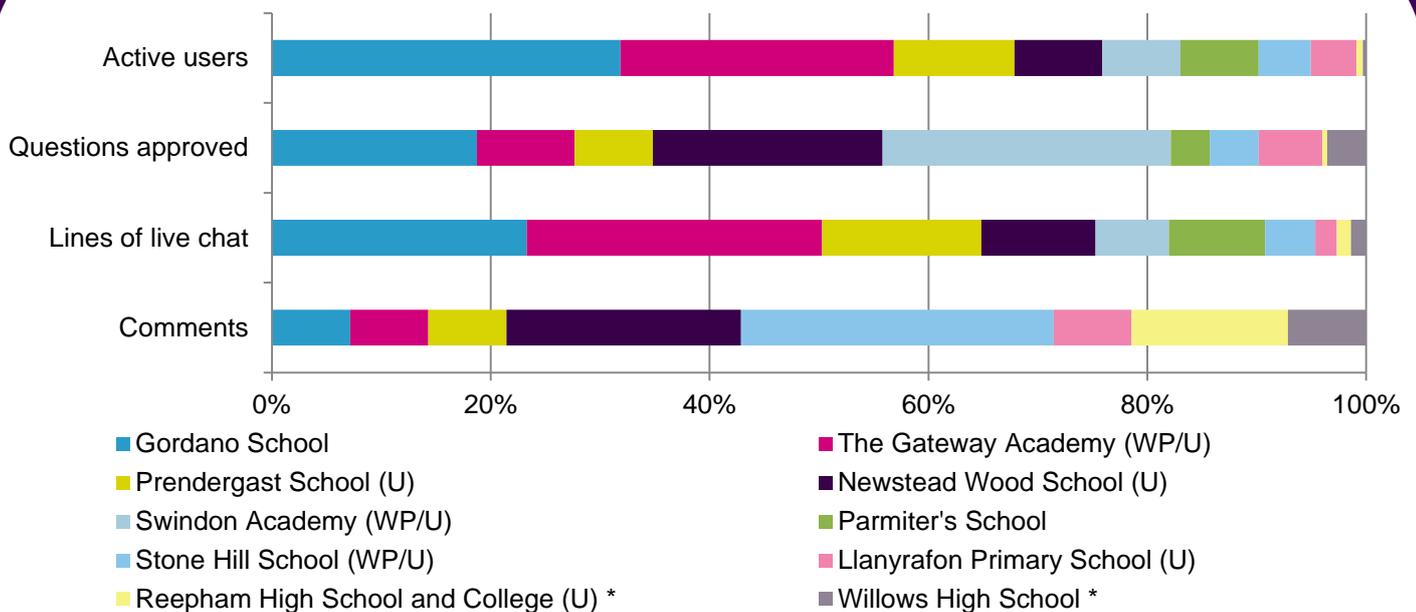


## March 2018

The Curium Zone was a general science zone supported by Wellcome, with six scientists all working in different areas. Matthew works for the Institute of Cancer research detecting cancer in blood, Kezia is a PhD student developing new solar cells and Jacque, the winner of this zone, is researching ways to increase the yields of nematodes to control insects on crops. Hazel is a geologist researching how people think and talk about geology, Fiona is a PhD student in mathematical biology finding out how our immune system can fight cancer and Daniel is a director of an environmental planning consultancy providing soil science advice.

The Curium Zone was quiet with a below average number of students logging in. This zone had a huge range of questions asked and 94% of students logged in were active in ASK, Chat or Vote – higher than the average for March’s zones.

### School data at a glance

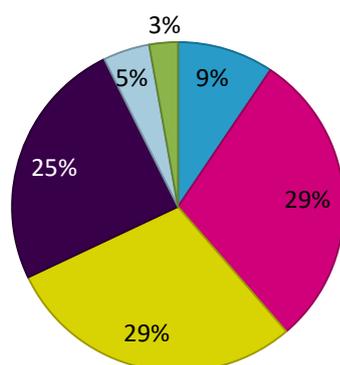


We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups going into STEM careers. Find out what we mean by our under-served (U) and WP schools (WP), and how you can support us in working with more of these at [about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp/](http://about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp/)

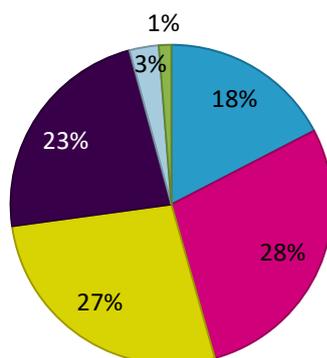
\* Students were able to join other zones than their own to join open live chats and ASK questions. Students at these schools joined from other zones in the March event.

## Scientist activity

### Answers



### Lines of chat



SCIENTIST	PROFILE VIEWS	POSITION
Jacque Cilliers	478	Winner
Fiona MacFarlane	690	2nd
Hazel Gibson	420	3rd
Kezia Sasitharan	493	4th
Matthew Beaney	524	5th
Daniel Baird	399	6th

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

PAGE VIEWS	CURIUM ZONE	MAR '18 ZONES AVERAGE
<b>Total zone</b>	14,099	19,571
<b>ASK page</b>	1,277	1,625
<b>CHAT page</b>	1,518	1,691
<b>VOTE page</b>	1,022	1,422

	CURIUM ZONE	MAR '18 ZONES AVERAGE	IAS 2012-18 AVERAGE
<b>Schools</b>	10	14	11
<b>Students logged in</b>	359	437	387
<b>% of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE</b>	94%	89%	86%
<b>Questions asked</b>	421	529	697
<b>Questions approved</b>	216	258	303
<b>Answers given</b>	287	469	541
<b>Comments</b>	18	62	75
<b>Votes</b>	248	348	304
<b>Live chats</b>	15	19	16
<b>Lines of live chat</b>	5,250	7,268	5,472
<b>Average lines per live chat</b>	350	388	354

## Popular topics

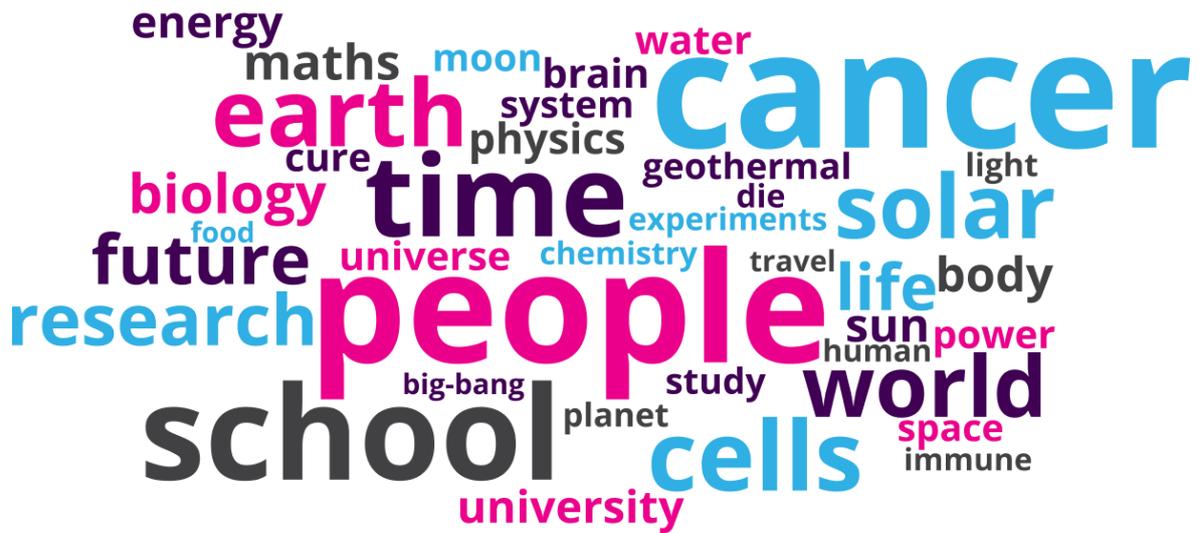
Questions in the zone were very diverse, due to it being a general science zone with scientists working in a variety of areas. Students were interested in their individual work areas, especially Matthew and Fiona's work with cancer. Matthew was asked about the progress he is making analysing plasma to try and find DNA mutations, and Fiona about why the immune system is unable to fight cancer.

Students were interested in becoming and working as a scientist and asked the scientists about how they got their current job, what grades they needed and whether they work in a lab, office or outside.

There were many general questions in the zone with lots of students asking about space, the universe, planets and the big bang theory. There was interest in atoms and elements and scientists were asked what their favourite element is and why.

## Chat

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



## Ask

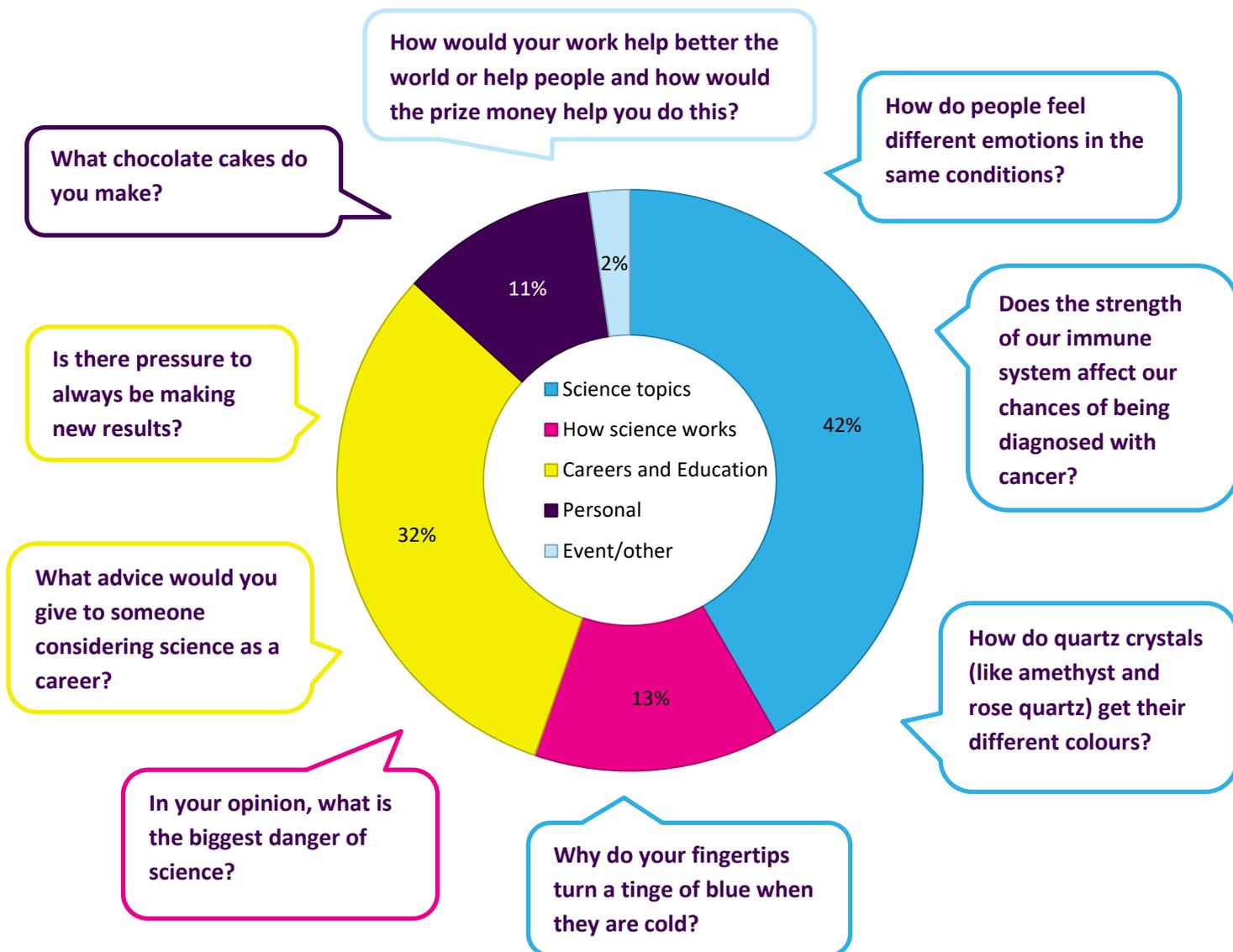
### Top Keywords of questions approved in the Zone

Area represents frequency of use



■ Being a scientist ■ Science

## Question themes and example questions in the Zone



Find out about how we've coded the questions at [about.imascientist.org.uk/2017/student-question-coding](http://about.imascientist.org.uk/2017/student-question-coding)

## Examples of good engagement

Within the chats, students showed an understanding of topics that had been in the news, such as environmental issues, and wanted to discuss these with the scientists.

*"do you think there is a danger of plastics getting into our food chain?" – Student*

*"Yes, there is a huge danger of the components of plastic (polymers) getting into our food chain" – Kezia, scientist*

*"@Kezia what can we do to help decrease the plastics?" – Student*

*"we can try out bit to clear up plastic content from the soil where our plants grow and prevent plastic from entering our food chain" – Kezia, scientist*

*"thank you so much kezia for your time, i have learned a lot!!!!!!!" – Student*

There were also conversations about the scientists' experiences in school, and the grades they needed.

*"hello, what academic grades did you have to achieve to be able to become scientists?" – Student*

*"Well in terms of academic grades I needed I had three a-levels and two as levels to get into University for my first degree, but I didn't get great grades (A,C,D on the A levels and A,E for the AS) so needed more to qualify for my course" – Hazel, scientist*

*I had to have an A and 2 Bs and two of them had to be in Biology, Math or another Science. Although I switched course when I started university and didn't get into all the ones I wanted. Grades are not always the most important thing!" – Fiona, scientist*

*"I only got one B, in Environmental Science - I never did a Biology A Level - which I ironic as now I am a molecular biologist!" – Matthew, scientist*

Lots of students asked for advice on becoming a scientist.

*"What advice do you have for someone who (hopefully) wants to be a scientist?" – Student*

*"Just don't give up! Keep going even when things don't seem to be going well" – Fiona, scientist*

*"Be persistent. Things will almost certainly not go according to your plan and as long as you keep trying you will get there" – Hazel, scientist*

*"Wow thank you! Do you have an inspiring scientist you look up to?" – Student*

*"There are so many. Usually the female mathematicians inspire me, because a lot of people doubted them initially." – Fiona, scientist*

### Scientist winner: **Jacque Cilliers**

Jacque's plans for the prize money: *"Youtube videos to explain difficult science topics covered in school, where I explain science ideas to school kids to help them pass exams."* Read Jacque's [thank you message](#).



### Student winner: **483curm44**

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...



**Fiona Macfarlane**  
@weeffimac

Follow

Another morning of @imascientist live chats, 30 minutes is not long enough! Really impressed with the questions the pupils ask and some questions that I have never even consider before #IASUK #science #learningnewthings

2:36 AM - 7 Mar 2018

*"I have learnt that science jobs are very interesting and that science jobs aren't as boring as i thought. :D" – Student*

*"[I'm a Scientist] has helped me realise that science communication is something I can actually do...and I like it too!" – Jacque, scientist*