**The Royal Society’s** **Digital Summer Science Showcase 2021**

Request for Quote 568: Digital agency brief

**1. Introduction**

This year, the Royal Society is planning to expand its annual Summer Science Exhibition online from   
8 to 11 July with a range of interactive digital content, citizen science projects, free talks and workshops and schools activities. We’re looking for a digital agency to help us develop the brand proposition, develop the look, and feel of the event and create an engaging online hub for us to share the content.

**2. Background**

[The Royal Society](https://royalsociety.org) is the national academy for science in the UK. It is a self-governing Fellowship of many of the world’s most distinguished scientists who are elected based on their scientific work. The Society is over 350 years old and its Fellowship includes names such as Newton, Darwin and Hawking as well as current names such as Jennifer Doudna, Uta Frith, Jocelyn Bell Burnell and the current President Sir Adrian Smith. The Fellowship embraces the work of discovery scientists and applied scientists and covers the full range of scientific disciplines.

The Summer Science Exhibition is the Society’s flagship annual public engagement event that usually takes place the first week of July at Carlton House Terrace in central London. Featuring exhibits of cutting-edge science from research institutions across the UK, the Exhibition provides 13,000 visitors the opportunity to ‘meet the scientists’ undertaking pioneering research and engage with science through fun, hands-on activities and interactive demonstrations.

In 2020 we took the Exhibition online at short notice due to the pandemic and ran a series of talks, interactive events (such as Q&A sessions and a Big Science Quiz) and social media activity. Highlights are [available here](https://royalsociety.org/science-events-and-lectures/2020/summer-science-online/).

We are looking to build on this for 2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and expand the scale and intention of the online offering to focus more on the science of the research groups we have involved for this year. The Society has decided in 2021 to run a digital Summer Science Showcase featuring cutting edge science between Thursday 8 – Sunday 11 July, with the possibility to hold aspects of the supporting talks and activities programme in person at Carlton House Terrace should circumstances permit.

**3. Summer Science Showcase outline and content strategy**

**Aim:** To inspire a global audience with cutting edge science. This is in line with Aim 3 of the Society’s Public Engagement Strategy: *Inspire and enthuse all sectors of society about science* to encourage participation and aspiration and position science as part of culture.

**Audience:** Individuals of all ages from across the world who have an established interest in science, although we anticipate the majority of the audience to be UK-based.

**Overview:** The Summer Science Showcase will hang together through a series of accessible questions, each highlighting the specific research from our set of 19 scientific research groups. Building on marketing campaigns from previous Summer Science Exhibitions, these questions will promote intrigue and encourage engagement from our audience, inviting people to experience the science in an interactive way. Please see provided set of content from 2019 to see how we used the questions in promotional materials.

The digital content for 2021 will be developed by the researchers and our in-house project team, and will vary for each group (see Appendix 1 for full list of 2021 groups and topics) and will investigate their specific overarching question, for example ‘What would it be like to live on the moon?’ or ‘What was the last day of the dinosaurs like?’ Examples of content could include:

1. **Introductory video outlining research** - This will be used to scene set any other content around the research group, and will provide content for our YouTube channel, but could also be used at the start of live events to frame the topic of that session.
2. **Digital content experience** (at least one) - Exact format to be developed in collaboration with the research groups, and could entail games, online quizzes or VR experiences. Six ‘media-friendly’ groups will be selected to work with an external consultant to further develop their interactive experiences.
3. **Message board (Ask me about my research) -** Running across the week, a moderated Q&A board where people can post questions and research groups can answer.
4. **Meet the scientists school workshops (tentative) -** Depending on whether a school programme will run, small group workshops with researchers and registered school groups that give opportunities for students to ask about STEM Careers and pathways into science**.**

There may also be:

* **Citizen science project** - a collection of Summer Science citizen-based research projects launched by the research groups to stimulate interest in their research. The citizen science series will run the month before Summer Science as a lead up to the long weekend. Projects could involve local or community-based projects or be geared towards a school’s audience (dependent on the impact of pandemic on school resourcing) and fit in with established events such as the Great Share and primary school participants.
* **Weekend workshops** - Interactive led workshops with smaller audience numbers to encourage deeper level engagement. Themed around the ‘science from home’ concept, these workshops could involve drawing classes or maker sessions using household objects. These would need to be run as registered sessions.
* **Lightning lecture type talks** - 10-15 minute short talks that give a snapshot into the groups research or present findings from their citizen science project, can be run live and provide social and digital content.

In addition to research group content,a small number of live high-profile talks will run as part of the supporting programme, providing additional marketing and media hooks for promoting the event to our audiences (e.g. a big Summer Science Quiz event with rounds curated by well-known scientists).

This approach ensures that the digital Showcase caters for the breadth of potentially high, international, and national viewer numbers, whilst incorporating opportunities for more in-depth engagement with researchers.

**WIP Proposition:** Meet the people answering life’s big questions

**4. Brief/Specification**

We seek proposals from digital agencies to help us deliver an impactful and engaging online experience for viewers and to encourage audiences to take part through excellent and inviting creative promotional materials. The list of exhibitors and their topics are provided at Appendix 1.

Together with an overall creative proposition, this will involve the design of an online portal to the Showcase content which clearly communicates the excitement and cutting-edge nature of the science on show. We want the online portal for the Showcase to feel engaging for users to visit, allowing them to explore and easily find the content most appealing to them. We don’t want it to feel like a static experience. We’d like to see how we can explore crafting an online hub that feels leading-edge in how it encourages users to experience our science content, activities, and events.

The look and feel of the hub should excite visitors, be straightforward to navigate and have the flexibility to be carried through to the branding of the support programme events, digital content and marketing materials.

The delivered content should include:

1. Umbrella strategy for the promotion of this year’s Showcase
2. U/X work and HTML design and build for an online portal to the Digital Summer Science Showcase 2021 that works within the main Royal Society’s website, royalsociety.org (working with our internal web development team to deploy the build on royalsociety.org)
3. An over-arching brand identity for the Digital Summer Science Showcase 2021 to work across online channels including web, social and email, built from our established branding from 2019 and 2020.
4. Strapline propositions and treatments for online and social media promotional materials
5. Branded design for email marketing

Our internal design and web development team will translate the final design and ideas into our suite of promotional materials. Designed assets to be delivered as packaged InDesign files or Illustrator files if more appropriate. Images should be supplied at a minimum of 144dpi.

Key considerations

1. The Society’s royalsociety.org website is built on Sitecore 9.2. Website build and designs should be mindful of this in their approach and the agency will be expected to work in collaboration with our web development team to ensure a smooth process
2. For the online portal, we will want to include information on the 19 different research groups’ science (Appendix 1), live events schedule (and catch-up area), external links to research group content and experiences.
3. Designs and colour palette choices should be in line with the Society’s brand guidelines (supplied with this brief) and fit within the core royalsociety.org website
4. For the past few years we have been able to secure the Society’s Professor of Public Engagement Brian Cox’s participation to film a short promo piece for us on video. This may be possible for 2021 as well.
5. Please consider that this event will take place in early July. We expect people to spend less time online due to the summer period, so we want to make their engagement exciting and impactful in a short space of time, allowing users to ‘dip-in’ and find something inspiring.
6. We are looking to complete the agency side of this project by 31March 2021

**5. Timeframes**

The following timelines will apply to the Request for Quote process and Services

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Request for Quote Stage** | **Dates** |
| 1 | RFQ Open | Tuesday 9 February 2021 |
| 2 | RFQ Clarification Questions | Up to 10am Monday 15 February 2021 |
| 3 | RFQ Closes | 2pm, Tuesday 16 February 2021 |
| 4 | Evaluation and shortlisting of proposals | Up to end Friday 19 February 2021 |
| 5 | Possible interviews and presentation of proposal | Week of 22 – 25 February 2021 |
| 6 | Contract Award | **Friday 26 February 2021** |
| 7 | Contract Start Date | Monday 1 March 2021 |
| 8 | Kick of meeting | Week of 1 – 5 March 2021 |
| 9 | Completion of services | Designs within 1 month, Project launch 1st week June 2021 |

**6. Budget**

The Royal Society has allocated a budget between £30,000 and £40,000 (VAT Exclusive).

The funding for these services is provided through a Central Government grant which requires the Society to acquit the funds in detail.

The Society asks that agencies provide a detailed breakdown of their proposed costs and the rate cards for the proposed team using the provided Pricing Schedule.

**7. Proposals requirements**

7.1 Agencies are asked to submit their written proposals that include your responses to the following criteria in either a MS Word or PDF format using the below questions are headings:

|  | **Criteria** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | What is your top line umbrella strategy of your approach to presenting the range of online content of this year’s Showcase as described at Item 4 of this Brief? |
| 2 | What are your initial thoughts on what would make for an engaging online portal for the Showcase, incorporating the 19 research groups’ experiences, live events and video listed at Appendix 1 of this Brief? |
| 3 | What are your proposed ideas for the visual treatment and strapline for the Summer Science Showcase look and feel and how it could work across different channels – web, social, video, email. This could include mood boards, short animation, design / illustration etc. as needed |
| 4 | Please provide an outline of your team for this project, their roles, their relevant experience, and examples of similar/relevant work you have done previously |
| 5 | Please provide a detailed breakdown of your proposal costs using the provided **Pricing Schedule** at Attachment 2. |

7.2 Agencies are also asked to complete and provide the following:

1. Register your interest in this RFQ by completing the **Registration Form** at Attachment 1
2. Complete the provided **Supplier Declaration Form** at Attachment 3

7.3 Also provided in this RFQ pack:

1. an example from our previous 2019 promotional activity at Attachment 4
2. the Society’s style guidelines at Attachment 5 and
3. The Society’s standard Terms and Conditions at Attachment 6

7.4 Suppliers are to email their written proposals and pricing to [Procurement@royalsociety.org](mailto:Procurement@royalsociety.org) by   
2pm Tuesday 16 February 2021.

**8. Queries and Questions**

Any queries can be emailed to [Procurement@royalsociety.org](mailto:Procurement@royalsociety.org) as soon as possible and we shall endeavour to respond within 1 business day.

Where appropriate, questions and answers will be shared with all registered agencies to ensure transparency and fairness of the process so please ensure that you complete and return you registration form as soon as possible.

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

**Appendix 1: List of confirmed exhibitors for 2021**

| **Exhibit title** | **Research summary** | **Category** | **Draft research question** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. A breath of fresh air** | Porous metal-organic framework (MOF) materials are constructed from metal ions and bridging organic linkers. We have developed highly stable MOFs containing functional micropores that can effectively trap pollutants such as SO2 and NO2 from air. These gases can be released subsequently for recycling and conversion into chemically useful products. | Chemistry | TBC |
| **2. Beware: floods ahead** | Scientists at Reading are using the latest advances in earth and climate sciences to provide advance early warnings of floods. Aid agencies can deliver flood relief where it is needed most, sometimes even before it starts to rain. This helps avert disaster – from Whaley Bridge to Mozambique. | Earth Sciences | How can we better predict where and when floods will happen and how bad they will be? |
| **3. Blue carbon and changing seas** | Occupying a small fraction of the ocean surface area, coastal vegetated habitats (including saltmarshes) contribute half of global carbon burial in marine sediments. These habitats bury and store more carbon per unit area than their sub-tidal and terrestrial counterparts, providing a globally significant Blue Carbon climate regulation/coastal protection service. | Ecology | Can nature help us to tackle the climate emergency? |
| **4. BO and beyond** | We all naturally produce body odour. Our discoveries have revealed how body odour is linked to an individual’s unique underarm microbiota. Our research expands the biology behind BO production, the origin of the ‘smelly compounds’ and technology being developed to tackle this side effect of sweating. | Biochemistry | TBC |
| **5. Eagle inspired engineering** | Eagles and owls do not follow the rules followed by designers of full-scale aeroplanes but are revealing useful tricks for drag reduction and flight stabilization that could improve both toy aircraft and drones for parcel delivery, monitoring, or civil engineering inspection tasks. | Biological Sciences | Would planes be better if they were more like birds? |
| **6. Exploring cancer landscapes** | We use exciting new technologies to map how a range of biological building-blocks interact to form the complex landscape of tumours. By defining the contours of this landscape, we can pinpoint new weaknesses and explore novel treatment routes to improve cancer care. | Health and Biomedical Sciences | Can we understand a tumour landscape so to develop better therapies? |
| **7. Growing new body parts** | Stem cells have the amazing ability to replicate themselves and become specialised tissue cells, making them a virtually limitless resource for treating conditions by replacing damaged tissues and cells with healthy ones. Our research aims to understand stem cell behaviour and how we can harness this to develop patient therapies. | Health and Biomedical Sciences | What are stem cells and how can they help us improve human health? |
| **8. Hubble's legacy** | Over its 30-year life the Hubble Space Telescope has had an unprecedented scientific and cultural impact. Hubble’s discoveries extending from the outer Solar System to the edge of the observable Universe have revolutionised our understanding of astronomy and cosmology while its spectacular images have inspired the wider public’s wonder. | Astronomy | What lies beyond the Earth? |
| **9. Last day of the dinosaurs** | The Chicxulub impact was pivotal in the terminal Cretaceous mass extinction. A new site, Tanis, preserves rapidly deposited, ejecta-bearing sediments, emplaced minutes to hours after impact. This post impact “geological-snapshot” permits greater understanding of the global effects of extinction that can help inform our own species of such events today. | Earth Sciences | What is mass-extinction and are we currently living through such an event? |
| **10. Merging minds and machines** | Directly connecting to the brain with a device is now a reality with cochlear implants and deep brain stimulators already in use. Our research focuses on developing safer, smaller, simpler interfaces, with the goal of improving the life of brain injury patients and enhancing existing brain function in healthy individuals. | Technology | How can we interface the nervous system and technology? |
| **11. Microbes that manage our waste** | We depend on microbes to turn sewage sludge, food waste and crop residues into energy and fertiliser using anaerobic digestion (AD). Scientists are analyzing DNA from the complex microbial communities involved. Their research is transforming our understanding of the processes behind AD and promises to increase its waste recycling potential. | Biological Sciences | How can microbes turn rubbish into riches? |
| **12. Mining a sustainable future** | Sustainable energy requires technology and energy critical elements (ECE) are the crucial components that make this technology work. ECE are rare and there are challenges to sourcing supply. Our research addresses society’s needs for ECE, how we find them, and how they can be used in a sustainable way. | Earth Sciences | How can we mine the elements of the future sustainably? |
| **13. Our breathing Earth** | Atmospheric CO2 is a key part of Earth’s climate. We show how new observations from satellites, together with towers, aircraft, drones, and lasers, are revealing fascinating new insights into geographical distributions of CO2 emissions, and how the pools and fluxes of carbon in the land and ocean change with time. | Earth Sciences | How do we use atmospheric CO2 to tell us about carbon emissions and uptake from nature and human activities? |
| **14. Personalised printing for pills** | We use 3D printing to create tablets and implants that release drugs when and where we want them to. | Technology | Can we 3D print the perfect personalised pill? |
| **15. Sensing danger** | Finding buried targets presents a serious challenge, especially in the detection and removal of antipersonnel landmines. Our research is pioneering cutting edge sub-surface detection technology for humanitarian demining. This work centres on the combination of innovative electromagnetic inspection and ground penetrating radar, leading to safer, faster, and more effective landmine clearance. | Engineering | How can we safely detect a buried landmine?" |
| **16. Smooth operators: transforming surgical robotics** | It is demonstrated how the transition from open to minimally invasive surgery reduces patient trauma but considerably increases complexity for the surgeon, and how robots can mitigate this. It is further shown how novel human-robot interfaces, such as gaze-tracking, can seamlessly automate robotic surgery while keeping the surgeon in control. | Technology | Would you trust a robot surgeon? |
| **17. The bee trail** | Pollinators, including bees, are crucial for food, the environment and conservation: using advances in DNA sequencing and artificial intelligence, by understanding which plants bees pollinate, where and when, and how bee populations have changed over the past 200 years, our research is helping to conserve these important creatures. | Biological Sciences | How can DNA help us to save our pollinators and our food? |
| **18. The ExoMars Rover** | We have built the ExoMars rover and two of its key instruments – PanCam and Raman, together with selecting and characterizing its landing site Oxia Planum. ExoMars is due for launch in July 2020. (Note: launch was delayed) | Astronomy | Was there ever life on Mars? |
| **19. Your place in the Universe** | The Universe is lit up by galaxies - they make up our cosmic habitat. But there are many things about them that remain mysterious. How did they emerge from grow after the Big Bang? Why do they have different shapes and sizes? Supercomputers are helping us to answer these questions. | Astronomy | What is the history of our galaxy, the Milky Way? |