

What is I'm a Scientist?

I'm a Scientist
Get me OUT of here

I'm a Scientist, Get me out of here! is a student-led, online, science engagement and enrichment project.

engages
91%
of students



60% WP and/or under-served

2,000+
schools registered



The activity is run online three times a year, **reaching school students all over the UK and Ireland to connect them with scientists.**

Scientists access the website from the lab, from home, the field, or even while travelling.

Connecting students with scientists

The activity is spread across several zones online, each with an average of 10 schools taking part.

The activities are spread across themed zones online, each with around 10 schools and 400 students. Over two weeks, students log in to read the profiles of 6 scientists or engineers in their zone, post any questions they have, and take part in a 30-minute, text-based chat where they can talk with the scientists/engineers in real-time. The scientists and engineers compete to gain the students' votes and at the end of the fortnight the winner is given £500 to spend on further STEM communication.



I thought scientists just looked like they do in the film Flubber... when I found out they liked Taylor Swift I realised they are more down to earth and not like a mad scientist.

Student

Student-led engagement

All interactions start with a student's question.

The students can ask the scientists anything they want, and often this means the students initiate conversations around their personal interests, experiences and attitudes. When scientists respond sincerely, they show there is value in the students' questions. Science becomes more personal, related back to the students' real lives and shown to be important in the world they live in.

It was nice that the engagement was driven by the pupils... in a lot of public engagement activities the scientists "present" material to the public. This was different in the sense that the students put questions "to" the scientists, they drive and direct the process, NOT the scientists.

Scientist



Students who need it most

Schools more than **30 minutes drive** from a Higher Education Institution **are half as likely to get a visit from a university scientist** than those within **15 minutes drive**.¹



***I'm a Scientist* focuses on reaching schools who otherwise find it hard to access outreach activities.**²

Students at these schools often have lower levels of science capital³ — a measure of their science-related resources, attitudes, behaviours and ways of thinking — and are less likely to study STEM subjects and have science-related aspirations. They may not currently engage with science and don't feel it is 'for them'. Through the conversations in *I'm a Scientist*, students begin to see scientists as more 'normal' and 'like them', leading to their opinion of science becoming more positive.

Teachers

- Increased confidence shown by students
- Students more likely to consider further education
- Higher engagement during class

Benefits of *I'm a Scientist* *Get me OUT of here*

Funders

- Reach under-served audiences
- Raise awareness of discipline
- Fill STEM pipeline
- Increase scientific literacy

Scientists

- Improved communication skills and confidence
- Renewed enthusiasm for research
- See work from new perspectives
- Increased public understanding

¹ Based on our survey of schools registered with us in 2017. View further details here: ias.im/96.10443

² We prioritise schools classed as under-served and/or widening participation. View our criteria for selecting these schools here: about.imascientist.org.uk/under-served-and-wp/

³ Read more about our mission to develop students' science capital at imascientist.org.uk/science-capital/

Online — better for **student engagement**

I'm a Scientist provides an environment that allows, and encourages, school students to have real interaction with scientists.

The online platform gives all equal voice and opportunity to engage — there is no hierarchy, no scientists stood on a stage

before them. Students take part in text-based live chats, meaning they interact in a way that is comfortable and familiar to them. As a result, 91% of students actively engage with the activity, and **students who are often too shy to speak up in class are able to do so** in the *I'm a Scientist* environment.

