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

Science festivals are the unique product of the communities in which they take place. Most science festivals feature scores of activities, many of which change substantially from year to year. Thus it is a challenge to summarize even one science festival, let alone the operations of all of the Alliance’s many independently organized members. Nevertheless, this annual report provides a useful snapshot of Science Festival Alliance activity in 2018 based on voluntary self-reporting.

“Please keep doing goofy things like this. For a neurologist to show up at a midnight movie is [overwhelmingly] inspiring. Thank you.”
– Attendee, Tennessee STEAM Festival

“I love seeing that spark light up. It reminds me of when I was starting out and learning about science.”
– Participating Scientist, Bay Area Science Festival

“City of STEM is an opportunity for…putting LA at the center of a global movement to envision tomorrow and build it today.”
– Eric Garcetti, Mayor of Los Angeles
North Carolina Science Festival **
April 1 – 30, 2018

Philadelphia Science Festival **
April 20 – 28, 2018

Randolph College Science Festival
March 14 – 25, 2018

Rogue Valley Mini Maker Faire (formerly Tinkerfest)
September 29, 2018

Roswell Science and Art Festival
October 10 – 13, 2018

St. Petersburg Science Festival **
October 16 – 20, 2018

San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering **
March 3 – 11, 2018

Science Festival of the Capital Region **
October 2 – 8, 2018

Science North
November 12 – 17, 2018

Siskiyou Science Festival
May 14 – 20, 2018

Sitka WhaleFest
November 1 – 4, 2018

Science Learning Tent at the Arlee Celebration **
July 5 – July 6, 2017

SKy Science Festival
April 26 – 28, 2018

SUBMERGE!
September 22, 2018

Tallahassee Science Festival
November 3, 2018

Tennessee STEAM Festival
October 12 – 21, 2018

Texas A&M Physics and Engineering Festival **
April 6 – 8, 2018

Thunder Over the Rock STEM Fest
October 27 – 28, 2018

Topeka Science & Tech Fest
October 12, 2018

USA Science & Engineering Festival
April 15 – 17, 2018

Virginia Tech Science Festival
October 27, 2018

Waco Cultural Arts Fest ScienceFest
October 5 – 7, 2018

Wisconsin Science Festival **
October 11, 2018

Youngstown Regional Science and Technology Festival
September 16, 2018

**EvalFest participant

Celebrating in 2019 or later:

COSI Science Festival
Jackson Hole WILD Science Festival
Long Island Sound Science Festival
Minnesota Science & Technology Festival
National Math Festival

Arizona SciTech Festival **
January 25 – March 31, 2018

Arkansas Science Festival **
September 28 – October 27, 2018

Atlanta Science Festival **
March 9 – 24, 2018

Bay Area Science Festival **
October 26 – November 3, 2018

Beakerhead
September 19 – 23, 2018

Cambridge Science Festival **
April 12 – 22, 2018

Celebrate Science Indiana **
October 6, 2018

Charleston STEM Festival **
February 3, 2018

Chicago Science Festival
May 8 – 16, 2018

City of STEM
April 1 – April 30, 2018

Colorado Springs Science Festival **
October 13 – 21, 2018

Dayton Regional Science Festival
November 17, 2018

EIU Showcase/Festival
February 16, 2018

eSTEAM Sumter Festival
October 6, 2018

Eureka! Festival
June 8 – 10, 2017

Flagstaff Festival of Science
September 21 – September 30, 2018

Gulf Coast Science Festival
March 9 – 17, 2018

Hack the Park
June 23, 2018

Hawaii Science Festival
March 1 – 31, 2018

iExploreSTEM
April 14, 2018

iMAGINE Upstate
April 8, 2018

Indian River Lagoon Science Festival
October 27, 2017

Interplanetary Festival
June 7 – 8, 2018

Jacksonville Science Festival **
March 1 – 3, 2018

Las Vegas Science and Technology Festival
April 27 – May 5, 2018

Los Alamos Science Festival
July 11 – 15, 2018

Louisiana STEM Expo
May 7, 2018

Maine Science Festival
March 15 – 18, 2018

Maryland STEM Festival
October 22 – November 11, 2018

Mind Trekkers
Various

Mississippi Science Festival
September 20 – 22, 2018

MSU Science Festival **
April 6 – 22, 2018

Nebraska Science Festival **
April 19 – 28, 2018

NH TechFest
November 10, 2018

2018 SCIENCE FESTIVAL ALLIANCE MEMBERS
2018 SFA MEMBER ACTIVITY BY THE NUMBERS*

- **58** Number of SFA member festivals celebrating in 2018
- **2,047,795** Total number of people who visited an SFA member festival
- **6,883** Total number of events and programs produced by SFA member festivals
- **140** SFA member festival events that drew more than 1,000 visitors
- **24** SFA member festival events that drew more than 10,000 visitors
- **3,898** Organizations collaborating with an SFA member festival
- **21,095** STEM practitioners taking an active role in an SFA member festival
- **13,847** Volunteers helping out SFA member festivals
- **$12,614,423** Combined budgets for SFA member festivals
- **$2,823,590** Combined value of in-kind funds contributed to SFA member festivals
- **28** Number of SFA member festivals with a budget of $50,000 or less
- **13,847** SFA member festivals celebrating in 2018
- **3,898** Organizations collaborating with an SFA member festival
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- **28** Number of SFA member festivals with a budget of $50,000 or less

*Figures reflect self-reported data provided by 40 reporting member festivals.*
EvalFest is a community of practice that has joined forces to see what we can learn about science festivals by using shared evaluation measures.

As of 2018, we have collected data from more than 40,000 festival attendees, and pilot tested nine shared evaluation measures.

Along the way, we have also developed a suite of tools and resources to help evaluate informal science learning, from survey instruments to training videos.

EvalFest is funded by the National Science Foundation and led by staff associated with the North Carolina Science Festival, Bay Area Science Festival, and Karen Peterman Consulting.

www.evalfest.org

25 science festivals used shared measures to collect data as part of the EvalFest community of practice.

Festivals used these data in a number of ways:
100% used the results from their own festival and 51% used data from the entire EvalFest community as well.

Compared to similar evaluations in the literature, EvalFest partners were more likely to use their evaluation data.

• 100% made decisions about future evaluation practices
• 87% used data to enhance their understanding of their festival
• 85% used findings to gain support of their festival
• 65% made changes to festival marketing or program plans
Thanks to our gracious hosts at the St. Petersburg Science Festival, the 2018 Science Events Summit convened event organizers and researchers from around North America and beyond. In addition to energetic conference sessions and networking, highlights included a showcase NerdNite event open to the public, the awarding of the Great Summit Debate championship belt, a plenary conversation with a producer of Olympic opening events, and a glorious beach sunset stroll.

Next up:  
2019 Science Events Summit  
June 3 – 4  
San Diego, CA

The Science Festival Accelerator
Thanks to funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, five new science festivals celebrated for the first time in 2018. Meanwhile, four established science festivals began the process of overhauling their festivals to make diversity their top priority. These four festivals will serve as lead festivals for 12 new start-up festivals to be named in 2019.

Science In Vivo
Thanks to funding from Science Sandbox, a Simons Foundation initiative, nearly two-dozen teams across the US launched experimental efforts to integrate in-person science experiences into people’s daily lives.

SFA Networking
Science Festival Alliance (SFA) membership grew to 63 active festival initiatives in 2018, all of which participated in SFA networking activity of some kind. MIT Museum staff represented the SFA at 12 professional meetings throughout 2018, and the SFA’s monthly webinars kept conversations going online throughout the year.

“[Attending the Summit for the first time] is like that rare, but magical, instance of meeting a stranger at a party and immediately feeling like you could be best friends.”  
– Respondant, 2018 Science Events Summit Attendee Survey
Supported by:

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