Schools Outreach Support Network:

Widening Participation in a Changing Landscape

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Perceptions of Physics I

“Physics reinstalls our childlike sense of wonder in the world — Why does the sun rise? What holds the world together?”
Perceptions of Physics II

Physics is like a Rolls Royce – admired but considered beyond most people
Branding Physics

“Physics gives access to a body of knowledge and way of thinking that is not for everybody — we should resist an overly democratic expression and celebrate the fact implicit in physics is a positive sense of intellectual elitism, of challenge and huge reward.”
Some of our activities with students

• 16-19 membership
• Careers material
  – Physics on Course
  – Myphysicscourse.org
• Lab in a Lorry
• Physics in Perspective
Some of our activities with teachers

• Physics Updates
  – 3 day residential courses
  – based at universities
• Stimulating Physics Network
• School Affiliation
Schools Outreach Survey

• 24 HEI physics departments and national research labs represented (UK and Ireland)

• Gives an indication of the types and frequency of activity
Variety of activities on offer

No. of Institutions

- Open days: 19
- Workshops / Masterclasses: 17
- Career events: 17
- Work exp.: 8
- Nuffield places: 10
- Events: physics teachers: 16
- Events: chem/bio teachers: 17
- Workshops in schools: 9
- Shows in schools: 5
- Workshops in colleges: 7
- Printed resources: students: 8
- Online support: students: 4
- Printed resources: teachers: 9
- Online resources: teachers: 8
- Competitions: 8
Total no. of participants in one year
Average no. of sessions for each activity

- Open days: 10
- Workshops/masterclasses: 11
- Career events: 9
- Work experience: 13
- Nuffield placements: 2
- Events: physics teachers: 4
- Events: chem/bio teachers: 4
- Talks in schools: 29
- Workshops in schools: 6
- Shows in schools: 30
National HE STEM Programme

- Emphasis on widening participation
- Transferring best practice within HE
- Developing sustainable networks
Chi Onwurah

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