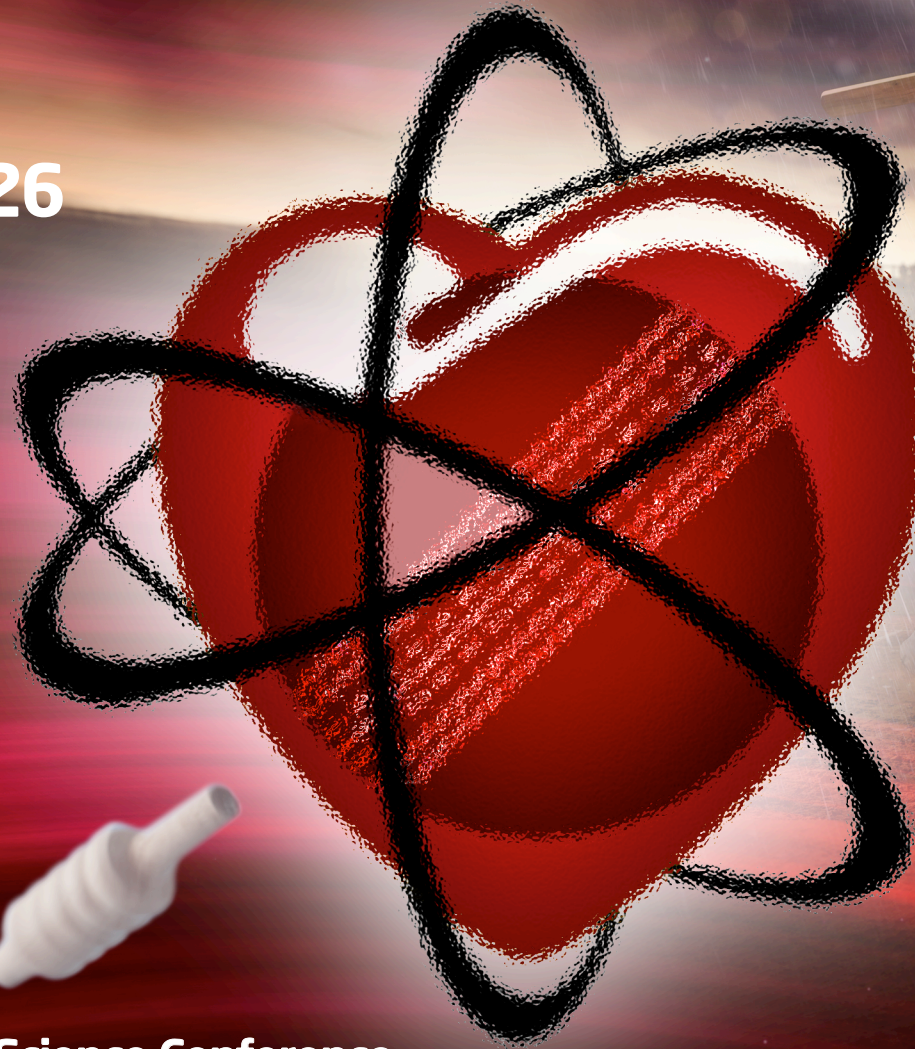




22nd April 2026

Chair's Report & Evaluation 2026



#science4u2026

The 23rd Annual Schools Science Conference
Presented by science4u.info
in collaboration with University of Westminster

Report 2026

Chair's report



In the early morning of Wednesday, 22nd April 2026, over 170 dedicated volunteers eagerly awaited the arrival of students from 20 secondary schools for the 23rd Annual Schools Science Conference

The event aimed to educate and inspire the next generation of scientists and was presented by [science4u](#) in collaboration with **University of Westminster, School of Life Sciences and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**.

This year, 20 schools registered their interest, representing 447 students. Despite a tube strike preventing six schools from attending, 326 delegates took part — very close to the event's usual attendance level.

With the Winter Olympics, Commonwealth Games, and the World Cup all taking place in 2026, this was the perfect moment to explore the science behind sporting excellence. This year's **Schools Science Conference** explored how the body's systems — muscular, skeletal, respiratory, cardiovascular, and neurological — work together to fuel peak athletic performance. But it was not just about gold medals and world records. The same cutting-edge science behind elite athletes also shapes how we stay fit, recover from injuries, and live healthier lives. From injury prevention and physiotherapy to nutrition, psychology, and technology, **Science for Sports** showcased the role healthcare scientists play in supporting both world-class athletes and healthy lifestyles for everyone.

This year's conference featured a keynote speech by **Professor Fiona Clark**, Head of Capability, EW Sensors, Leonardo UK who spoke about her career and **The Joy of Working in STEM**. Following the welcome and introduction, the students participated in four exciting sessions.

The Sessions

Science in Practice - 2 sessions

The **Science in Practice** sessions featured 40 interactive displays showcasing various scientific fields such as microbiology, immunology, and nuclear medicine. Students had the opportunity to meet scientists, try out some tasks, and learn about potential career paths.

Science for Experimentation

The **Science for Experimentation** session, sponsored by **The Association for Laboratory Medicine**, allowed students to present their research and compete for the **Don Henderson Award**. The proud winners were **Thomas Tallis School** for their project, **Synthesising Bioplastics**. Highly commended were the runners-up: **Lift Richmond Park** (2nd place) with the project **Optimising Human Performance in Sports Through Flow State**, and **Fortismere School** (3rd place) with their project **How does sportswear affect thermoregulation?**

Bats to Bytes Workshop

In this session based on an **Ri** off-the-shelf Masterclass, students explored how tools such as the **micro:bit** can collect and analyse data and be used to coach cricket batting technique.

By measuring the movement of a cricket bat and using real-time feedback, students discovered how computer science can revolutionise sports while building critical data analysis skills.

Chair's Report

Chair's report



Feedback

Feedback from teachers and students was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the valuable experience and educational impact of the conference.

Teachers welcomed:

- ***Being able to present their research to other schools***
- ***The opportunity to talk to a number of scientists/healthcare professionals in the Science in Practice sessions***
- ***Seeing students happy and enthusiastic***

One teacher commented:

- ***It was fantastic***

Students' comments included:

- ***Today's event was absolutely fabulous***
- ***Very fun and engaging – I was given lots of ideas***
- ***It was very fun! Highly recommended!***
I learnt more than I thought I would!
- ***It was fun and interesting – I loved engaging on STEM and I loved the bat workshop as I've never done this before***
- ***Today's event helped me recognise the different opportunities science carries – and that developments in healthcare can carry huge importance globally***

Acknowledgements

The Organising Group is very grateful to our presenters and sponsors, especially our Gold sponsors **A Menarini Farmaceutica Internazionale SRL**, **Philip King Charitable Trust** and **Strand Parishes Trust** for their generous support.

Without the support of our key sponsors, this event could not have taken place.

Thank you to all who made **Science for Sports** a success, including **University of Westminster, School of Life Sciences and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**.

It is through collaborations like these that we can inspire and equip the next generation of STEM leaders. We look forward to continuing this tradition at the 24th Annual Schools Science Conference.

Kimberly & Stuart

Kimberly Gilmour & Stuart Adams
Joint Chairs of the Organising Committee



Chair's Report

Attendees

Demographics



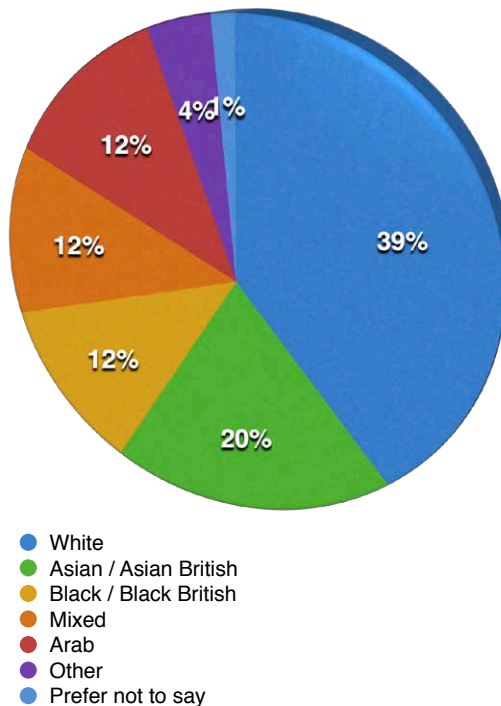
The 23rd Annual Schools Science Conference - **Science for Sports** - was held in collaboration with the **University of Westminster** on 22nd April 2026

This is a conversational event aiming to bring scientists and students together to discuss science and science careers. A total of 326 students aged 11-16 from 14 secondary schools and colleges across London attended the event which was

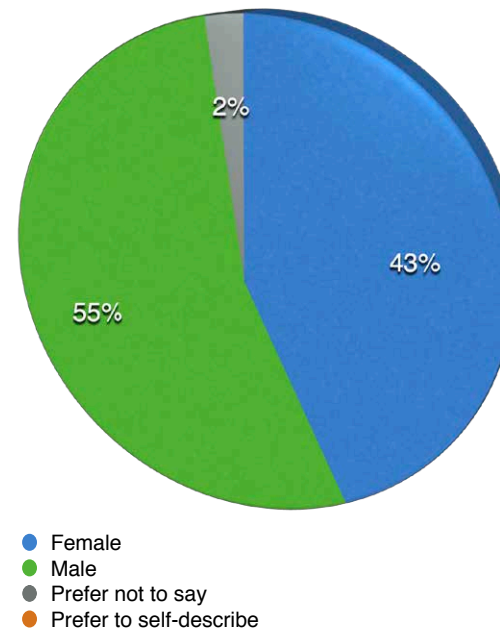
organised by an enthusiastic group of volunteers.

The students and teachers were asked to complete an evaluation form and this is the summary of the responses.

Ethnicity



Gender

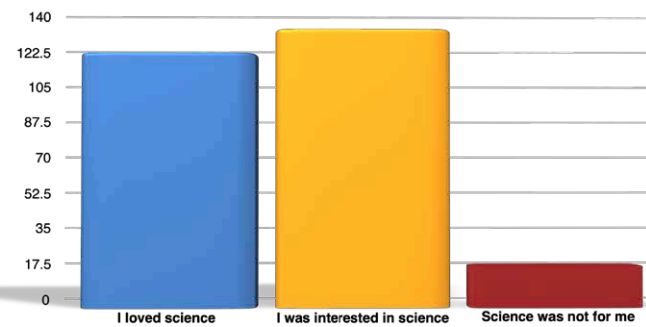


Evaluation

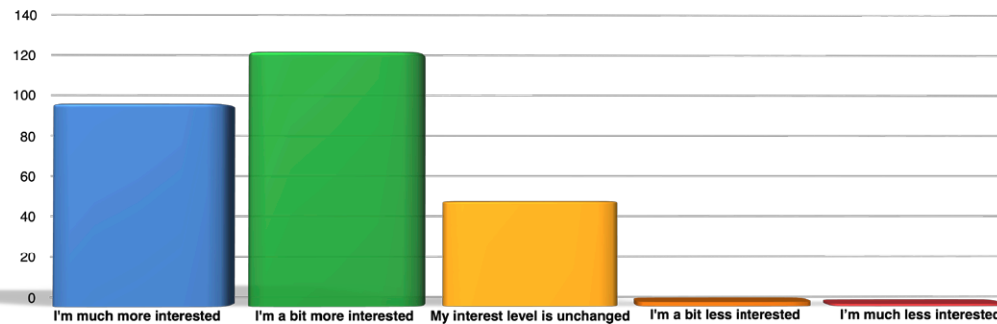
Students' Evaluation Science



How I felt about Science



How did this event affect your interest in science?

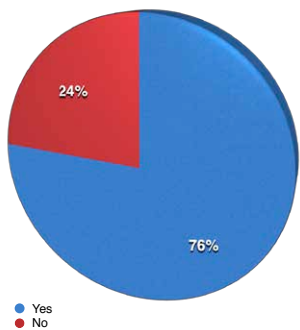


Evaluation

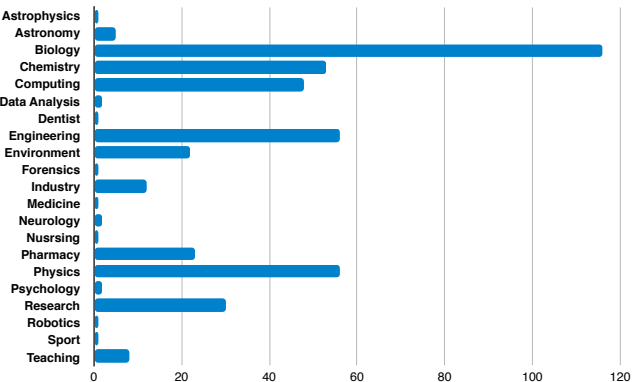
Students' Evaluation Careers



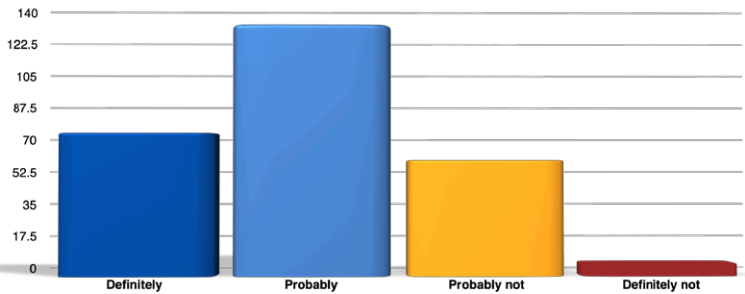
Had you ever considered
a career in science?



BEFORE ATTENDING: If you answered
definitely or probably, what as?



Are you more likely to consider
a career in science now?

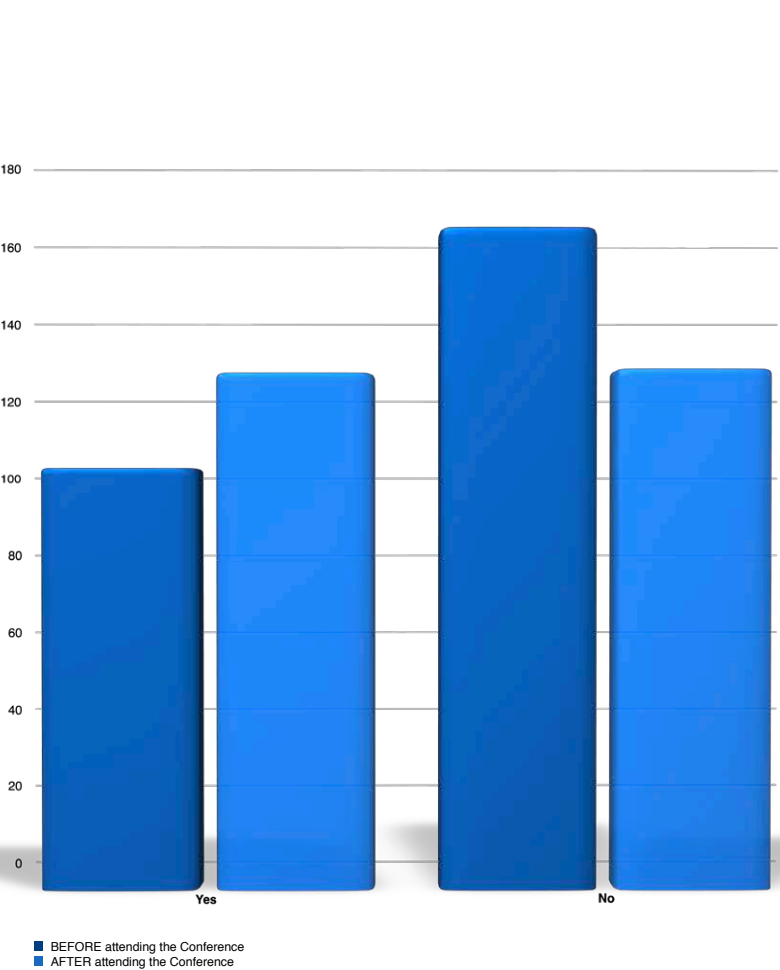


Evaluation

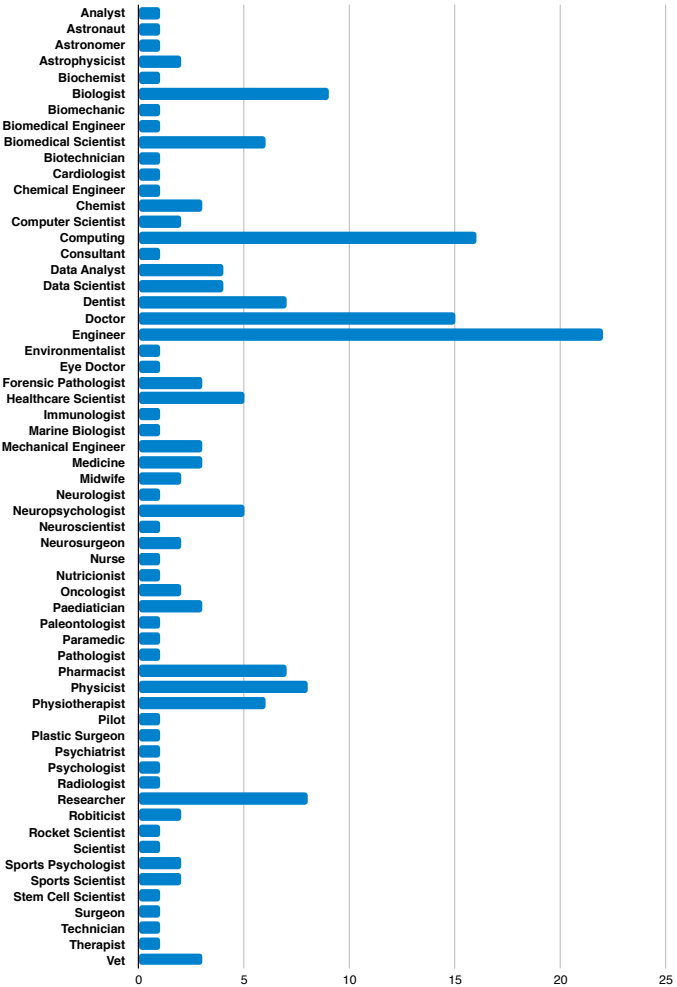
Students' Evaluation Careers



Had you ever considered a career in healthcare within the NHS?
Would you now consider a career in healthcare within the NHS?



AFTER ATTENDING: Which science careers
would you consider taking up in the future?



Evaluation

Students' Evaluation Expectation



What are your expectations for this event?

- Amazing
- Attending science lectures
- Clearer understanding of medicine
- Educational science event
- Entertaining
- Excitement
- Exciting
- Exciting and learning new things
- Experiments
- Eye-opening
- Find out how sports data is used
- Fun
- Fun and inspirational
- Fun science
- Good
- Good times
- Good/nice
- Greatness
- Having a good time
- I thought I was only doing a presentation
- I thought it would be boring but it wasn't
- I thought it would just be presentations
- Increased understanding
- Information
- Informational
- Informing
- Insight into science jobs
- Interesting activities
- Interesting experiments
- Interesting things on display
- It will be full of science experiments
- It will be very good
- Just fun science practicals
- Learn about science
- Learning opportunity for science
- Lots of science projects
- Mostly talk not interactive
- Practical experiments
- Quite fun
- Quite high
- Science presentations
- Something informative
- Specialists
- Talks, workshops
- To be exciting
- To be fun
- To demonstrate that sciences for many people
- To find an interest in science
- To gain more knowledge and have fun I think it will be interesting
- To help me decide which science I want to do
- To learn a lot
- To learn about science
- To learn about university
- To learn more about science
- To meet scientists
- To research career options and areas of science
- To research different careers



Evaluation

Students' Evaluation Education



What are the biggest barriers to achieving your education goals?

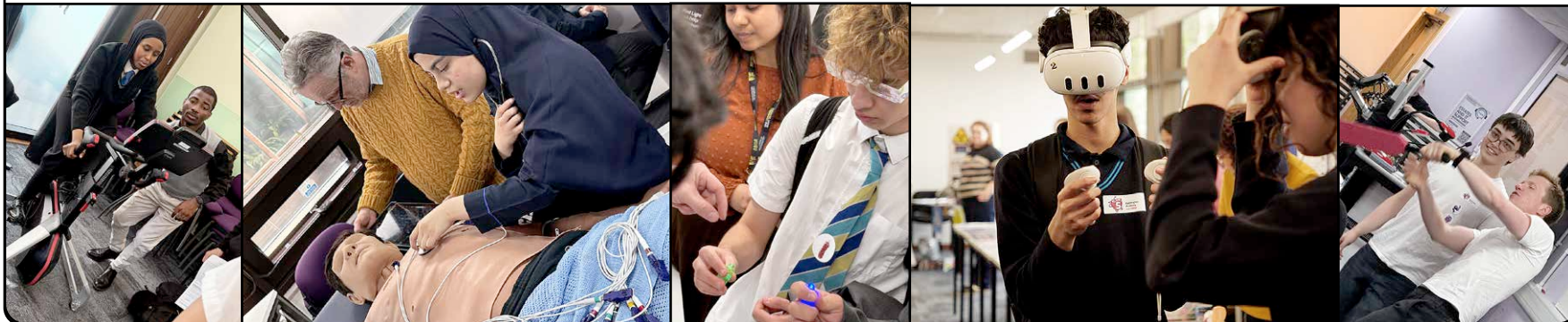
- A-levels
- Academic achievements
- Amount of money it costs
- Attention span
- Autism
- Being inconsistent
- Being lazy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Competition from others
- Confidence
- Connections and resources
- Cost/expenses
- Depressed and 18, stress and anxiety
- Doom-scrolling
- Dyslexia
- English language
- Exam stress and consideration of other pathways
- Exams
- Exams are difficult
- Family
- Finances
- Financial barriers
- Financial issues
- Focus - I lack focus and waste time on other things
- Focus (or lack of it)
- Focusing
- GCSEs
- Getting distracted easily
- Getting high scores on tests
- Getting the grades for it
- Good grades
- Grades
- Grades and behaviour
- High workload
- I cannot balance my time properly
- I do a lot of sports so do not have much free time to revise
- I don't make a lot of effort
- I don't understand maths
- I need to be better in biology
- I'm not sure
- I'm tired
- Imposter syndrome
- It's very hard to be noticed
- Knowing how to do it
- Lack of connections
- Lack of information on the academic journey
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of motivation / being overwhelmed
- Lack of opportunities
- Lack of revision
- Lack of time
- Language
- Language, competition I think I need to work harder
- Laziness
- Laziness to revise
- Losing interest
- Maths because I'm not as good at it as other subjects
- Maths skills
- Me not trying hard enough
- Mental block
- Mental health
- Migraines
- Mixed abilities in classes
- Mixed ability school classes
- Money
- More fun things to do
- Motivation
- My GCSEs
- My grades
- My lack of intent
- My lack of interest in chemistry
- My laziness
- My memory
- My mindset and the difficulty of starting and continuing with something
- My motivation

Evaluation

Students' Evaluation Education



- My motivation inspiration and work ethic
- My phone distracts me another things as well
- Myself that makes me not study
- Not being focused
- Not believing in myself
- Not doing well in school
- Not having motivation
- Not many opportunities in astrophysics
- Not sure I'll have the grades
- Not wanting to go to medical school for six years
- Not wanting to go to uni
- Nothing
- Passing GCSEs and getting good grades
- Patience
- People
- Phone
- Physics
- Pressure
- Pressure of balancing education and personal life
- Price
- Procrastination
- Remembering things
- Resources
- Revision
- Science really hasn't been my strongest subjects
- Seems like a lot to do
- SEN
- Social media
- Stress and procrastination
- Student debt
- Studying
- Studying and learning
- Teachers
- The A-levels and GCSEs - I require top marks in maths
- The competition in education in and work
- The difficult subjects
- The difficulty of the subjects I want to balance academics and creativity
- The fact that the field I want to work it is mainly dominated by men
- The lack of Unis that have what I want to do
- The people around me
- The pressure to succeed
- The price of going to universities
- The price of pursuing further education
- The sheer amount of competition
- The types of teachers
- They access I have to resources
- Time
- Time for revision
- Time management
- Too much pressure and competition
- Tuition fees
- Work

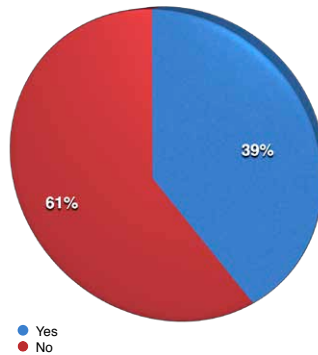


Evaluation

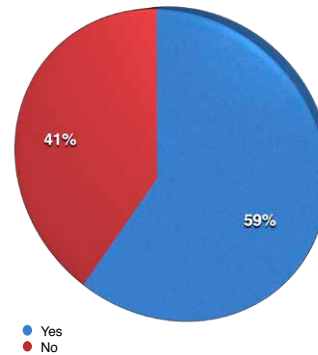
Students' Evaluation Influence



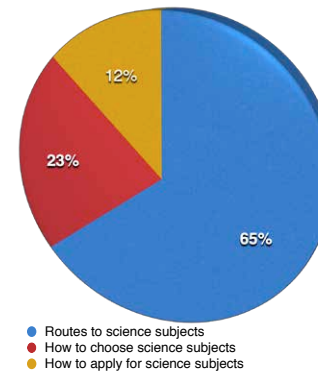
**Did this event
change or influence
your subject choices?**



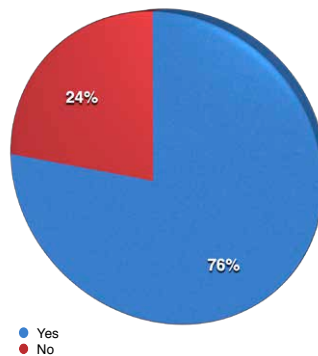
**Did you have prior
knowledge of the topics
at this event?**



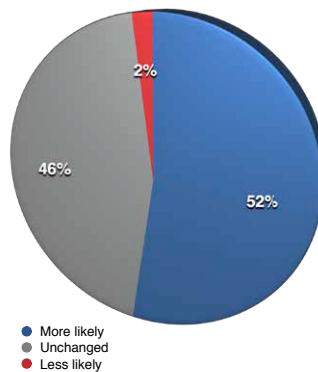
**What do you feel you
have gained from
attending this event?
Better understanding of...**



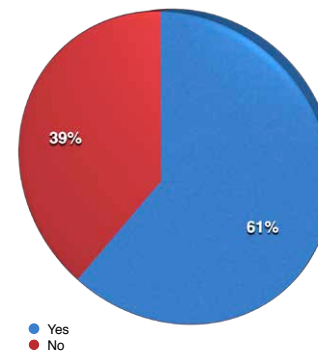
**Did you feel your skills
improved as a result of
attending this event?**



**Are you now more likely,
unchanged, or less likely
to consider attending
university?**



**Did this event make you
more interested in
studying at University of
Westminster?**

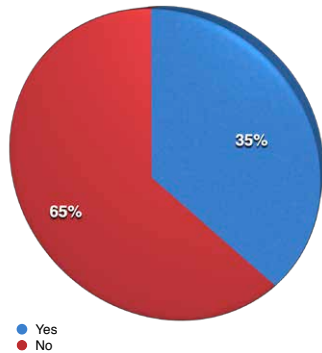


Evaluation

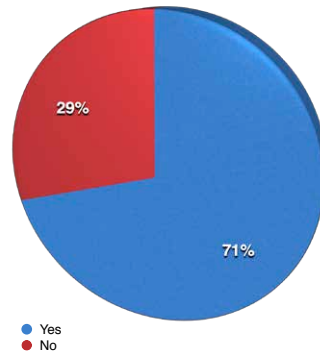
Students' Evaluation Perception



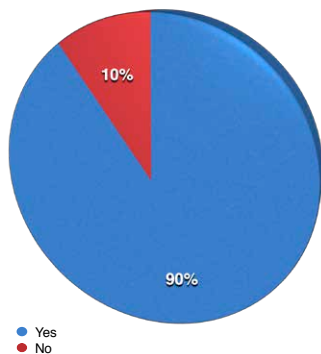
Were you aware that there are healthcare science careers that do not require a university degree?



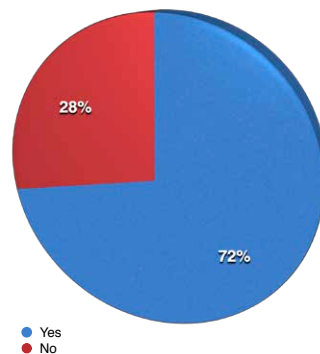
Have you visited a University before?



Do you intend going to University?



Have you heard of University of Westminster?



How has this event affected your perception of University of Westminster?

- 100% applying
- Allowed me to have an insight into UoW's variety of STEM subjects
- And it is amazing how well-kept the University facilities are
- Cool place
- Extremely positive
- Fun
- Good
- Great
- Great Uni
- I am now aware of the opportunities it offers
- I can see the opportunities
- I did not know much about it but my outlook is now positive
- I got to see the campus and the courses
- I like it
- I like it and it is interesting
- I think it has great opportunities
- I think it's a great university
- I understand how universities function better and I have more interest in biology
- I'm now considering this university
- I'm now interested in going to UOW
- I've not been here before so it was great to learn more about it
- Interesting
- Interesting science coverage
- It gave me a good impression and is making me consider sciences
- It has a diverse choice of subjects for job options
- It has made me consider doing science in the future
- It has made me more interested
- It has made me see all the opportunities available at this university
- It has made me understand more about the university
- It has opened me up to more concepts and ideas within science, especially for the future
- It is made me consider coming here
- It is much bigger and better than I expected
- It is now on my radar for sciences

Evaluation

Students' Evaluation Perception



- It is so inclusive
- It is very diverse
- It looks cool
- It looks like a good choice
- It looks like a good place to study science
- It made me interested in the University and I am curious to learn more
- It makes me want to go there in the future
- It seems like a fun and good place
- It showed me an experience of a day in the life at uni
- It shows good resources and facilities for science
- It was very interesting
- It's a great Uni
- It's a university with many good facilities
- It's a very inclusive University
- It's bigger than I thought
- It's made me think better of this university
- It's nice
- It's very welcoming
- It's very well presented and staff were very informative
- Made me interested in the technology in the University
- Made me more interested
- Made me more likely to pursue a career in medicine
- Makes me see it as a local university
- Maybe you want to come here
- Much better than I thought
- My brother attends here!
- People are lively
- Positive
- Positively
- Seems exciting
- Small but has some good resources
- That's good
- The better environment
- The different stuff made me interested
- The University is very science focused
- They are very welcoming - students and staff
- They have nice extracurriculars
- This event made me realise University of Westminster has great science majors selection
- This has increased my interest
- This university is a good choice
- This university seems fun
- University of Westminster is a great uni and I would advise my friends to go there
- Very good
- Very good university and very nice people
- Very large and interesting university looks like there's lots of opportunities here
- Very organised, clean and the environment is lovely
- Wide range of interactive fields in mind it seems very interesting and a good university option
- Willing to help the community
- Would love to go here



Evaluation

Students' Evaluation Comments



Are there any comments you would like to make about today's event?

- A great event
- A lot more interested than I predicted
- Amazing - Highly recommended - Inspirational
- Amazing!
- Brilliant
- Could you give us more time to enjoy the activities next time, please
- Extremely interesting fun and well organised
- Fun
- Give out more leaflets
- Good
- Good free items
- Great
- Great!
- Had a great time
- Helpful - kind helpers - very interesting
- Helpful because I learnt new things
- How did they hire all the people who were presenting
- I appreciate your guys hard work
- I didn't think it was properly explained
- I enjoyed the freebies
- I had so much fun - thank you!!
- I like learning about the structure of the eye
- I like the sweets along the way
- I love meeting all the scientists
- I really enjoyed the workshops
- I really liked the strength-testing activities
- I wish there was more sport activity
- I'd say it was good
- I'm coming to this uni!
- Interesting
- It is great as it is
- It is very well organised and interesting
- It was a great experience
- It was amazing
- It was cool
- It was educational and interactive
- It was exciting
- It was exciting and interesting
- It was fun
- It was fun and energised
- It was fun and interesting
- It was fun but we didn't have time to see everything
- It was great nice!
- It was interesting and I learned something new
- It was quite fun
- It was really good
- It was very entertaining and interactive
- It was very fun
- It was very fun and interesting - a pleasure to be with the scientists!
- It was very fun in general



Evaluation

Students' Evaluation Comments



- It was very good
- It was very interesting
- It was very lovely - would recommend :-)
- Keep it up
- Liked the pens
- Love the phsician technician one
- Loved the interactive sessions and the yellow-vested marshals were very helpful and organised
- Lovely
- More free time needed
- More time at a two hour
- Nice and interactive
- Nice session
- Okay, fun
- Overall an enjoyable experience - just short on time
- Phenomenal
- Robot dog is cool
- So friendly - learnt loads
- Such fun
- Thank you
- Thank you for such a good day
- Thank you for the opportunity
- Thank you! It was so fun and interactive
- Thanks for a great event!
- Thanks guys :-)
- The best!
- The people are very friendly and nice - loved it!
- The Science for Experimentation session was the best activity
- The VR was amazing
- The workshops are very nice and thanks for the free stuff
- The workstations were enjoyable (primarily the physical and interactive ones) - the sessions could've been better or more organised
- There were lots of grip tests - didn't need that many
- Today was a great opportunity to further my knowledge
- Today's events were interesting
- Very fun and entertaining
- Very fun and interactive
- Very good
- Very nice



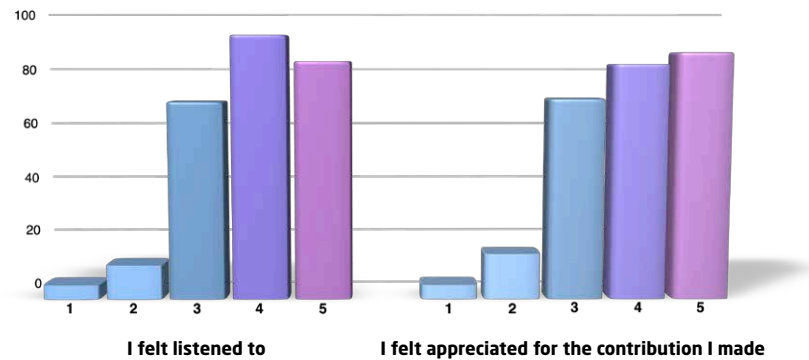
Evaluation

Students' Evaluation

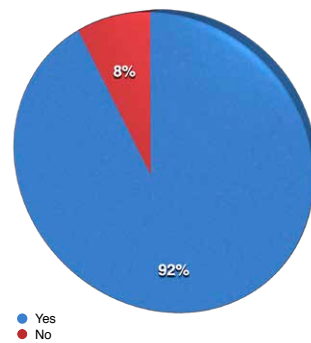
The Event



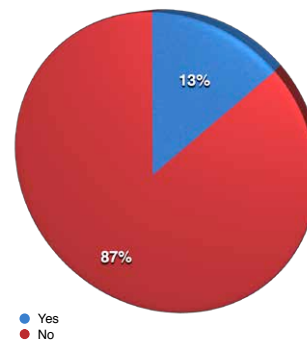
How did you perceive the Bats to Bytes Workshop?



Would you recommend this event to your friends?



Have you used the conference website science4u.info?



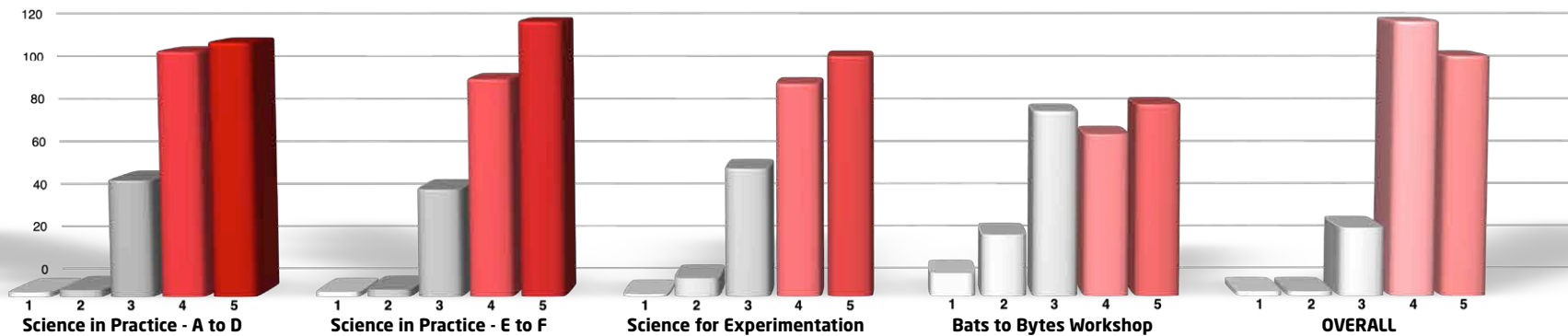
Evaluation

Evaluation

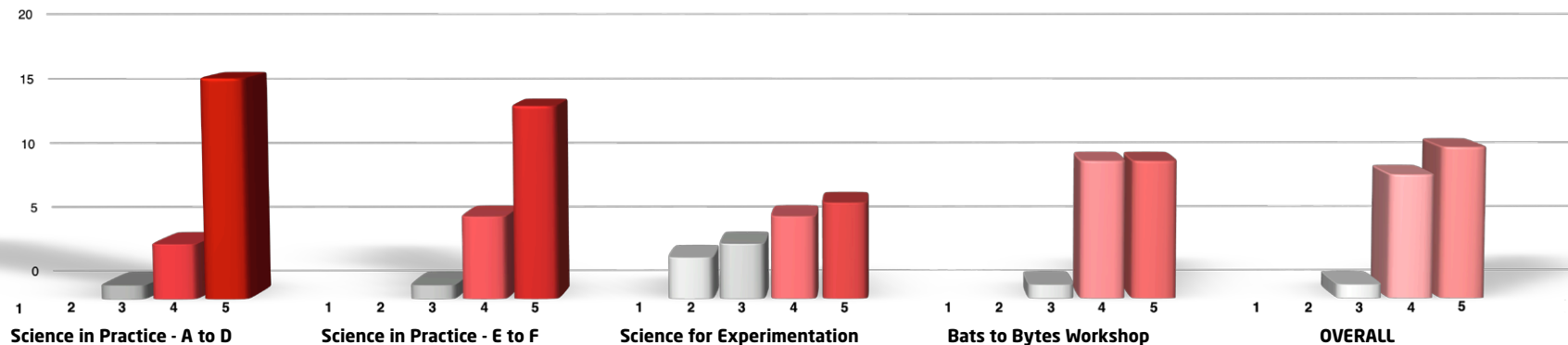
The Activities



STUDENTS
How would you rate the activities?



TEACHERS
How would you rate the activities?



Evaluation

Teachers' Evaluation Comments



What obstacles have you faced when trying to attend the conference and is there anything we can do to remove these barriers?

- Journey, due to tube strike
- No barriers (tube strike was out of our control collectively)
- None
- Presentations ran over so we had less time in the Practice rooms
- Strike action
- Strikes (not the organiser's fault) – better signposting to the University
- Train strikes – nothing you could do, also quite early for us to arrive
- Tube strike – but things went smoothly

In what ways could we improve this event to benefit you and your students?

- Better communication on where to go
- Finish a bit earlier
- Finish the event before 15:00
- Have dedicated volunteers at the nearest tube station
- Have workshops preparing students for research methods
- It was fantastic
- Longer science in practice session although it's close to optimal
- More laptops for cricket session
- More marshals in rooms if in the wrong place
- No notes besides a lack of time in each room (maybe limit time for each stall?)
- Perhaps smaller, more focused
- Provide more time per session
- Schedule could've been sent to us beforehand
- Share the theme earlier in the year please
- Toilet breaks
- Well organised, but you could allow more time for different workshops

What was of most benefit?

- Aspirations to study science
- Being able to present their research to other schools
- Boosts student confidence as they interact with others
- Exposure to careers in science
- Exposure to real science/medicine
- Exposure to science in different context
- Interactive stalls
- Learning about a range of careers
- Learning about different careers in STEM
- Seeing science in action
- Seeing science working
- Seeing other presenting abilities
- Students happy and enthusiastic
- The opportunity to talk to a number of people in the Science in Practice sessions
- Watching other school presentations

What was of least benefit?

- Having to rush between venues
- Not applicable
- Probably the presentations beginning of the day but good for them to see
- The amount of time for lunch
- The cricket session

Is there anything stem ambassadors could do to help with your presentations?

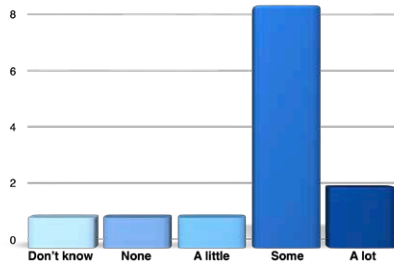
- No responses

Evaluation

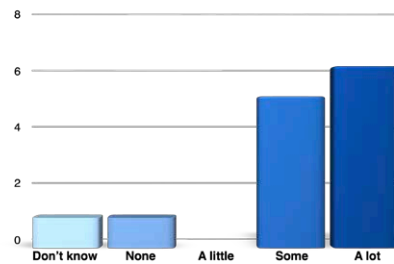
Teachers' Evaluation Impact



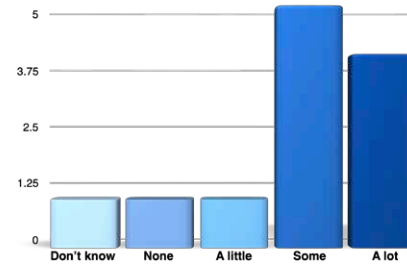
If your school has attended one of our previous events, what impact did it have on those students' subject choices?



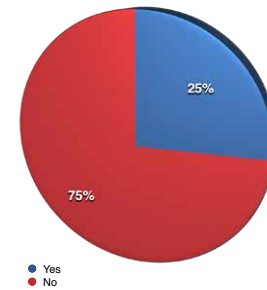
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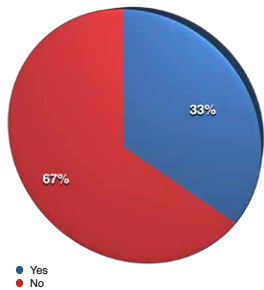
If your school has attended one of our previous events, what impact did it have on those students' motivation to study science?



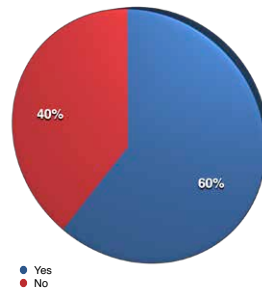
Do you know of any instances where students attending one of our previous events have chosen a career pathway into science?



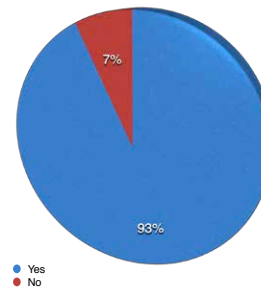
Have you used the conference website www.science4u.info?



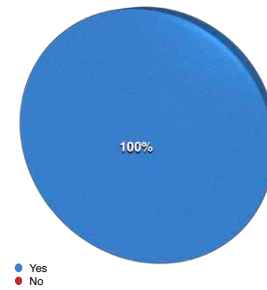
Will the Virtual Laboratory tour help with your lesson plans?



If your students were unable to participate in Science for Experimentation, would they be interested in participating next year?



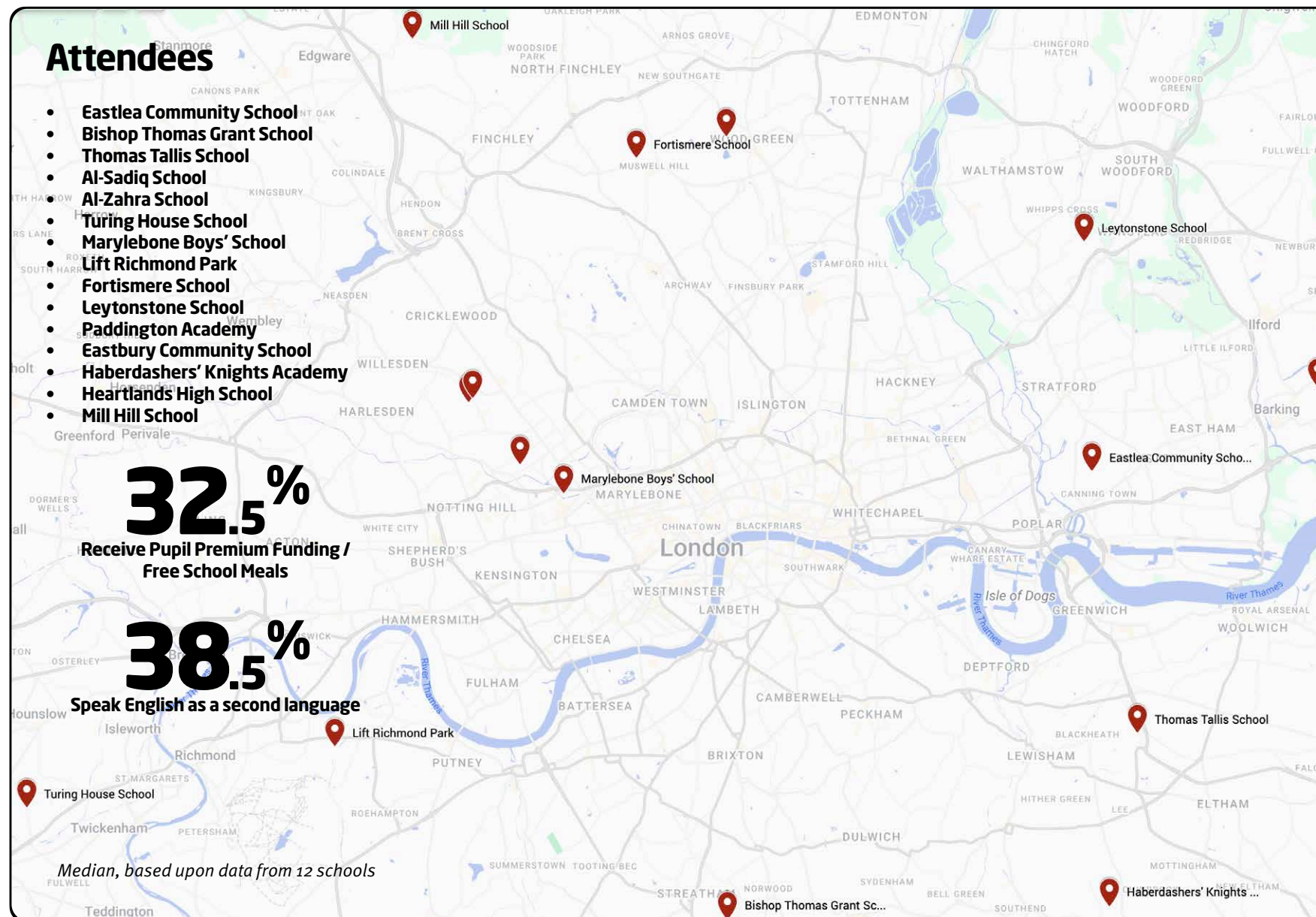
Did this event provide value to you and your students?



Evaluation

Encatchment

Location of schools attending



Evaluation

Acknowledgements & thanks

Thank you to all who contributed to make **Science for Sports** a success!

Collaboration

Science for Sports was presented by science4u.info in collaboration with **University of Westminster** and additionally supported and funded by **University of Westminster School of Life Sciences and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

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Bats to Bytes Workshop



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Thank you

It is through collaborations such as these that we can inspire and equip the next generation of STEM leaders
We look forward to continuing this tradition at the 24th annual Schools Science Conference