



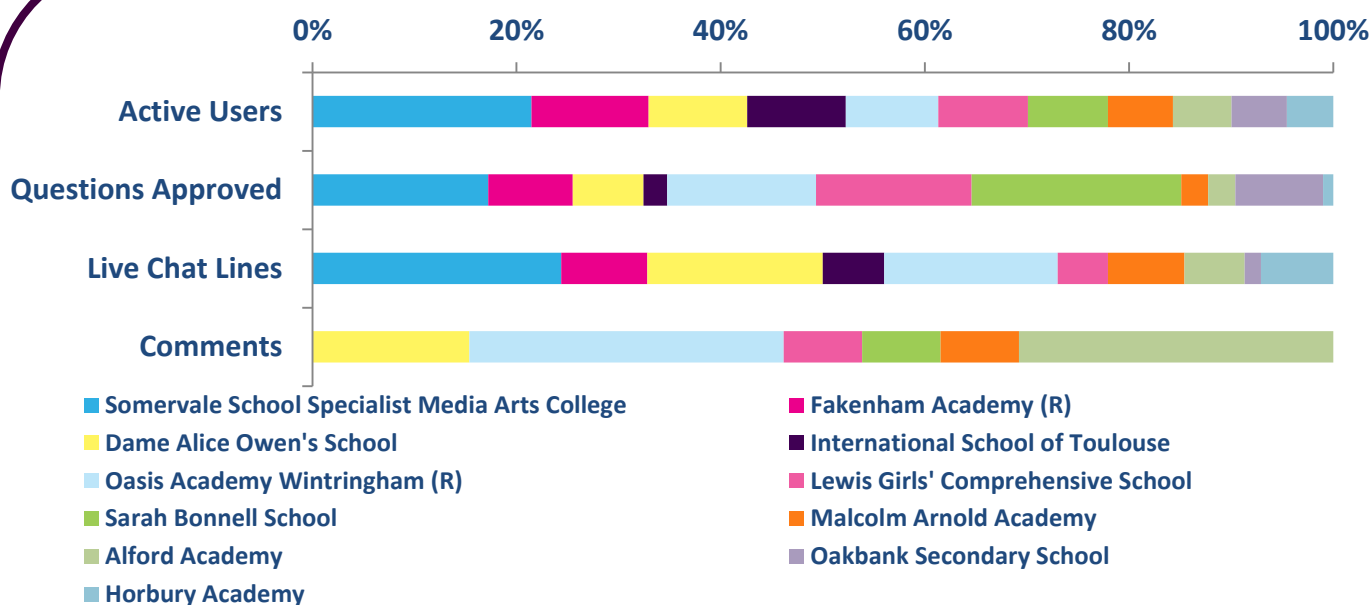
## March 2017

The Decision Zone was a themed psychology zone funded by The British Psychological Society. Wil is a PhD student looking at emotions in language and bilingualism, Mary is a psychology lecturer studying how our senses work together to perceive the world and James, the winner of the zone, is a Strategist and Consumer Psychologist who advises brands how their design can influence consumers' decision making. Diana is an Emeritus Professor studying how people weigh up evidence to make important decisions and Andy is a lecturer looking at how people can lose control, leading to drunkenness and eating bad foods.

The Decision Zone centred on investigations into psychological research, and also involved three A-Level psychology classes. Some students seemed unsure what psychology was, and the psychologists were all good at explaining their research areas, as well as a more broad definition of psychology, in clear and relatable terms.

This was a relatively busy zone, with a higher than average number of active students and number of questions in ASK. Wil was the most active psychologist, and gave nearly half of all the answers in ASK and was also particularly active within the Live Chats.

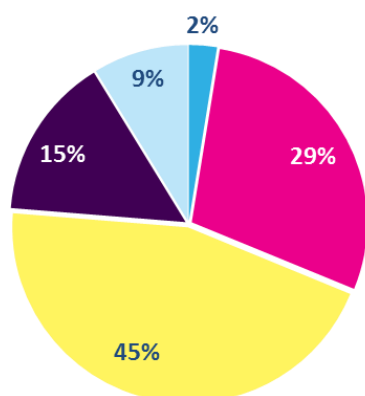
### School data at a glance



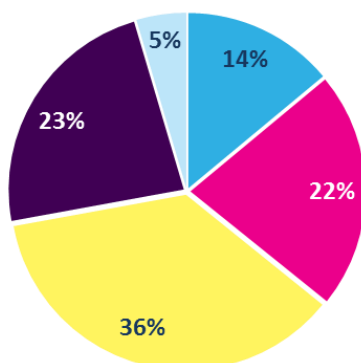
We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups going into STEM careers. Find out what we mean by our Widening Participation (WP) and Rural (R) schools, and how you can support us to work with more of these at [about.imascientist.org.uk/widening-participation](http://about.imascientist.org.uk/widening-participation).

## Scientist activity

### Answers



### Lines of Live Chat



| Scientist         | Profile views | Position |
|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| James Gudgeon     | 663           | Winner   |
| Andy Jones        | 551           | 2nd      |
| Wilhelmiina Toivo | 763           | 3rd      |
| Mary Spiller      | 537           | 4th      |
| Diana Kornbrot    | 537           | 5th      |

## Key figures from the Decision Zone and the averages of the March zones

| PAGE VIEWS | DECISION ZONE | MAR '17 ZONES AVERAGE |
|------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Total zone | 16,533        | 18,600                |
| ASK page   | 1,388         | 1,451                 |
| CHAT page  | 1,881         | 1,703                 |
| VOTE page  | 1,190         | 1,523                 |

|   | DECISION ZONE | MAR '17 ZONES AVERAGE | IAS 2012-17 AVERAGE |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Schools                                   | 11            | 13                    | 10                  |
| Students logged in                        | 403           | 455                   | 376                 |
| % of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE | 83%           | 80%                   | 85%                 |
| Questions asked                           | 542           | 594                   | 713                 |
| Questions approved                        | 302           | 276                   | 307                 |
| Answers given                             | 468           | 482                   | 549                 |
| Comments                                  | 36            | 47                    | 77                  |
| Votes                                     | 274           | 307                   | 296                 |
| Live chats                                | 14            | 17                    | 15                  |
| Lines of live chat                        | 4,623         | 6,543                 | 5,265               |
| Average lines per live chat               | 330           | 379                   | 348                 |

## Popular topics

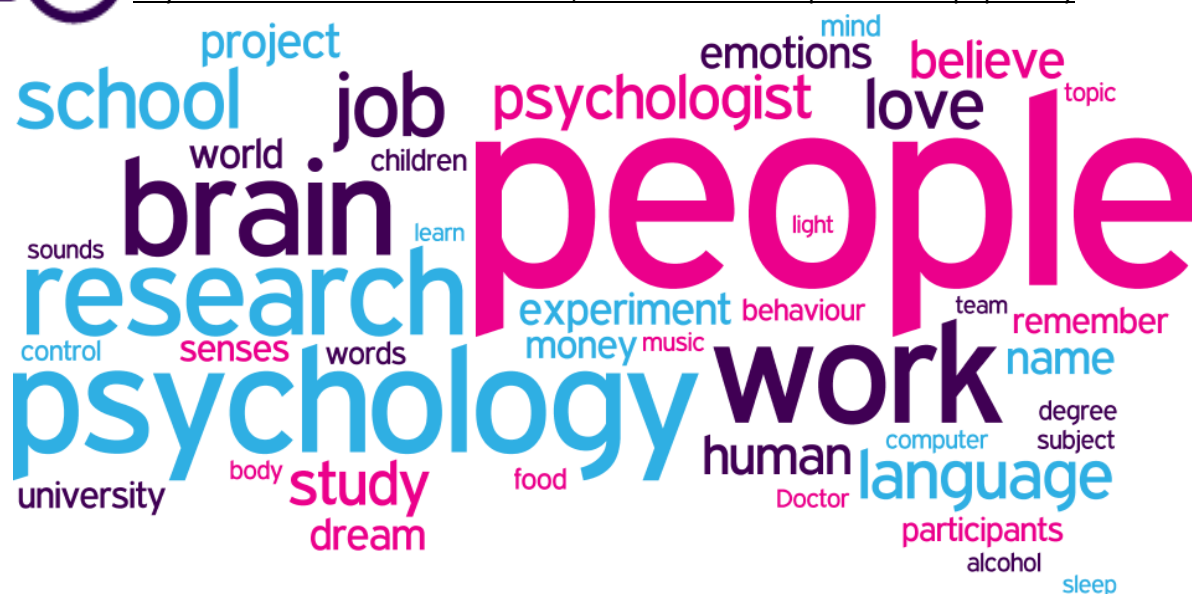
Questions on the zone theme lead to great answers from the psychologists, with lots of interest in James' work with brands. He was asked about the different sorts of colours and fonts that make people notice brands, and other tactics that companies might use. Wil was asked about her research tactics, and whether she thought she would get the same results if she used song titles or book quotes. Andy was asked why people turn to food if they are worried or upset.

Students were also interested in what it's like to be a psychologist, asking them about where they work, what it's like to be a lecturer and the qualifications they had needed to get to where they are.

There were lots of general psychology questions, such as about human consciousness, how the brain processes information and why we get addicted to things. Off topic, students bonded with the psychologists over things like music, food and their experiences at school.

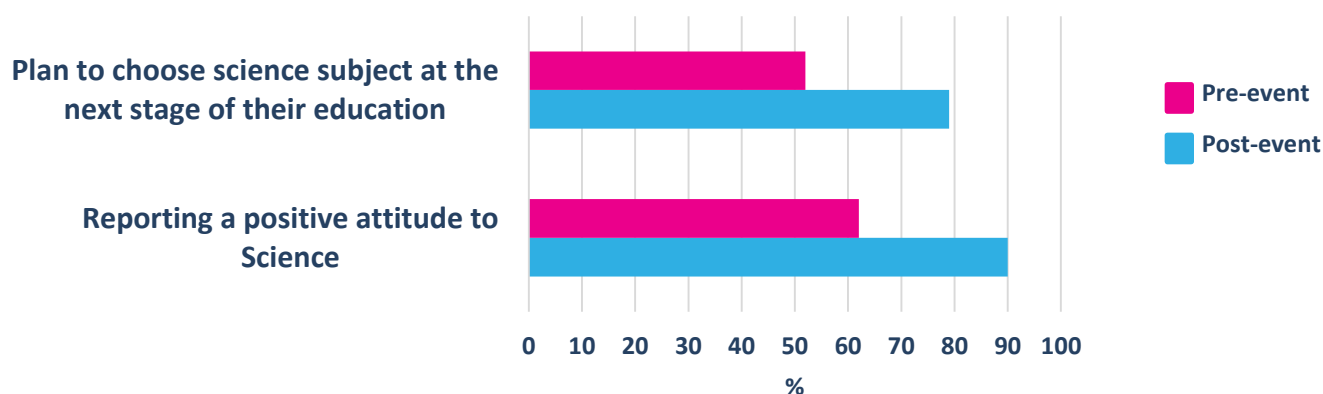


Keywords from live chats in the zone, size of the word represents its popularity



### Students' attitudes to STEM

We ask students directly about how they feel about science, before and after taking part in the event. It's clear that participating in I'm a Scientist has an overall positive effect on students' attitudes to science:



Figures are averages from I'm a Scientist Zones run between 2012 and 2015. We're still collecting feedback for March 2017, but we expect to see a similar positive change.



Keywords of questions approved in the zone, length of bar represents frequency of use

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14



## Example Questions (click for links)

"How does our brain process decision making?"

"What is an interesting discovery that has recently been made in psychology?"

"Why are humans so fallible?"

"How do you plan on making a change to the world?"

"What language do deaf people think in?"

"Why does the brain link senses?"

"What is the reason behind you wanting to focus your work on bilingualism?"

"How difficult do you find it to obtain funding for research as a psychologist?"

"Are there other species living on different planets?"

"What's the worst addiction you have ever studied?"

"Why do people pretend to get drunk when you pretend to give the alcohol?"

"Why do you think bilinguals feel that their second language is less emotional than their first?"

"What word had a surprisingly high emotional response?"

"If you are addicted to something bad like tobacco, why does your body crave it if it's bad?"

## Examples of good engagement

Within the chats, students engaged well with the psychologists' individual research areas:

*"I was wondering what advice you would give to brands if they wanted to sell more of their products."*

– **Student**

*"I would tell them to make sure they are offering a quality product! And to keep single minded as to why they're doing what they're doing! There are lots of little tactics to use in the supermarket - but too many to talk about here!!!"* – **James, psychologist**

*"Thanks, that sounds really interesting! Could you give me an example of a tactic?"* – **Student**

*"You can prime people to behave in a certain way - you make certain things come top of mind, and therefore be more likely to be chosen. Cadbury's did this with a big purple sticker at the end of the aisle. They saw more people choosing their chocolate because of it!"* – **James, psychologist**

Students also showed a real interest in Wil's work with language and bilingualism:

*"Do you think language ability is a natural talent? Are some people naturally better at understanding language than others?"* – **Student**

*"This is a really good question. I do think some people can be naturally a bit better at learning languages, but with effort and a learning strategy that works for them anybody can reach a good level of fluency in a language. So I don't think it's all about natural talent! 😊 Also it depends at which stage of your life you are learning the language – children can learn a language a little bit easier than adults."* – **Wil, psychologist**

## Scientist winner: James Gudgeon

James' plans for the prize money: *"I'd send 50 'science boxes' with 10 simple decision experiments to schools around the world. The best ideas to improve decision making and save the world might come from people your age that would never get to release them if they're not inspired by science right now!"* Read James' [thank you message](#).



## Student winner: EmilyGodd

For great engagement during the event, this student will receive a gift voucher and a certificate.

## Feedback

We're still collecting feedback from teachers, students and scientists but here are a few of the comments made during the event...

*"It was quite easy and effortless - you can just do it from your office. I really enjoyed chatting with the students...it was really good fun :)"* – **Psychologist**

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