



2023 Annual Statistics Summary Report

The 2023 Annual Statistics Survey was conducted by the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) in partnership with Ecsite, the European network of science engagement organisations.

ASTC is dedicated to increasing the understanding of and engagement with science and technology among all people. Ecsite connects, inspires and empowers science engagement organisations and professionals, extending the reach and strengthening the impact of their work.

The following summary report contains information collected from 185 science engagement organizations that are members of ASTC and/or Ecsite. This data was collected between February and April 2024, and primarily reflects operations during 2023. For the purposes of this report, “science engagement organizations” refers to science centers, museums, and other informal science education organizations.

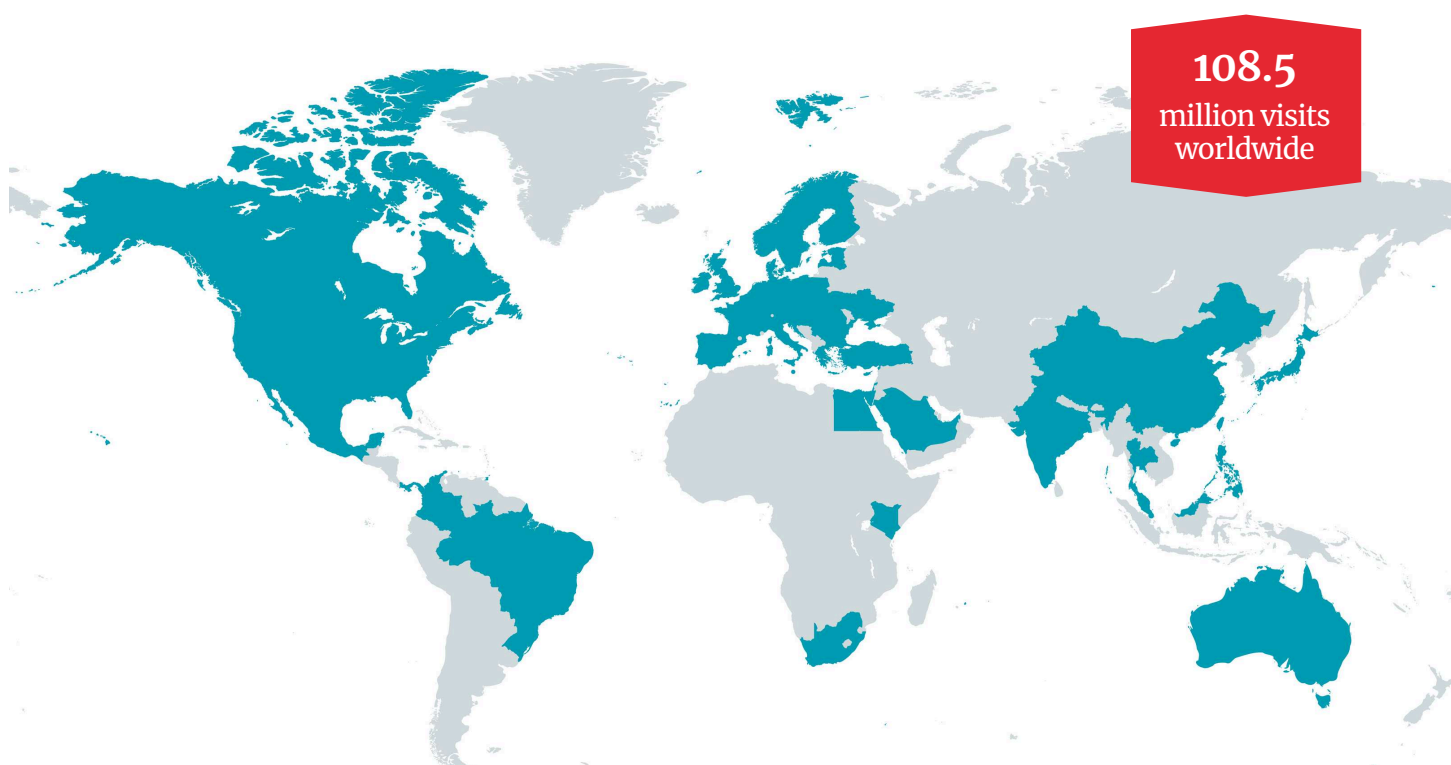
In 2023, 153 science engagement organizations reported a total attendance of more than 44 million visits (41.7 million onsite and 2.4 million through offsite events and programs, such as school outreach, community festivals, and local workshops).

Extrapolating from the reported data to include all 762 ASTC and Ecsite member science engagement organizations, it is estimated that there were more than 108.5 million visits to member organizations worldwide last year.

In the United States, the total reported attendance for 94 science engagement organizations was more than 23 million. It is estimated that there were over 62 million visits to ASTC's 419 member science centers and museums located in the United States during 2023.

In Europe, the total reported attendance for 47 science engagement organizations was more than 13.6 million. It is estimated that there were over 33 million visits to Ecsite's 311 member organizations during 2023.

Median total onsite attendance at individual organizations was 165,487, with 83% of respondents reporting an increase over the previous year. Paid onsite attendance increased for 82% of respondents.



Operating with Diverse Financial Structures

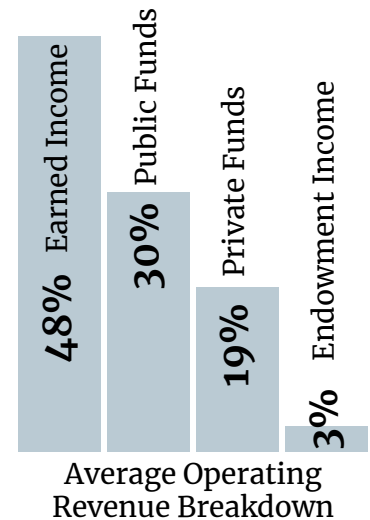
The scale of financial operations differs widely among science centers, museums, and other informal science education organizations.

Of respondents, 10% reported operating revenue of \$476,675 (€436,876) or less, and 10% reported operating revenue of more than \$27,623,425 (€25,317,062).

\$4.0 million
median operating revenue

\$3.5 million
median operating expenses

While science engagement organizations do count on public and private funding, an average of 48 cents per operating dollar comes from ticket sales, program fees, facility rentals, and other earned income sources.



The majority (93%) of ASTC and Ecsite members charge for general admission. Of responding organizations, 85% participate in reciprocal/discount admission programs, and 74% provide discounted admissions for specific individuals such as active military, students, and teachers.

\$13.09 €12.00
median admission charge
for adults

\$11.00 €10.08
median admission charge
for children

\$12.00 €11.00
median admission charge
for seniors

Adding Value to the Local Economy

As community pillars, science centers, museums, and other informal science education organizations add value to their local economies.

174 science engagement organizations reported 22,303 paid employees in 2023, with 102 organizations in the United States reporting 9,840 paid employees, and 56 organizations in Europe reporting 10,105 paid employees.



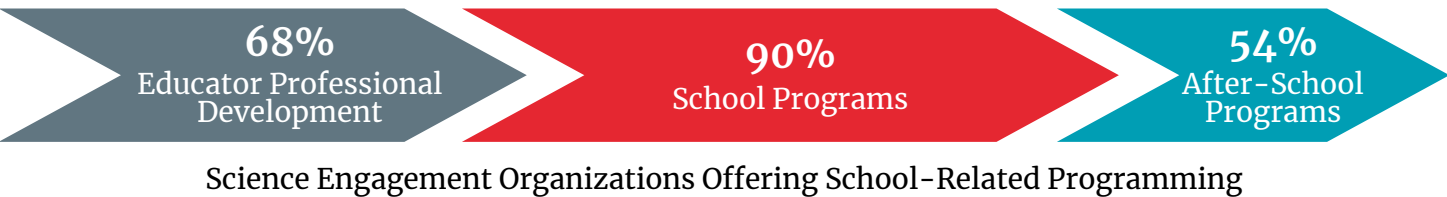
The median number of full-time equivalent employees at individual organizations was 39.5 (35.3 in the United States and 43 in Europe).

Participating in the Global Educational Infrastructure

School group field trips play a large role in visitor attendance to science engagement organizations. Of the 143 organizations that reported both total and school onsite attendance, school groups accounted for a median 12% of total onsite attendance during 2023.

Extrapolating from the reported data to include all 762 ASTC and Ecsite member science engagement organizations, the estimated school group attendance was more than 19.3 million worldwide in 2023.

But school field trips represent only a fraction of the ways science engagement organizations are involved in the overall educational infrastructure. 96% of responding organizations offer school outreach programs, curriculum materials, overnight experiences, programs for homeschoolers, and more.



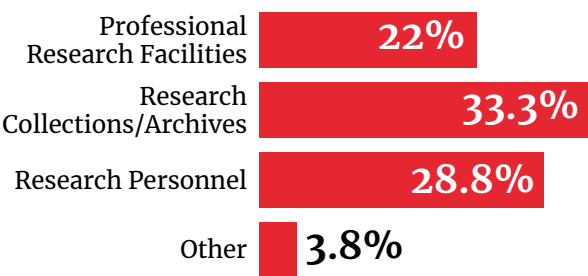
Providing Space and Opportunities to Engage with Science

Science centers, museums, and other informal science education organizations vary widely in physical size, from very large organizations with more than 2,408,000 sq ft (223,710 sq m) of interior exhibits, to very small organizations with as little as 58 sq ft (5.4 square meters) of interior exhibits.



Science engagement organizations provide a variety of options for how and where visitors can learn about, contribute to, and benefit from science and technology. Outside permanent exhibits, responding organizations have outdoor parks (53.3%), planetariums (35.5%), large-screen theaters (30.9%), and live collections (30.9%).

In addition to the hands-on, experiential exhibits and programs that are the hallmark of science engagement organizations, many organizations (44.7%) have research and/or archival operations.



Organizations with Research/Archival Operations

About the 2023 Annual Statistics Survey

This report contains information based primarily on 2023 data collected in a survey conducted between February and April 2024.

The survey was distributed by email to the 762 science centers, museums, and other informal science education organizations that were then members of ASTC and/or Ecsite. By the time data entry closed in early April, there were 185 responses received, a response rate of 24%.

Of survey respondents, 53% are science centers, while another 16.8% are children's museums. The remaining 30.2% include a variety of other types of museums and organizations.

Most of the survey respondents (104, or 56%) are located within the United States, while 5 (3%) are in Canada. 65 (35%) respondents represent countries from Europe, while the remaining responses come from 10 additional countries.

The majority of survey respondents (93.4%) first opened to the public before 2014, with the median date of first opening being 1992. Organizations in the United States reported a median first opening date of 1988, while organizations in Europe reported a median first opening date of 1999.

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