



William Roberto Karen Jasmine Chinna

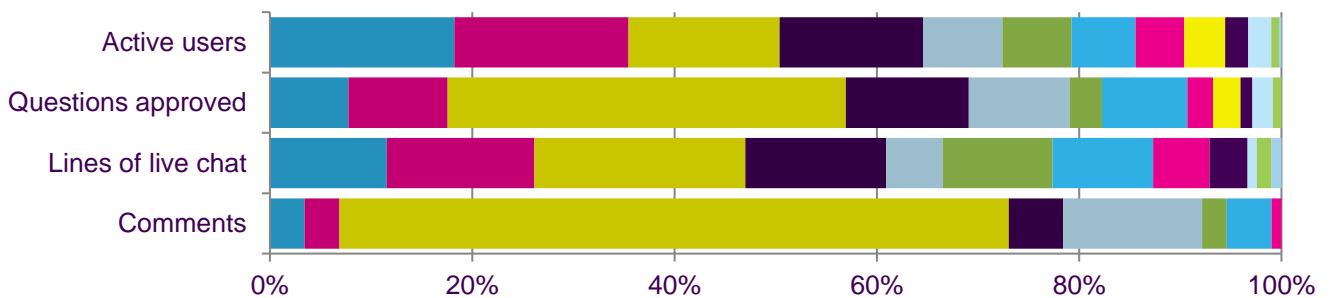
November 2018

The Environmental Care Zone was a themed zone for primary schools, supported by Science Foundation Ireland.

- William McCarthy is a PhD student researching how contamination gets into food and how we can stop that from happening
- Roberto Ferrari studies how honeybees communicate with each other
- Karen O'Neill works with freshwater pearl mussels aiming to understand the quality of the rivers they live in
- Jasmine Headlam, this zone's winner, studies jellyfish venom and uses computers to identify the different components
- Chinna Devarapu builds circuits for light to find bugs in water

This was the busiest zone in November's *I'm a Scientist* Ireland, with over 2,000 questions sent to the scientists in ASK. More students joined the Environmental Care Zone evening live chat than any other zone, across all *I'm a Scientist* zones this November.

School data at a glance

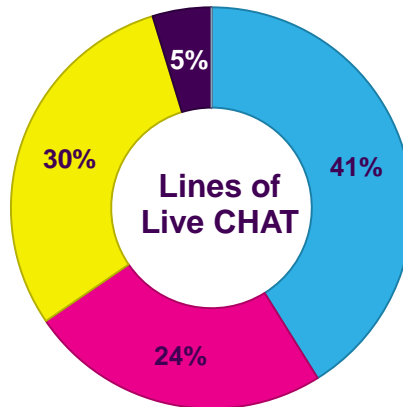


- Prosperous N S, Kildare (U)
- St Colmans Clara National School, Kilkenny
- Our Lady Of Mercy N S, Sligo (DEIS)
- Scoil San Lionard, Kilkenny
- Gaelscoil Na Cruaiche, Mayo
- S N Gort Na Huaighe, Tipperary
- S N Baile Ui Ghiblin, Cork
- St Marys Parish Primary School, Louth (U)
- Shandrum National School, Co Cork
- St Molaga Senior Ns, Dublin (U)
- S N Ath Na Lionta, Cork
- Deravoy National School, Monaghan (DEIS/U)
- Scoil Ailbhe, Tipperary

We want to increase the participation of under-represented groups going into STEM careers. Indicated here are SFI priority counties (U) and Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS).

Find out more at about.imascientist.ie/widening-participation

Scientist activity



SCIENTIST	PROFILE VIEWS	POSITION
Jasmine Headlam	1,227	Winner
William McCarthy	1,415	2nd
Karen O Neill	971	3rd
Roberto Ferrari	950	4th
Chinna Devarapu	839	5th

Key figures from the Environmental Care Zone and averages of the November zones

PAGE VIEWS	ENVIRONMENTAL CARE ZONE	NOV '18 ZONES AVERAGE
Total zone	29,466	19,289
ASK page	4,790	2,268
CHAT page	1,517	1,171
VOTE page	1,307	800

ENVIRONMENTAL CARE ZONE	NOV '18 ZONES AVERAGE	IAS 2012-18 AVERAGE
Environmental Care Zone Schools	13	11
Students logged in	433	373
% of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE	91%	70%
Questions asked	2,102	1,011
Questions approved	592	416
Answers given	724	508
Comments	224	67
Votes	563	307
Live chats	19	16
Lines of live chat	5,730	4,232
Average lines per live chat	302	268

Popular topics

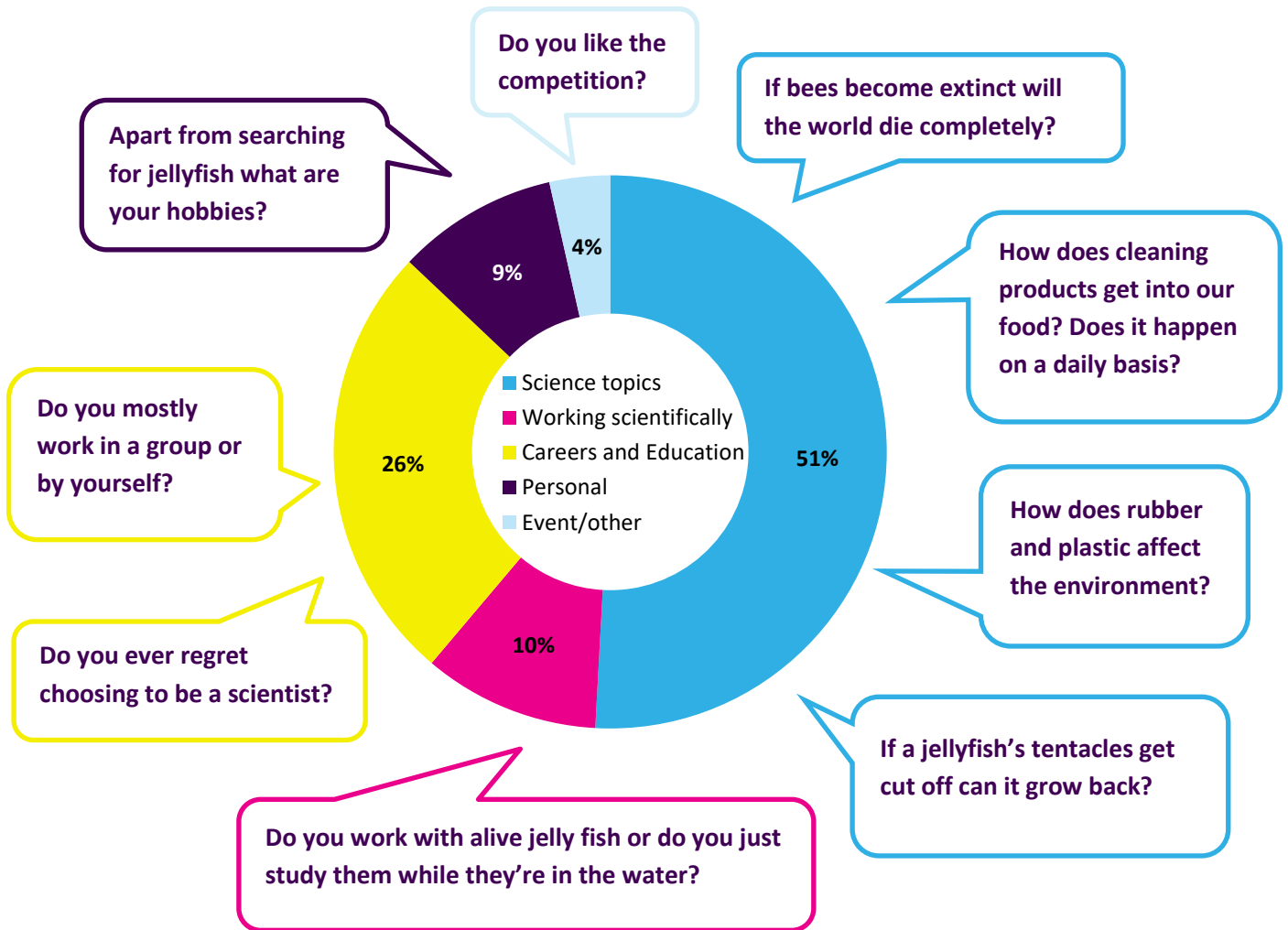
Students really engaged with the zone theme and the scientists' work, especially Jasmine's work with jellyfish. Students wanted to know all about different jellyfish species, where they live, what they eat and the types of treatments Jasmine has made for stings.

Roberto's work with bees was another popular topic, with students asking him how they help the environment by pollination and how we help to stop bees from dying out. Karen was asked about her research into freshwater pearl mussels and how she checks river qualities to help the mussel to survive.

Students showed a great concern and awareness of the zone theme, with global warming and pollution popular terms used in ASK. They wanted to know the causes of pollution and how we can help the environment globally and with smaller actions at home. Scientists gave the students some good ideas, such as less littering and using environmentally friendly materials instead of plastics.

Question themes and example questions in the Zone

Find out about how we've coded the questions at about.imascientist.org.uk/student-question-coding



Examples of good engagement

In ASK, one student's question to Jasmine inspired a follow-up question the next day, showing that the student had engaged with answered questions on the site and responded to get more information themselves.

? Question: do jellyfish have eyes
1 Keywords: animal, eye, jellyfish

Asked by **the joeff** to **Jasmine, Karen** on 8 Nov 2018. This question was also asked by **Xxsamanthaxx**.



Jasmine Headlam answered on 8 Nov 2018:

Some jellyfish do have eyes! For instance, the box jellyfish has 24 "eyes," two of which are actually capable of seeing in colour.



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Question: Why does the box jellyfish have 24 eyes I know that they use two for colour but what are the other twenty two for

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Keywords: animal, eye, jellyfish

Asked by **Sarah207** to **Jasmine** on 9 Nov 2018.



Jasmine Headlam answered on 9 Nov 2018:

That's right, they use two for seeing things in colour and the rest of their eyes are very sensitive to light so they use them for knowing when it's daytime because they migrate to the surface of the water to feed on plankton during the day.

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Often, students' questions in live chats led to more in depth conversations, where the students felt comfortable enough to share their own experiences with the scientists. One student started chatting to Karen with only short questions but quickly found more confidence:

"What was the hardest thing you had to study?" – Student

"I find it really hard to work in the river where I study because there is a lot of rain there so I have to be really careful, and make sure my equipment is put in really safely or it will wash away" – Karen, scientist

"What was the easiest thing you studied?" – Student

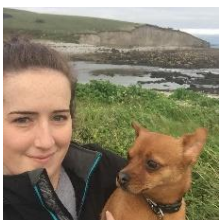
"In college I studied the difference between river mussels and lake mussels, I just had to weigh them and measure how long they were :)" – Karen, scientist

"Have you ever thought of studying something and you did it but half way threw you gave up?" – Student

"Yeah I nearly dropped out of college in second year, I thought it was too hard! But I decided to keep trying it and got there in the end :)" – Karen, scientist

"I wanted to be and artist when i am older but after reading about you and what you are studying I want to be a scientist so basically you are my idol in a way i want to be like you when i grow up. Who was your idol when you were younger?" – Student

"Aw that's amazing that's really great to hear, the good news is you can be an artist and a scientist! I know lots of people that do both, like a lady that built a giant mussel for us that you can walk inside for her art project in college :)" – Karen, scientist



Scientist winner: Jasmine Headlam

Jasmine's plans for the prize money: *"I want to give a talk at schools and answer more of your questions about jellyfish. I will bring some jellyfish in a fish tank so that you can get up close and personal with some of the world's most dangerous creatures."*

Read Jasmine's [thank you message](#).

Student winner: *faith2018*

For great engagement during the activity, this student will receive a gift voucher and a certificate.

Feedback

We're still collecting feedback from teachers, students and scientists but here are a few of the comments made about November's activity...

I have learnt much more about marine biology and how not all scientists work in labs! – **Student**

Your questions have rejuvenated me and have given me the “oomph” to finish my PhD with the same energy that I started it with and I will forever be grateful. – **Jasmine, zone winner**