

ASPAC Fellowship Report

The ASPAC fellowship was extremely beneficial to me. I am fairly new to working at a science centre (6 months) and ours is unusual in that we do not have a public area as our building was destroyed in an earthquake. My understanding of science centres was therefore limited to the way that we currently operate, which is entirely through outreach. To find out the full scope of what science centres do was really useful as this has alerted me to the full range of possibilities there are which will allow me to confidently contribute ideas when planning our new science centre. Presenting at the conference was a valuable experience and by watching others I learnt a lot about what makes a good presentation.

Increased focus on our outreach programmes has given us an in depth understanding of where the demand is and the value that outreach has in the community. In a conference that presented a lot of technologically impressive ideas and initiatives, I hope that my presentation may have pointed to opportunities for science centres to engage with the community at a more basic level and indicated the value in doing this.

It was great to meet and network with people from such a range of science centres and to have the opportunity to find out at a more personal level the variety of work people do. I enjoyed discussing some of the lectures and presentations with others afterwards gaining further insight in a more casual context. It is nice to have contacts from science centres and the feeling of a wider community.

Overall, attending the conference gave me a much broader, more rounded view of science centres and inspired me to think divergently about our role in society.