Get Ready Bristol - the UK's First Digital 3d Planetarium Prepares for Launch!

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At-Bristol Science Centre, one of the UK's leading interactive science centres, will be re-opening its Planetarium on Friday 24 April as the UK's first digital 3D Planetarium; with brand new shows and an out of this world, super-celestial opening weekend.

Visitors to the Planetarium will be able to see the brand new presenter-led 'Summer Stargazing' show (in a choice of 2D or 3D)*, as well as a 'Space Explorers' (2D) show, which is especially for under 6s. They will be able to discover the universe from the comfort of their seats – fly through rings of Saturn, journey to distant stars, and tour the Solar System and see it in a way that they've never seen it before! The adjoining 'Space Gallery' exhibition has also undergone a face-lift; with a brand new design and layout, it will act as a space port before visitors journey to outer space in the Planetarium.

The 3D experience utilises 'active' 3D technology, with shows projected in 4K resolution (UHD Ultra High Definition) from two projectors, and 7.1 surround sound, creating a fully immersive experience.

Over the opening weekend of Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 April, visitors will try out the new Planetarium for the very first time, as well as being able to get their faces painted with astronomical-themed patterns for free, and they'll see some 'space busking' activities from the At-Bristol Live Science Team – including trying some space food and handling real meteorites. Visitors (and At-Bristol staff!) are also being encouraged to dress up in celebration of the launch of the Planetarium – so anything spacey goes!

And in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Hubble Telescope, visitors will be able to see at first hand, a specially produced large-scale image taken from the Hubble Telescope – which will be exclusively unveiled at venues across the world at 3pm on Thursday 23 April.

Phil Winfield, At-Bristol's Chief Executive said: "It's a hugely exciting time for us; the teams here in At-Bristol have been hard at work behind the scenes to bring this project to life, and we can't wait to open it and see our visitors' reactions to the new experience. The technology really is amazing, and complemented by our new Space Gallery, it should be a really inspiring experience. The Planetarium upgrade is a great opportunity for growth for us; as the data visualisation element of the Bristol is Open project allows us to develop new relationships within the city and beyond, using the Planetarium in an entirely new and innovative way."

As an educational charity, the Planetarium upgrade has been made possible by funding granted by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Bristol City Council under the 'Bristol is Open' project. The aim is to act as an investment in Bristol's future as a centre for education, research, technological innovation and commerce.

Technology companies, research organisations and small and medium-sized enterprises will all be offered the opportunity to utilise the unique data visualisation capabilities of the upgraded Planetarium. The benefits to the business and academic communities will be the ability to visualise huge and complex sets of data in new and insightful ways, from full 3D design models to real time weather forecasting maps.

The At-Bristol Planetarium opens on 24 April, with the opening weekend of celebrations taking place on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 April. Face painting will take place Saturday & Sunday 10.30-12.30 & 1.30-3.30 – it is free, but donations are encouraged.

*Tickets will cost £2 for a 2D show, £3 for a 3D show, in addition to general admission prices to At-Bristol. Due to health restrictions, 3D shows are not available for under 6's. To book tickets, please call 0845 345 1235 or visit www.at-bristol.org.uk.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

Interviews and images are available, as well as media previews – please contact Jen Forster, PR Manager for At-Bristol, on 0117 9157 152/07967 334 152 orjen.forster@at-bristol.org.uk.

For further information on the Bristol is Open project, please contact John Smith, PR Officer for Bristol City Council, on 0117 922 2650, emailpublic.relations@bristol.gov.uk or visit the website www.bristolisopen.co.uk.

About Bristol Is Open:

How cities work is changing. Bristol Is Open is a research infrastructure to explore developments in software, hardware and telecom networks that enable more interaction between people and places and more machine-to-machine communication. The project uses a high performance software defined network as the city operating system, then internet of things platforms and big data analytics feed an emerging number of smart city applications. This is giving people more ability to interact, work and play with the city that they live in, and will help cities address some of the biggest challenges of modern urban life. This is the Open Programmable City - http://www.bristolisopen.com/

About At-Bristol:

1. **1. Press Trips:** If you are interested in writing a review of At-Bristol and require press tickets, please e-mail press@at-bristol.org.uk, providing media details and proposed dates of visit

1. **At-Bristol** is a leading science centre in the UK and a major player in the worldwide science centre movement with over 277,000 visitors a year, including over 60,000 school visits.
2. **At-Bristol** runs its own YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/atbristol), which is the most subscribed science centre channel in the world withalmost 10,000 subscribers.
3. **At-Bristol** makes and develops new exhibitions for Science centres and schools worldwide to purchase and hire, and won the tender to design, develop and build the London2012-inspired touring exhibition, In the Zone, on behalf of the Wellcome Trust ahead of many major exhibit developers in the UK.
4. **At-Bristol** aims to be a world-class science centre that makes a distinctive, valued and recognised contribution to science learning and public engagement with science across Europe.
5. **A registered charity**, At-Bristol has hosted over four million visits since its opening in June 2000 and continually strives towards making science accessible to all.
6. **At-Bristol** receives no central government funding and support from visitors, members, corporate partners and donors means it can continue to make science relevant and fun for future generations.
7. **At-Bristol** has achieved a 32% reduction in energy over 4 years, which won us a West of England Carbon Challenge Carbon Champions for four consecutive years 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, and we continue to work towards further goals across all areas of sustainability. At-Bristol is currently one of the most innovative sustainable buildings in the country; we were awarded Silver in the South West Tourism Excellence Awards 2012, a Gold Green Tourism Business Scheme Award, and were highly commended in the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2013.

You can also follow At-Bristol on Twitter (@AtBristol) or on Facebook (atbristolfans)

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