

# The Presenter Network Conference 2019



The Presenter Network was set up in 2014 by the Royal Observatory Greenwich as a way for presenters to share best practice as well as watch others in action to develop their presenting style. Since then we run regular meet-ups in collaboration with other organisations and established hubs covering every aspect of presenting you could ever imagine: using comedy effectively, working with challenging audience members, how to look after your voice and everything in between.

The response to the conferences over the past couple of years had been overwhelmingly positive and so back by popular demand the third annual Presenter Network Conference was organised.

This special one-day event was held on **Thursday 5th September 2019** at the Royal Observatory Greenwich in London. The day was jam-packed with sessions facilitated by members of the network with plenty of time to network and share best practice too.

## Frequently asked questions:

- Who was this event for? This network is created by presenters, for presenters so whether you are just starting out or want to freshen up your skills there will always be plenty to suit. If you are not actively involved in presenting, then I am afraid this is not the network for you.
- How much did it cost? This event was FREE - yes you read that right - FREE! This group operates purely on the good will of our members. All meet-ups leaders, speakers and workshops facilitators are offering their time and experience for free which we are very grateful for.
- What was the capacity? We would have loved to have opened it up to any presenters that would have liked to come along but we were limited by the capacity of the spaces we were using to around 120 people.
- Where and when was this event? The event was held at the Royal Observatory Greenwich in London on 5th September 2019.
- Was it all be about science? No we had people from across the public communication sector, however because the network is run by the team here at the Royal Observatory Greenwich our networks naturally included lots of science related places and people.

# Conference Programme

## 9:30am - Registration

This gave delegates the chance to meet each other, sign in and have a quick look around the galleries before we kicked off.

## 10:00am – Welcome and planetarium show

What better way to start a conference than with a trip to space? This portion of the day took place in our beautiful planetarium and the show itself was a take on our live *Sky Tonight* show and was presented by astronomers from the Royal Observatory Greenwich.

## 10:30am – Key Note Address

The key note speaker was the brilliant Andrew Smyth. You can find out more about Andrew and all the awesome things he gets up to in the **Appendix**.

## 11:15am – Break and networking

During all of the breaks people from the Royal Observatory Greenwich team and local hub leaders were available to answer any questions about the network or running a session. Delegates were not given a list of attendees but instead encouraged to talk to each other.

## 11:30am – Short Talks

In this section we asked the presenters from some of the most popular network meet-ups of the last few years back to speak as well as some brand shiny new people doing amazing things too. The speakers and talk titles were:

- **Kayleigh Cassidy and Leah Erdos - *Presenting to young learners: a talk in two halves***. Using her training in speech language and communication alongside her experience working with children with specific learning difficulties, Kayleigh Cassidy will focus on how to make your presentation inclusive for all children. Following that, Leah Erdos will speak on her experience working with children in and out of traditional classroom settings and will discuss what that has taught her about working with adults.
- **Zain Iqbal - *Teens as Presenters***. How young can presenters be? At Thinktank Science Museum we have been hiring teenage presenters for over ten years to deliver our public science programme to visitors. Find out some of the benefits of having young presenters, the challenges we face and how to build an effective teen presenter team.

- **Zoe Griffiths - *Introducing Challenging Concepts***. In this talk Zoe will draw on her experience as a mathematics communicator and mathematics teacher to explore different ways of introducing challenging concepts to teenagers. Expect some thinking, some games and some tricks.
- **Simon Watt - *Great artists steal***. Simon has had a lot of jobs. Having tried his hand at a great many different art forms, he has noticed that, though each has its own nuances, there are commonalities and, more importantly, things that can be nicked from each of them to improve what we do as presenters. In this talk, Simon will share some of his insights.

Find out more about our tip-top plenary speakers in the **Appendix**.

## 1:00pm – Lunch

## 2:00pm - Workshops

The focus of these workshops was very much skills based and practical so everyone could be kept pretty busy. When presenters arrived they were assigned a group which would rotate through all the workshops so they didn't have to choose between them. Here's a list of what we had:

- **Genevieve Robinson - *Storytelling***. Storytelling is a powerful technique that can be used to present just about anything. In this workshop, you'll look at some storytelling techniques and how they can be used to bring your presentation to life.
- **Ian Dunne - *Props and how to use them***. A good prop can be a very useful tool, you can hang a story on it, punctuate the presentation or enliven up any presentation and ones that actually do something are a real joy. In this workshop, Ian will share some tricks that can be used. Please bring a little something along with you and be prepared to make the most of it.
- **Julie Lloyd-Evans - *Presenting in the Great Outdoors***. In this workshop, you'll learn about presenting educational sessions outdoors and the benefits of using the environment to help engage and excite your audience.

Find out more about our brilliant workshop leaders in the **Appendix**.

## 4:15pm – Closing Remarks and group photo

## 4:30pm – Networking

This gave presenters a chance to connect with anyone they missed through the day and a chance to talk to hub leaders about setting up their own local Presenter Network hub.

## 5:30pm – Social

There is always so much to talk about after Presenter Network meet ups. We headed for a drink and an informal chat after the conference and were glad to see lots of presenters come along.

For more information about the Presenter Network [click here](#).



## Appendix

### Key Note Speaker

#### Andrew Smyth (Aerospace engineer, baker and presenter)

Andrew is an aerospace engineer, baker and presenter. As a finalist on the Great British Bake Off in 2016, he grew a firm following for his innovative creations combining his passions of engineering and baking. Since leaving the tent, he's presented a live cooking segment on ITV's Lorraine, appeared at national food fairs and even baked a rotating jet engine cake for Prince William. He currently divides his time between researching Future Aircraft at Rolls-Royce, teaching patisserie classes and presenting his "bakineering" live shows around the UK and Ireland. Career highlights have included presenting for the Royal Institution, Warner Brothers and the British Council.

@cakesmyth

[www.cakesmyth.com](http://www.cakesmyth.com)

### Plenary Speakers

#### Kayleigh Cassidy (Infant's presenter, comedian and improvisation facilitator)

Kayleigh Cassidy is an award-winning comedian who has just completed an MA in Creative Writing from Birkbeck University. She was recently shortlisted for the Mechanics' Summer Folktale festival competition and is also an improvisation facilitator who regularly performs with Edinburgh's sell-out show Crime Scene Improvisation. Prior to life in London, Kayleigh worked in Barcelona where she taught children English through the art of theatre and storytelling. Kayleigh is currently working as a Nursery and Infants presenter at the Royal Observatory Greenwich and hosts The Game is Now, a Sherlock Holmes-themed escape room.

@MawkishMagpie

#### Leah Erdos (Infant's presenter, charity worker and drama trainer/facilitator)

Leah is a drama facilitator, a charity worker, and a space adventurer with the Royal Observatory's favourite space-bear, Ted. Before moving to London in 2016, Leah worked as an English teacher in Cambodia, Thailand, and in China, teaching children aged 6 months to 16 years. She graduated with an MA in Applied Theatre from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 2017 and stayed in London for the opportunities and the weather. She has trained teachers and educators on participant based methodologies and on the use of drama in their classrooms in China and India. Leah specialises in early-years education and is passionate about the provision of accessible arts programmes.

@LeahKErdos

Facebook: Leah Erdos

## Zain Iqbal (STEM Teens Officer / enabler)

Zain is based at Thinktank Science Museum; a science-learning centre based in Birmingham, UK. Having participated in the Thinktank Science and Heritage Career Ladder in 2012, as a trainee and then enabler in the museum, Zain spent several years delivering hands on activities and demonstrations to the public. After studying physics at university and spending a year in industry, he then returned to Thinktank as STEM Teens Project Officer and casual Learning Officer. Over the past year, he has worked alongside researchers to train and study youth educators and their effectiveness in science learning sites across the US and UK.

@QuantumGoonie

## Zoe Griffiths (Maths communicator / ex-teacher)

Zoe is a mathematician who began her career talking about maths as a classroom maths teacher. She is now a maths communicator, presenting to audiences in schools and at science festivals with Think Maths. Zoe dabbles in comedy and recently performed at Robin Ince's Christmas variety show 'Nine Lessons and Carols for Curious People'.

@ZoeLGriffiths

## Simon Watt (Biologist, writer, science communicator, artist, comedian and TV presenter)

Simon takes science-based performances into schools, museums, theatres and festivals. He runs the 'Ugly Animal Preservation Society' - a comedy night with a conservation twist which

found global fame / notoriety after hosting an online campaign resulting in the election of the blob fish as the ugliest animal on the planet. Simon also co-created and hosts the comedy science panel show podcast 'Level up Human'. He has written dozens of articles for national newspapers and websites and his book 'The Ugly Animals: We Can't All Be Pandas' is out now. He is a regular contributor to TV, radio and web and presented on the BAFTA winning 'Inside Nature's Giants', 'The Elephant: Life after Death' and the IFTA winning 'Wild Cities'.

@SimonDWatt

[www.readysteadyscience.com](http://www.readysteadyscience.com)

## Workshop Leaders

### Genevieve Robinson (Children's storyteller and teaching artist)

Genevieve is a children's storyteller and teaching artist from London with over a decade of experience working with children of all ages. She presents interactive educational science shows at the London Science Museum and leads Disney Educational Workshops, for The Lion King and Aladdin West End Shows. She is currently touring schools around the country with an empowering and creative storytelling project of her own creation; 'Stories of Inspirational Women and how they changed the world'.

@Vievey22 @genevievestoryteller

[genevievestoryteller.com/women](http://genevievestoryteller.com/women)

### Ian B Dunne (Stand-up scientist)

Ian is a stand-up scientist who has performed all over the country - using information and demonstrations to bring science alive for one and all. His work has taken him the length and breadth of the country and overseas too. He's performed to lots of different audiences; doing shows followed by Q&A with primary schools and presenting to whole year groups in secondary schools as well as frequently engaging with universities and the general public at festivals and fairs. With over 20 years of experience, Ian has accumulated a wide range of kit which he uses in his shows and presentations to entertain and engage his audiences.

@IanBDunne

[ianbdunne@doscience.co.uk](mailto:ianbdunne@doscience.co.uk)

## Julie Lloyd-Evans (Outdoor teacher and trainer)

Julie is the Education Director for the Adventure Learning Charity and runs Learning Without Walls. She passionately believes engagement with the natural world and learning through direct experience is a key motivator for success and wellbeing. Her driver as a trainer is to inspire and enable practitioners to take learning outside. Her ambition as a teacher is to build resilience and self-esteem in young people, empowering them to - be curious, be critical, be creative and challenge the way we live.

[www.learningwithoutwalls.org.uk](http://www.learningwithoutwalls.org.uk)

[www.adventurelearning.org.uk](http://www.adventurelearning.org.uk)

[www.pinterest.co.uk/julielloydevans](http://www.pinterest.co.uk/julielloydevans)