



The Royal Institution

Science Lives Here

CHRISTMAS LECTURES Live!

Screening the 2024 CHRISTMAS LECTURES

Introduction

Watching The Royal Institution's CHRISTMAS LECTURES ("the Lectures") is a Christmas tradition for families the length and breadth of the country. They have delighted and inspired children and adults since they were founded by Michael Faraday in 1825 and have an unprecedented reach for a science engagement activity, with an average of 1 million views per lecture in previous years. Not only are they the world's longest running series of science events that anyone can attend, but they were also the first science programme ever broadcast on TV anywhere in the world.

Our vision is that science is for everyone, and we believe there should be equitable access to all of the Ri's science engagement programmes. We aim to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to engage with the lectures in their community, as part of a participatory, multi-platform project.

The Ri cannot do this on its own, and needs the support of many different partners. As part of the evolution of the CHRISTMAS LECTURES, we are working with our existing Masterclass partner organisations and ASDC to invite science and discovery centres, museums, and universities across the UK to participate in screening the live Lectures as they are filmed at the Ri in mid-December 2024. It is these live events which are then edited to form the television programmes broadcast on BBC4 between Christmas and New Year.

Timeline

- End of August: EOI opens
- Early November: public announcement of host venues for live screening
- Late November: technical run through with Ri Digital team
- Late November: event running order, holding slides, and banner sent to venues
- 10th, 12th, 14th December: livestream of the Christmas Lectures

Objective

The size and location of the Ri limits who can come to the Lectures and we are keen to open up the experience to children and their families around the UK. The purpose of the live screenings is to engage young people (11-17) around the UK with the science and ethics covered by the Lectures.

Timings and Logistics

The 2024 CHRISTMAS LECTURES recordings will take place at the Ri from **6-8.30pm on Tuesday 10, Thursday 12, and Saturday 14 December 2024.**

We will turn on the live stream with a holding slide and some background music at 5.30pm, and switch to the Lecture Theatre at 6pm. The event will start with a welcome from our host, who will engage with the remote audience, and will then welcome

the Lecturer. The Lecture will then begin and will take up to 2 hours. At the end of the Lecture the host will say goodbye to the various venues and the live stream will switch to a credits slide.

Technical Requirements

The video will be streamed via a private Vimeo URL, details of which will be circulated to the venues 48 hours beforehand. As a result, the technical requirements for the venues are very simple: they need a reliable internet link and a means of showing the video and audio.

What the Ri will provide

- An Ri compere who will host both the Theatre and livestream audiences
- A digital platform (Slack or Teams) to discuss plans in advance of the events and collaborate with other participating venues
- A Vimeo chat function on the night for venues to report technical problems, and for us to inform venues of the likely length of breaks in recording as demos are reset
- A Featured event page on the Ri website, including ticket links
- Optional promotion to schools in your area who have applied to the Ri school grant scheme, demonstrating that their students do not usually have access to STEM activities from external providers
- A comms pack including:
 - Electronic logos and photos which you can use to promote your event
 - Two branding options, one using the series title (e.g. Secrets of Forensic Science) and one focusing on CHRISTMAS LECTURES identity
 - A slide to show on-screen before and after the live stream with Ri and sponsor logos
- The Ri will produce a press release in November and will involve venues in social media activity around the time of the events

What you will need to provide

We are happy for you to charge for tickets as long as you aren't doing more than covering your costs (we recognise that this will be more than your direct costs and will need to include things like staff time). We are also happy for you to generate local sponsorship for your event. We ask, however, that all such sponsors' names are shared with the Ri in advance so that potential conflicts of interest can be managed. Ri and sponsor branding should also be featured alongside the venue's own brand.

We want you to find ways to make the events come alive. The lesson from previous years is that on-site interactive activities are really important. There are likely to be breaks in filming to allow demos to be reset, and so the audience needs something to keep them engaged during those periods. We will provide suggestions for warm up activities related to the topic of the Lecture that you can deliver onsite.

We will ask for some evaluation data from you, including how many people booked, how many people attended, an approximate age breakdown, and any suggestions for future events. Optional impact evaluation materials will also be provided.

What sort of venues are we looking for?

Each venue brings something special, and we definitely aren't just looking for big city venues that can generate the biggest audience numbers - although we want those too! We are open to you working in partnership with a variety of organisations that are able to host an event for their local community, anywhere in the UK.

Organisations working in partnership with the Ri agree to:

- Share the Ri's commitment to safeguarding children and adults at risk, to regard their welfare as paramount and to protect them from harm;
- Have robust child safeguarding policies and procedures in place for all partnership activities, protecting children and adults at risk in line with safeguarding good practice and adhering to all current safeguarding legislation;
- Ensure that staff and volunteers have the appropriate safeguarding training and vetting for their roles.

The 2024 CHRISTMAS LECTURES

In this year's Christmas Lectures, Dr Chris van Tulleken delves deep into our guts – to reveal the revolutionary latest science around what happens inside our bodies when we eat. He investigates how food has fundamentally shaped human evolution, uncovers the importance of our microbiome – as the extra 'organ' we didn't know we had – and asks how we can all eat better in future, for the sake of our own health and the health of the planet.

Chris will reveal how what we eat can have a massive effect on both our bodies and our brains. He'll bring the science to life through a series of fact fuelled demos, special guest appearances, festive food hacks, and a healthy dose of self-experimentation.

From tastebuds to toilet, we'll find out what happens in the body when we eat. How we eat with our eyes (green eggs and ham anyone?) and how smell and even sound can affect the taste of our food.

No spoilers

We want attendees to be encouraged to engage with the events on social media, but to avoid spoilers in advance of the BBC4 broadcast.

[Express your interest](#) now, and the Ri team will contact you to discuss the next steps to becoming a Christmas Lectures livestream partner.