



The Royal Institution

Science Lives Here

CHRISTMAS LECTURES Live!

Screening the 2023 CHRISTMAS LECTURES

Introduction

Watching The Royal Institution's CHRISTMAS LECTURES ("the Lectures") is a Christmas tradition for families the length and breadth of the country. They have delighted and inspired children and adults since they were founded by Michael Faraday in 1825 and have an unprecedented reach for a science engagement activity, with an average of 1 million views per lecture in previous years. Not only are they the world's longest running series of science events that anyone can attend, but they were also the first science programme ever broadcast on TV anywhere in the world.

Our vision is that science is for everyone, and we believe there should be equitable access to all of the Ri's science engagement programmes. We aim to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to engage with the lectures in their community, as part of a participatory, multi-platform project. The Ri cannot do this on its own, and needs the support of many different partners. As part of that evolution, we are working with ASDC to invite science and discovery centres, museums and universities across the UK to participate in screening the live Lectures as they are filmed at the Ri in mid-December 2023. It is these live events which are then edited to form the television programmes broadcast on BBC4 between Christmas and New Year.

Timetable

- End of March: EOI opens
- Mid-September: Lecturer/content announcement
- Early June: early public announcement of host venues for live screening
- 1st October: deadline for venues to apply
- Early November: public announcement of host venues for live screening
- Late November: technical run through with Ri Digital team
- Late November: event running order, holding slides, and banner sent to venues
- 12th, 14th, 16th December: livestream of the Christmas Lectures

Objective

The size and location of the Ri limits who can come to the Lectures and we are keen to open up the experience to children and their families around the UK. The purpose of the live screenings is to engage young people (11-17) around the UK with the science and ethics covered by the Lectures.

Timings and Logistics

The 2023 CHRISTMAS LECTURES recordings will take place at the Ri from **6-8.30pm on Tuesday 12, Thursday 14, and Saturday 16 December 2023.**

We will turn on the live stream with a holding slide and some background music at 5.30pm, and switch to the Lecture Theatre at 6pm. The event will start with a welcome from our host, who will briefly engage with the remote audience, and will then welcome

the Lecturer. The Lecture will then begin and will take up to 2 hours. At the end of the Lecture the host will say goodbye to the various venues and the live stream will switch to a credits slide.

Technical Requirements

The video will be streamed via a private Vimeo URL, details of which will be circulated to the venues 48 hours beforehand. As a result, the technical requirements for the venues are very simple: they need a reliable internet link and a means of showing the video and audio.

What the Ri will provide

- Optional help from the Ri Demo team in developing interactive live onsite activities for your event
- Optional promotion to schools in your area who have applied to the Ri school grant scheme, demonstrating that their students do not usually have access to STEM activities from external providers
- Electronic logos and photos which you can use to promote your event
- A slide to show on-screen before and after the live stream with Ri and sponsor logos
- A digital platform (Slack or Teams) to discuss plans in advance of the events, and a Vimeo chat function on the night for venues to report technical problems, and for us to inform venues of the likely length of breaks in recording as demos are reset
- The Ri will also produce a press release in June and another in November and will involve venues in social media activity around the time of the events
- Access to audiences from local schools from the Ri network
- Featured event page on the Ri website
- Access to the Christmas Lectures evaluation report

What you will need to provide

We are happy for you to charge for tickets as long as you aren't doing more than covering your costs (we recognise that this will be more than your direct costs and will need to include things like staff time). We are also happy for you to generate local sponsorship for your event. We ask, however, that all such sponsors' names are shared with the Ri in advance so that potential conflicts of interest can be managed. Ri and sponsor branding should also be featured alongside the venue's own brand.

We want you to find ways to make the events come alive. The lesson from previous years is that on-site interactive activities are really important: not only because without them the audience is basically just watching a big telly, but also because there are likely to be breaks in filming to allow demos to be reset, and so the audience needs something to keep them engaged during those periods. We will provide instructions for warm up activities related to the topic of the Lecture you can delivery onsite.

We will ask for some really basic evaluation data back from you: how many people booked, how many people attended, an approximate age breakdown, and any suggestions for future events. We will provide any materials needed for this.

What sort of venues are we looking for?

We want a variety! We understand that venues differ in size, and that each brings something special. We definitely aren't just looking for big city venues that can generate the biggest audience numbers, although we want those too! So we would like to know

what sort and size of audience you expect to attract to this event. We are also open to you working in partnership with other organisations, e.g. arts centres or cinemas.

No spoilers

We want attendees to be encouraged to engage with the events on social media, but to avoid spoilers in advance of the BBC4 broadcast.

[Express your interest now](#) and we will be in touch as soon as the topic and lecturer are announced.

New this year!

After gathering feedback from previous livestream venues we have implemented a few changes to the programme to help with the promotion of the event to your local audience:

Branding: the livestreams comms pack will include two branding options this year, with one being the Christmas Lectures series title (e.g. Secrets of Forensic Science) and one more traditional based around the Christmas Lectures identity. We will also include this in the brief for promotional images to make sure it is obvious that the event is interactive and for kids/families.

Audience promotion: We will start promotion of partner venues in late June, and share ticket links to 'the lectures near you' on the Ri website. We will also share the details of the livestreams with the Ri schools network.

Topic: we will share NDAs with partner organisations to let you know the topic before the public announcement in August. These will be available for everyone who fills out the Expression of Interest form by end of June, to make sure venues know the topic before confirming participation.