UK Science Year

working to a pre-defined government brief

What is the BA?

- established 1831
- nationwide organisation with a regional & branch network
- communicating science in an open society
- broad programme of events
- open & inclusive membership

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What does the BA do?

- the BA *Festival of Science*
- UK *National Science Week*
- media fellowships
- *sciBArs*
- science & society forums
- public consultations
- mass participation experiments
- events for professional science communicators
- *Science & Public Affairs* magazine
- Alpha Galileo press service
- young science writers awards
- award schemes for young people
- major hands on science events for younger children
- *Visions* workshops

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UK Science Year

- UK Government initiative to boost science in schools following recent literacy & numeracy years

- involved three Government departments covering education, trade & industry (including science) & culture

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UK Science Year

Objectives

- to improve the profile & perception of science
- to enhance science teaching & learning
- to involve communities in science
- to strengthen & demonstrate links between schools, higher education & industry

Audience

- 11 – 19 year olds and the adults that influence them

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UK Science Year

- Managed by NESTA
- 2 key partners

  Association for Science Education (ASE) – professional body for science teachers in the UK embodying formal science education

  The BA – embodying informal science education

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the BA Science Year programme

The objectives

- to define a programme meeting the objectives of Science Year
- to enhance the BA's existing programme
- to devise some new & innovative activities
- to achieve 'added value' & sustainability

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the BA Science Year programme

The audience

- teenagers (13 – 19 year olds)
- teenagers of tomorrow (8 – 12 year olds)
- adults who influence these young people

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the BA Science Year programme

The content (1)

- enhancing UK National Science Week with new schools' materials
- creating a mass participation experiment - *LaughLab*
- awarding grants to schools to take part in Science Year
- *BAckchat* student exchange between teenagers & world class scientists at the BA Festival of Science

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The content (2)

- building the BA science club network & working with ECSITE UK on sciZmic
- creating a major hands on science event - *Science Discovery Day*
- creating *Footprints* – a touring drama workshop

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Science clubs

The audience

- 8 – 13 year olds
- teachers

The aim

- to increase the number of science clubs in the BA's network

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Science clubs

What we did (1)

- rolling programme of workshops for teachers, teacher trainees & trainers, local science advisers & others
- built on Government initiatives to enhance the experience of socially excluded young people & of the gifted & talented
- worked with ECSITE UK to develop a new model of science clubs operating from science centres

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Science clubs

What we did (2)

- increased the number of clubs by 20%
- provided ways of running enrichment activities to meet the needs of all children

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Science clubs

Sustainability

- improved infrastructures to support the programme – new newsletter, sciZmic integration etc
- heightened profile for enrichment activities generally
- teacher training institutions now replicating through annual sessions on enrichment activities

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Science Discovery Day

The audience

- 11 – 19 year olds
- teachers

The aim

- to devise a major & memorable hands on science event with relevant content for this audience

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Science Discovery Day

What we did

- held a day of hands on science at London's Royal Albert Hall
- over 3 000 teenagers & their teachers came
- and the Minister for Schools
- to take part in over 100 workshops, talks, discussions
- led by (Nobel) scientists, science educators &others

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Science Discovery Day

Sustainability

- new approaches tried with this age group that can be used again
- built upon BA's experience with 8 – 12 year olds & showed this approach is viable with older children
- it is repeatable (subject to funding)
- & the BA is looking at 'franchising' the concept for use all over the UK

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Footprints

The audience

- 11 – 14 year olds
- teachers

The aim

- using drama, to create a discussion forum about the future of genetics

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Footprints

What we did

- commissioned a devised drama from an experimental stage director
- chose genetics for its topicality, for the social implications & the potential for controversy
- produced curriculum support materials
- took the drama into schools (over 50 performances)
- orchestrated guided discussion after the performances

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Footprints

Sustainability

- further performance tours of the drama are planned in UK schools
- curriculum support materials continue to be distributed
- interest from abroad – Malaysia & Germany – bid to British Council to fund

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Lessons learnt (1)

- feedback from the audiences (both the young people & the teachers) were positive in each instance (*Footprints* was commended as particularly innovative)
- Science Year provided much needed resources that enabled the BA to do some R&D
- the activities that were built round existing BA programmes will be more sustainable by influencing future activity

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Lessons learnt (2)

- one-off activity served a useful purpose but was some of it was less sustainable without further funding
- the BA was able to respond quickly to an extremely tight timescale
- we could do it even better the next time!

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