Better World Showcase 2018

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

University of Manchester Physics Outreach (UMPO)

Initiative

UMPO is a student-led outreach volunteer group founded in the School of Physics & Astronomy in 2015. They began as a summer science busking group, taking physics demos out into public spaces in Manchester including Piccadilly and Cathedral Gardens, Central Library and the Whitworth – engaging with audiences who wouldn’t necessarily choose to come to a science festival or university event by going to them instead of requiring them to come to us. Since then, UMPO have recruited and trained almost 200 undergraduate physics students as volunteers and have taken part in a huge range of science events, as well as designing a number of workshops and activities to deliver to local primary and secondary schools, where the students have acted as role models to encourage young people to take their study of STEM subjects further. The group is currently working on some new schools activities aimed at improving the gender balance in A-Level physics, and also returning to their city centre science busking roots by looking at how to take physics into the Christmas markets.

How Physics Outreach has Made a Difference

Last year UMPO worked with ten schools (about half of them priority widening participation schools) and a local Scout camp, reaching nearly 650 primary and 300 secondary school children – their biggest event had 18 student volunteers running a day of activities for nearly 200 Year 6s. They’ve also engaged thousands of families and members of the public at public events like the Bluedot Festival at Jodrell Bank and Manchester Science Festival.

https://twitter.com/uomphysoutreach

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www.manchester.ac.uk/betterworldshowcase