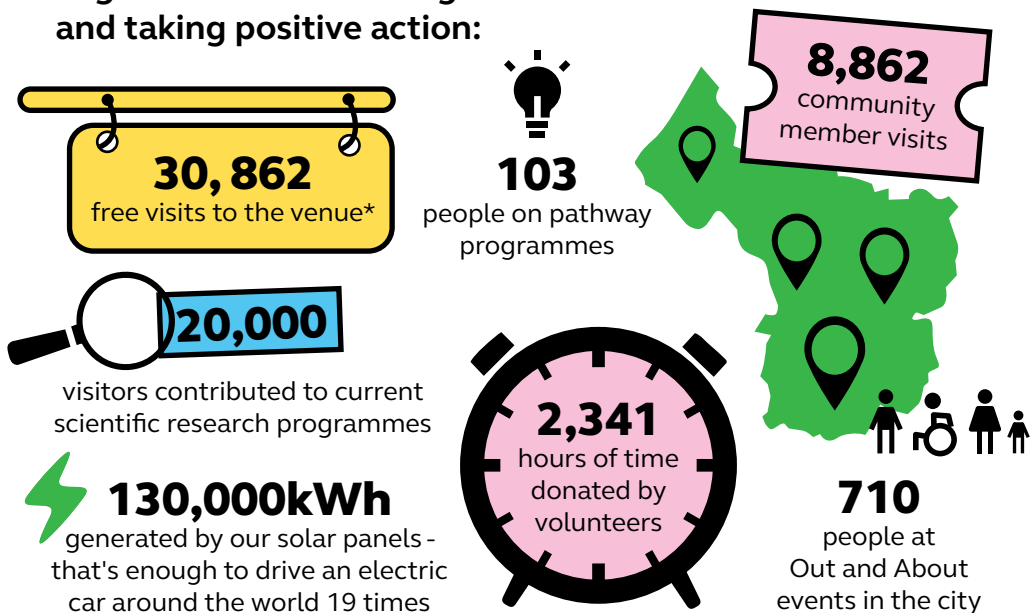
Our impact at a glance

In 2025-2026 we welcomed...

262,769 visitors



Together we're removing barriers and taking positive action:



*Free visits as part of our inclusion initiatives



Inspiring the next wave of curious thinkers

Birthdays are always a time to pause, celebrate and also to look ahead. As part of our 25th celebrations, we launched **Future Sparks**, our biggest-ever commitment to young people's education.

Through this initiative, with the support of our funders including the **John James Bristol Foundation**, we're investing in greater educational equity across Bristol, with a pledge to provide **25,000 free school visits**, including to alternative provision and SEND schools, by 2030.

1,997 primary school children have visited so far through the programme, and **100% of schools reported positive impact** on children's learning and interest in science.

As part of our commitment to the future of education in our region, we launched the research phase of our Education Suite redevelopment. Young people will be at the heart of this transformational project to reimagine our **3 learning rooms** and **2 working laboratories** into welcoming, supportive and inspiring spaces.

Ahead of 2026, the year of the historic Artemis II mission, we refreshed our Planetarium with new **Christie Griffyn 4K35-RGB projectors**.

During a research project with City Academy, we learned that students were particularly interested in how space science relates to everyday life. As a result, visitors to the Space Gallery can now explore how technologies developed for space travel are used in our daily lives, as well as their impact on the climate. We also upgraded our digital exhibits, enabling us to showcase content from developments in space science and the latest space missions.

Developed with our research partners, we ran **2 programmes** in our Open City Lab space; '**Research Island Rescue**' and '**Passport to the Stars**' which gave our visitors the opportunity to engage in current scientific research programmes.



Image credit: Mark Dawson

“

The children can now envision some of our science topics when we are learning a particular unit and they often say ‘that’s what we saw at We The Curious’.

- Future Sparks feedback

”

“

My partner
proposed to me!
We got engaged
in the Rainbow
Constellation
exhibit, under
warm pink light.

(Curious Timeline submission)

”



Creating welcome, inclusive ways to connect

Our 25th birthday also gave us a chance to pause and reflect on the people, stories and experiences that have made We The Curious what it is today.

We invited people to share their memories, photos, videos and stories to help shape our **Curious Timeline** – an interactive physical timeline that was installed in our foyer, made from recycling materials from our workshop, archive materials and parts of past exhibits. It was a joyful collage of the We The Curious story so far.

The Curious Timeline was complemented by **3 commissioned artworks** by young artists from one of our long-term strategic partners, Creative Youth Network.



Using memories and archival materials, the artworks included a trail around our venue, a 'hide and seek' illustrated mural and an immersive poetry video experience which aired on the Big Screen.

“A dream come true...an incredibly valuable opportunity that has supported me both creatively and professionally”

- Creative Youth Network artist



Community remains at the heart of We The Curious. It's through our long term relationships with partners that we're able to improve access to and representation in our spaces and in science. Together, we deliver positive change, supporting young people as they learn new skills, build confidence, and make meaningful choices about their futures.

Our volunteer programme continued to go from strength to strength. We achieved our Investing in Volunteers award and now have **over 100 volunteers** generously supporting us, with 100% of respondents to our Annual Volunteer Survey saying they'd recommend us as a place to volunteer.

Through our pathway programmes, we welcomed **8 work experience students** from City Academy. We also started our partnership with the Government-funded Youth Guarantee programme. Young people on these programmes build their confidence with early career experience and discover a greater range of creative STEM careers.

Our Community Membership programme also continued to grow. Working with **221 community partners**, we provided free tickets for people facing barriers to access and delivered Out and About activities in community spaces across Bristol. We continued to strengthen our offer for neurodivergent visitors and those who benefit from a quieter environment, delivering **6 Relaxed Mornings** throughout the year.

We worked with **4 community researchers** through our Research Collective programme, the community-led strand of our Open City Research pledge, and partnered with **2 South Bristol schools** through our Curious Partner Schools programme.

In the venue, our 'Box' gallery space played host to the **'Nature Rising'** exhibition - a ground-breaking project led by Global Majority communities in Bristol celebrating the natural world.

“

We had such a lovely day, and your staff are truly incredible. Everyone we encountered was warm, patient, and genuinely inclusive, making our children, young people, and families feel completely at ease. The community membership is immensely valuable to a small charity like ours.”

- Community Member feedback



Image credit: Lisa Whiting

Building a better future

How we work as a charity matters as much as what we do. With our first full financial year since reopening, 2025-2026 was a year of both consolidation and growth. We're committed to doing what we can to create positive change for people and the planet, and to be here for generations to come.

We announced our revised decarbonisation target, committing to 'a site powered without fossil fuels, using fully renewable electricity, with a **30% reduction** in offsite carbon emissions by 2030'. We also launched our sustainability consultancy service, helping other organisations on their decarbonisation journey.

We published our **Anti-Racism Statement of Intent**, which details how we're working to become an actively anti-racist organisation, working to break down barriers, and challenge unfair systems.

We also published an updated version of our **Ethics Policy**, explaining how we work with collaborators, funders, suppliers, and partners so that they continue to reflect our charitable purpose, values, legal duties, and the trust of our community.

And finally, we appointed our long-standing trustee, **Sir David Sproxton**, as our first-ever Patron. We're honoured to continue working with him and grateful for the creativity, curiosity and ingenuity that he brings, helping to shape future experiences and champion our mission.



 I've always been interested in how things work and how science and imagination can be brought together to make the most amazing things.

- Sir David Sproxton, Patron for We The Curious

Image credit: Tim Martin



Thank you

Everything that we achieved in 2025-2026 was made possible by the supporters, funders, partners, staff, trustees, volunteers and communities who have been part of our journey – thank you.

As we look to the future, there's lots of ways that you can support our charity; whether it's partnering with us, hiring our spaces, making a donation, volunteering your time or supporting a project.

If you'd like to support us, then please do get in touch – we'd love to hear from you. Drop us a line on development@wethecurious.org

A big thank you to our funders

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