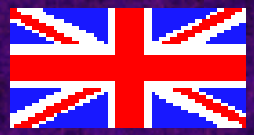
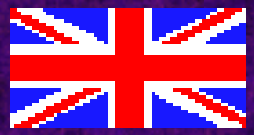


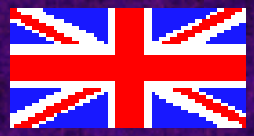
Outreach funding in the UK

Funding for Outreach in Particle Physics is primarily through the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) - set up by Royal Charter.



Outreach funding in the UK

ELIZABETH THE SECOND by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Our other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith: TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING! WHEREAS it has been represented unto Us that it is expedient to make provision for promoting and supporting research in astronomy, planetary science and particle physics ,,,,,, NOW THEREFORE Know Ye that We, by virtue of Our Prerogative Royal and of all other powers enabling Us so to do … grant and declare as follows:



Outreach funding in the UK

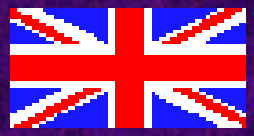
Royal Charter continued:

2. (1) The objects for which the Council is established and incorporated are:

a) to promote and support, by any means, high-quality basic research and related post-graduate training in astronomy, planetary science and particle physics;

(b) to advance knowledge and technology, and provide trained scientists and engineers .....

(c) to provide advice on, and disseminate knowledge and promote public understanding of, astronomy, planetary science and particle physics.



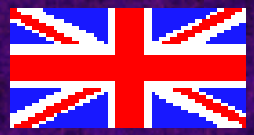
Outreach funding in the UK

Funding for Outreach in Particle Physics is primarily through the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) - set up by Royal Charter.

Outreach is part of PPARC's overall communications strategy, involving "public engagement and public accountability".

Aim to "inform and inspire audiences by capitalising on the excitement of new developments and discoveries"

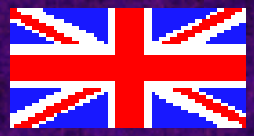
and "to demonstrate the resulting benefits to the nation, for example, from partnerships with UK high-tech industry".



Outreach funding in the UK

PPARC encourages PPARC-funded scientists to communicate their work to the wider public by:

- Encouraging them to spend up to 1% of their research grant funds on public outreach work
- Providing access to funds through Small and National Awards (more later)
- Providing access and financial support for media training courses
- Producing leaflets, posters etc for their use

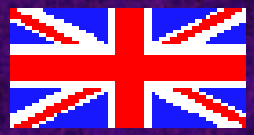


Outreach funding in the UK

PPARC Small Awards

Provides funds for small, local or 'pilot' projects. Anyone can apply, including the research community, schools, museums, etc. Awards range from £500 to £10,000 and can go towards materials, salaries, travel & subsistence. Projects must be relevant to PPARC funded science areas: particle physics; space, ionospheric, solar and planetary science; astronomy; astrophysics and cosmology.

Twice yearly - closing dates 10 April, 10 October.



Outreach funding in the UK

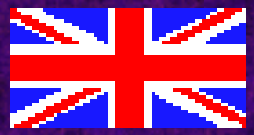
PPARC Small Awards - Spring 2002

£62,861 for 17 awards

Mainly space and astronomy, but:

- £7,500 Bringing "Into the Antiworld" to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival

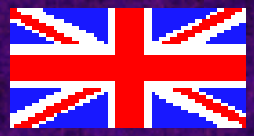
- £5,000 Taking a real-time cosmic ray detector to the public



Outreach funding in the UK

PPARC National Awards

Provides funds for larger projects having a wider impact, up to £100,000 per project. One round per year, with a two-stage selection process. Stage One requires short applications in July, short-listed applicants are then asked for full business plans for Stage Two by mid November. Project teams should have strong links with PPARC's scientific research community.

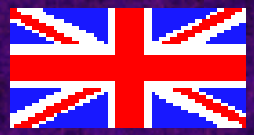


Outreach funding in the UK

PPARC National Awards - 2001

£70,000 Classroom Space - Space Hardware
Two-year project to extend the number and range of materials offered by the existing 'Classroom Space' project, funded by a previous PUST National Award,

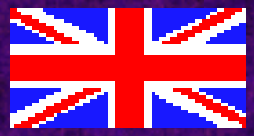
£80,000 From Fundamental Particles to Galaxies and the Universe Project of Durham and Sheffield Universities, together with selected schools, to develop a public outreach programme in North-east England. Primary target 35000 schoolchildren (11-16), 1000 teachers, and 5000 general public. Focus on the origin of the universe, the properties of fundamental particles, and the nature of dark matter.



Outreach funding in the UK

Other funding opportunities - (1)

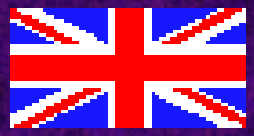
- IOP (Institute of Physics) 'Grants to Promote Physics'. Any type of physics-based event is eligible, priority to individuals organising events for the general public or mixed audiences. Two rounds per year, first to support events in National Science Week (7-16 March 2003); second is open in April-May to support events that will occur in that year. Amounts up to £500.



Outreach funding in the UK

Other funding opportunities - (2)

- COPUS The UK Partnership for Science Communication founded by the Royal Society, the Royal Institution and the BA (British Association for the Advancement of Science). Seed grants and National Science Week grants up to £3000 were available, and development grants to support larger scale initiatives (maximum £20,000 pa for 1 or 2 years). Currently under review.

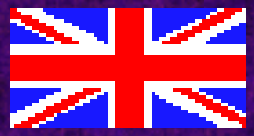


Outreach funding in the UK

Other funding opportunities - (3)

- NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) funded by National Lottery. Purpose is to support and promote talent, innovation and creativity in the fields of science, technology and the arts. Primary activity is the support of individuals. In 2001 a total of £1.9M was awarded to 35 individuals eg:

- Theatre of science £9850 Education Award for accessible science lectures
- Online Jemma £90,000 Education Award for a new cyber heroine to excite girls about science



Outreach funding in the UK

Closing comments:

- Outreach in UK is well supported and - importantly - encouraged by research council

- BUT - most PPARC-supported outreach projects are in astronomy and space science

- Major problem is TIME, and money cannot always buy time. Maybe there needs to be a bigger REWARD system for particle physics outreach