Better World Showcase 2018

Demonstrating how the Faculty of Science & Engineering is Making a Difference

School of
Physics and
Astronomy

Nominee
Rob Appleby
and the Tactile
Collider Team
(Staff)

Nominated for
Outstanding
contribution to
equality and
diversity

Tactile Collider

Initiative
Tactile Collider is an initiative bringing the latest in accelerator physics research to blind and visually impaired children and adults (plus teachers and carers) around the UK. With funding from an STFC Large Award, Dr Rob Appleby and his team have worked with specialists and visual impairment consultants to develop special resources and activities that communicate the physics behind CERN’s Large Hadron Collider through touch and sound – such as models of LHC equipment which can be handled, specially designed tactile magnets where the magnetic poles can be felt, and a demonstration of acceleration using balls that make a noise. A very successful pilot workshop was held at St Vincent’s School for Blind and Partially Sighted Children in Liverpool in October 2017, broadcast on radio 4’s In Touch Programme, and Tactile Collider will go nationwide in 2018.

How Rob Appleby and the Tactile Collider Team have Made a Difference

Many outreach initiatives and public engagement activities rely on visuals - they assume everyone can see the impressive demo, or the piece of equipment protected in a glass case. This project is aimed at making some of the most exciting and high-profile physics research of recent times accessible to the visually impaired. Kirin Saeed, one of the project's visual impairment consultants, said: “Science is often regarded as a ‘no-no’ for blind and partially sighted people, particularly when it comes to complex ideas. I think getting people to try it, and believe they can do it, is just brilliant.

https://twitter.com/tactilecollider

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www.manchester.ac.uk/betterworldshowcase