



CAMBRIDGE
SCIENCE
CENTRE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Candidate Pack – December 2021

INTRODUCTION

Cambridge Science Centre (CSC) envisions a world where every child can experience adventures in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) that inspire them to do well in their life and make a positive contribution to their communities.

CSC is an independent charity (Registered Charity No. 1146349) and the only year-round, interactive children's science centre in the East of England. We **Spark** the scientific curiosity of everyone, **Ignite** enduring passion for discovery in everything, **Fuel** self-belief in those who doubt their own potential, and **Illuminate** pathways into STEM education and careers.

Cambridge is one of the best places in the world for an innovative, hands-on science centre. Our programmes are built on the unrivalled scientific heritage of Cambridge and enriched by the vibrant technology and life science industries on our doorstep. Unfortunately, parts of the East of England rank among the most deprived in the country, particularly in education, skills and training. Research by the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2016) demonstrates that the conventional wisdom around educational poverty is outdated. Some affluent areas, including Cambridge, are social mobility cold spots, where the education system fails to offer the best opportunities to children from lower income families. These cold-spots exacerbate the issues uncovered by the ASPIRES Report (King's College London), a cornerstone analysis of STEM learning, which shows that by the age of 11-years, the majority of young learners have decided that STEM is 'not for me'.

To counter this, CSC provides children and families with life-changing "Wow!" moments that show that STEM is exciting, inclusive and can be 'for them!'. We employ a multi-touchpoint model that delivers fun and engaging, hands-on adventures in STEM,

builds family and teacher confidence and reaches children most in need of support and guidance. We have engagement routes that can be completed at Home, in School, as a Community, and in our own Centre in Cambridge. We achieve this through fun and intriguing hands-on science interventions delivered by our professional science communicators, rigorously tested science exhibits, and engaging online content.

We are highly regarded by our audiences. Over 90% of teachers and home educators that we have interacted with would recommend us to others. Parents/Guardians say: "So artfully organised for this age level and families." and "Fantastic. Very enthusiastic speakers who engage kids easily and keep them interested". Our partners note the benefits to working with us – one community partner said: "...we are fully supported by their experience, knowledge, equipment and most importantly the professional science communicator's sense of fun!" while a corporate partner commented: "The best way we can help people is to be science-led and CSC inspires young people with that passion."

Looking to the future, we aim to expand our reach and greater support the young people and their wider communities in Cambridge, the East of England, and beyond.

See us in action here – <https://youtu.be/ATTgCV-uBbs> and <https://youtu.be/RG96QyPM7B8>

See also www.cambridgesciencecentre.org



ABOUT US

Cambridge Science Centre (CSC) has two core goals:

- To increase Science Capital among young people and their teachers and families from all backgrounds.
- To support the increased uptake and attainment in STEM subject GCSEs, A-levels, degrees, apprenticeships and careers and working towards addressing the STEM skills gap.

In a rapidly changing technological environment, scientific literacy is key to health, lifestyle and well-being choices. Access to STEM education improves life opportunities by equipping young people with analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. This prepares and empowers people to navigate and contribute to their changing landscape - employment in their futures will be increasingly dominated by the STEM sector. There is a considerable body of evidence that it is this practical learning experience that captures young imaginations and sets them on the path towards careers in STEM.

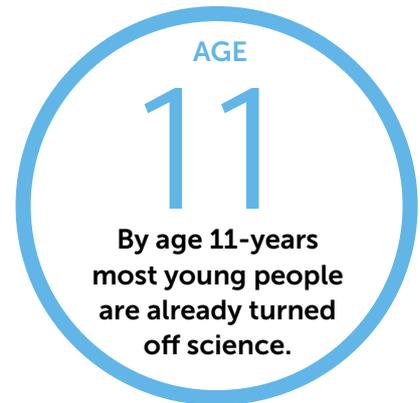
Despite this, there is a STEM skills gap in the UK that is impacting the country's national economic competitiveness.

- By age 11-years most young people are already turned off science, seeing it as 'too academic' for them.
- Four in ten UK employers have problems recruiting staff with STEM skills.
- Eight in ten businesses think the skills gap needs to be bridged for the UK to be competitive.
- Experts believe it will take over ten years to close the gap.

Although our region enjoys some of the most vibrant academia and scientific industry, significant numbers of schoolchildren and communities on our doorstep have very low social mobility and equality of opportunity compared to the rest of the country. The region as a whole may have the highest level of investment from the technology sector in Europe, but our young people are unlikely to benefit from the opportunities this sector offers without high quality STEM education.

Our model rigorously targets young people via multiple interactions to deliver sustained STEM engagement and science capital. Our programmes support the National Curriculum and are delivered using techniques that excite and engage participants. Everything is portable: our shows, workshops, activities, and our exhibits! Meaning we can transform an empty space into a hands-on science centre in hours. This is powered and enhanced by our team of professional Science Communicators who can interact, adapt, and engage our audiences.

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OUR INITIATIVES

Our initiatives include:

School Roadshows – Create a full science centre in a high school and engage children from this hub school and its feeder primary schools. Up to 600 children can receive two engagements via shows, workshops, and free exploration of exhibits in a week-long roadshow. Repeat visits can allow us to interact with children right up to when they make crucial decisions on GCSE pathways.



School Visits – Schools can either have us visit them or visit our Centre and engage through our array of dedicated school shows and workshops. We can provide anything from a whole-school assembly to an intense, dedicated session with a small group of students.

Community Roadshows – A science centre in your city, town, or village. Setting up in existing and trusted community spaces, a Community Roadshow can bring a full science centre to any community and give all ages and family groups the opportunity to learn and enjoy STEM together.

Community Exhibits – Our exhibits can stand alone, and un-manned exhibits placed in community spaces long-term such as banks or libraries give communities the opportunity to engage with STEM in a small way daily, thus making STEM part of the everyday.

At Home with CSC Online – Free, digital resources to power critical thinking, experimentation, and fun in everyone's home.

Our Cambridge Centre – Our central hub offering shows and activities, as well as school visits, clubs, and events throughout the year.

Through our extensive outreach programme, we are able to target young learners in areas of Multiple Deprivation, bringing Cambridge-quality STEM engagement to children most at risk of missing out on STEM participation.

In 2019, 102 schools visited our Centre, we visited 32 schools and reached more through our school roadshows (which bring primary schools together in a high school hub) and we welcomed over 11,000 public visitors to the Centre.

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, we explored new ways to engage our audience. These have proven highly successful with audiences, supporters, and others within our sector.

OpenUpScience magazine – A hard-copy magazine designed to bridge the digital divide for vulnerable households. Each issue is filled with facts, puzzles, games, and do-at-home experiments to get the whole family engaged in the spirit of scientific discovery. Distributed via partnerships with likeminded charities and social enterprises, the positive feedback has been outstanding.

VirtualSchoolTrip – A virtual platform that offers teachers access to pre-recorded versions of our school shows. Unlimited access for the booked period allows teachers to be flexible during the varying challenges of COVID-19 rules. The shows are safeguarding-friendly, allowing teachers to assign their use at home or in school across classrooms and times.

Science@6 – A web-series that enjoyed two series in 2020 and interlinked with OpenUpScience and challenges distributed via social media. Each episode featured demonstrations and fun-facts, and audience entries and questions were featured.

Our unique and award-winning approach is working. Since 2013, we have sparked the scientific curiosity of ~450,000 young learners, and provided support for children, parents and teachers alike. Despite the pandemic, the Centre was able to sustain meaningful engagement with ~40,000 young learners in 2020.





OUR TEAM

We are a small but growing organisation (currently 16 staff members).

We are governed by a Chair and Board of Trustees who will work with the new Chief Executive to ensure the sustainability of the Centre and support our ambitions.

And our Ambassadors, Professor Dame Athene Donald and Lord Martin Rees, Astronomer Royal.

OUR SUPPORTERS

As an independent charity, we are powered by the generous donations of organisations, grant-awarding bodies, and individuals.

We are strengthening our wider links, including the Executive Council - made up of individuals and representatives from world-class corporate, academic and government organisations who will help us spark children's scientific curiosity for generations to come.

OUR FUTURE

Our outreach model is unique and, we believe, the best method of embedding STEM into the lives of young people and communities. We seek to ultimately establish this model on a national level and be the organisation that is the authority on this form of engagement.

To achieve this goal, we look to build on the solid foundations we have in place by: supporting the growth and development of our team, securing a robust core-funding stream, expanding our audience reach, and enhancing our industry, academic, and community partnerships.

In this appointment we are looking for someone who will help us develop and deliver this strategy.

THE ROLE



Post Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Reports To:	The Chair
Location:	Cambridge
Direct reports:	Head of Development, Head of Exhibitions, Head of Programmes and Delivery, and Marketing Manager
Other people post holder works closely with:	Board of Trustees, Executive Council and donors, Prospective donors, Sector representatives (e.g., ASDC and other Science Centre senior management)

OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE POST

Working closely with the Board of Trustees, the CEO will be responsible for the leadership, strategic development and management of Cambridge Science Centre. They will represent the charity and promote its vision, mission, values and work to key stakeholders, partners and the wider general public. The CEO will also be responsible for identifying opportunities for growth, business development, and diversification to ensure the financial sustainability of the organisation. This is an exciting time for CSC – the emergence from lockdowns and beginning in-person engagements again creates new opportunities to define the future of the Centre and the sector.

Acting as ambassador for the charity, the CEO will also provide the public face for campaigns and build relationships with stakeholders in business, politics and the media. They also play a key role in motivating and engaging volunteers, staff, beneficiaries and prospective donors.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- Leading the strategic growth and development of CSC;
- Overseeing the direction of the charity and ensuring it continues to meet and, where possible exceed, its charitable mission;
- Building an effective working relationship with the Chair of the Board of Trustees; providing regular reports to the Board and attending trustee and sub-committee meetings;
- Leading the development of the organisation's short and long-term strategies and plans, and working with the Chief Financial Officer to prepare an annual budget and risk analyses for approval by the board of trustees;
- Operating within the annual budget and ensuring the charity fulfils its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities;
- Ensuring a sustainable income from individual, corporate, legacy, grants and trust donations and directing sales and marketing efforts effectively;
- Partnering with senior officers and staff to grow and strengthen the organisation to ensure it remains sustainable and staff and volunteers are focused on achieving its mission and aims;
- Ensuring financial, management and HR policies are up-to-date;
- Establishing and monitoring key indicators of the charity's impact, funding and financial health;
- Representing the charity to the media, at external events and publicity opportunities;
- Building strong relationships with politicians, the science centre sector and government officials in order to advance the charity's aims;
- Building strong relationships with the development officer/team;
- Involvement with fundraising activities.





PERSON SPECIFICATION

Leadership skills: A prime role of the CEO is to motivate and manage staff and volunteers and they will need personal drive and energy to achieve this;

Advocacy skills: The CEO is the public and private face of the charity and must be able to effectively promote its aims; the CEO will take an active role in developing partnerships and undertaking fundraising;

Interpersonal skills: A key responsibility of the role is to build relationships with a variety of people, from beneficiaries and staff members to senior corporate executives and opinion formers. Excellent communication skills are essential;

Financial acumen: To set and operate a budget and manage costs effectively, financial literacy is important; thinking and behaving commercially;

Management skills; including excellent problem-solving skills, the ability to make decisions and to prioritise between tasks and delegate, and planning skills to implement strategies to meet the charity's goals set by the board of trustees are vital;

A quick learner: once in post, the CEO will be required to quickly get up speed with the situations of beneficiaries and the nature of service provision and aims.

Marketing skills; including critical thinking and problem solving

- Experience in senior executive-level management or organisational leadership is essential with a proven track record in leading teams and achieving results.
- A unique feature of the job of charity chief executive is the need to work closely with the non-executive trustee board, so any experience of working with committees or boards is advantageous. Experience of working in the science and discovery or STEM education sector would be a benefit;
- Fundraising / development experience would be beneficial though not essential.
- Commercial experience and an entrepreneurial mindset are beneficial;
- An undergraduate degree, preferably STEM, is expected. A master's' degree in business would be helpful though not essential.

HOW TO APPLY

The closing date for applications, which should be in the form of a CV and cover letter and emailed to csc@minervasearch.com is 17th January 2022. We expect to shortlist in late February, with interviews shortly after.

For a confidential conversation please contact csc@minervasearch.com

[Cambridge Science Centre](#)



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