



making physics matter

The Ogden Trust strategy

September 2021-August 2026



Making physics matter

Our mission is to increase the uptake of physics post-16 by supporting physics education and engagement for all young people (4-18), particularly those in under-represented groups. This document sets out our three key strategic priorities that will underpin our work towards this mission.

Since the Trust was founded in 1999, it has supported education in an effort to level the playing field between people who have economic or social privilege and those who do not. Over time, the focus of the Trust has shifted to concentrate on supporting schools and teachers in their delivery of physics teaching and learning, especially in areas of disadvantage.



Who couldn't love physics? It's all about why we're here. It's about life itself. How could it not be fascinating?

Sir Peter Ogden, Founder and former Chair of The Ogden Trust



In an increasingly technical world, physics empowers people to make informed decisions: questioning, understanding and processing the world around them. It also provides the skills and knowledge to contribute to changing, improving and advancing that world with new ideas and discoveries, both in physics and beyond.

Physics can underpin so many career paths and opportunities in diverse sectors and industries. The critical thinking skills that are learnt through studying physics can be transferred into many spheres of life and work, and are increasingly important in navigating the scientific, social and political landscape.

Systemic failures in physics education and long-established perceptions about physics can limit engagement and achievement. The Ogden Trust wants to ensure that no one feels excluded from taking physics further; we want to challenge the stereotypes, expand access and opportunities, and make physics matter to more people.



Physics as a subject has a huge importance in the world today and we must ensure that access to good quality physics education is about the ability to learn and not the ability to pay.

Cameron Ogden, Chair of The Ogden Trust



Strategic priorities

Increase the uptake of physics post-16 by supporting physics education and engagement for all young people (4-18), particularly those in under-represented groups.

School-led partnerships to build



- supportive, collaborative teaching communities
- improvement in physics education & engagement
- enrichment opportunities
- strong environments for physics learning

Support for teachers of physics to provide



- ongoing professional development
- understanding, knowledge & teaching tools
- inspiration, skills & resources for practical physics
- a sense of appreciation & value

Ensuring physics opportunities for all through



- leadership, action & ideas
- working with universities, employers & community groups
- equitable access to physics-related enrichment
- understanding & experiencing career pathways from physics

High quality physics education is critical to engagement with physics. We can help to bridge the gap between those who have access to great physics teaching and those who do not; those who believe physics is for them, and those who feel disenfranchised from the subject and the opportunities it can underpin. By building longer-term, working relationships with schools, teachers and educators we can influence a broader, deeper and more sustainable change in physics education.

Our ethos

We have developed our strategy on a foundation of experience, collaboration, listening and learning; we want to build long-term relationships to ensure that physics teaching and learning captures the imagination, inspires young learners, and informs and opens future opportunities.



Collaborative working

We support and encourage collaboration between schools, as well as with local employers and community organisations. When appropriate, we deliver our programmes in collaboration with other organisations to increase our reach and impact.



Recognising teachers' expertise

We value the great work our teachers do and endeavour to provide opportunities for them to be rewarded and recognised for this effort, as part of a supportive, inclusive community of teachers and physics educators.



Listening to our community

Our programmes are centred around the needs of teachers and listening to the broader education community. The Ogden team includes practising teachers and education specialists who inform and direct our programmes to meet the needs of educators and learners.



Building long-term relationships

We build long-term relationships with schools, teachers, universities, employers and community groups to enable sustainable change, and to embed and evaluate the impact of our programmes.



Developing and sharing evidence

We develop evidence about what works (and what doesn't) from our programmes and share this with the wider physics education community.

School partnerships

School-led partnerships are at the heart of the Trust's strategy. These supportive communities help to improve engagement with physics and to build a sustainable improvement in physics education.

By working together, schools can create a supportive network to develop the teaching and learning of physics; schools can offer opportunities, activities and events in partnership that individually would not be possible. They share practice, processes, ideas and resources, and work together to create a culture of science capital. Partnerships can help schools to best deliver physics both within and beyond the curriculum.

The School Partnerships programme comes in different sizes: local clusters, established collaborations and regional support. Across all of these, the Trust encourages and facilitates schools to focus on:

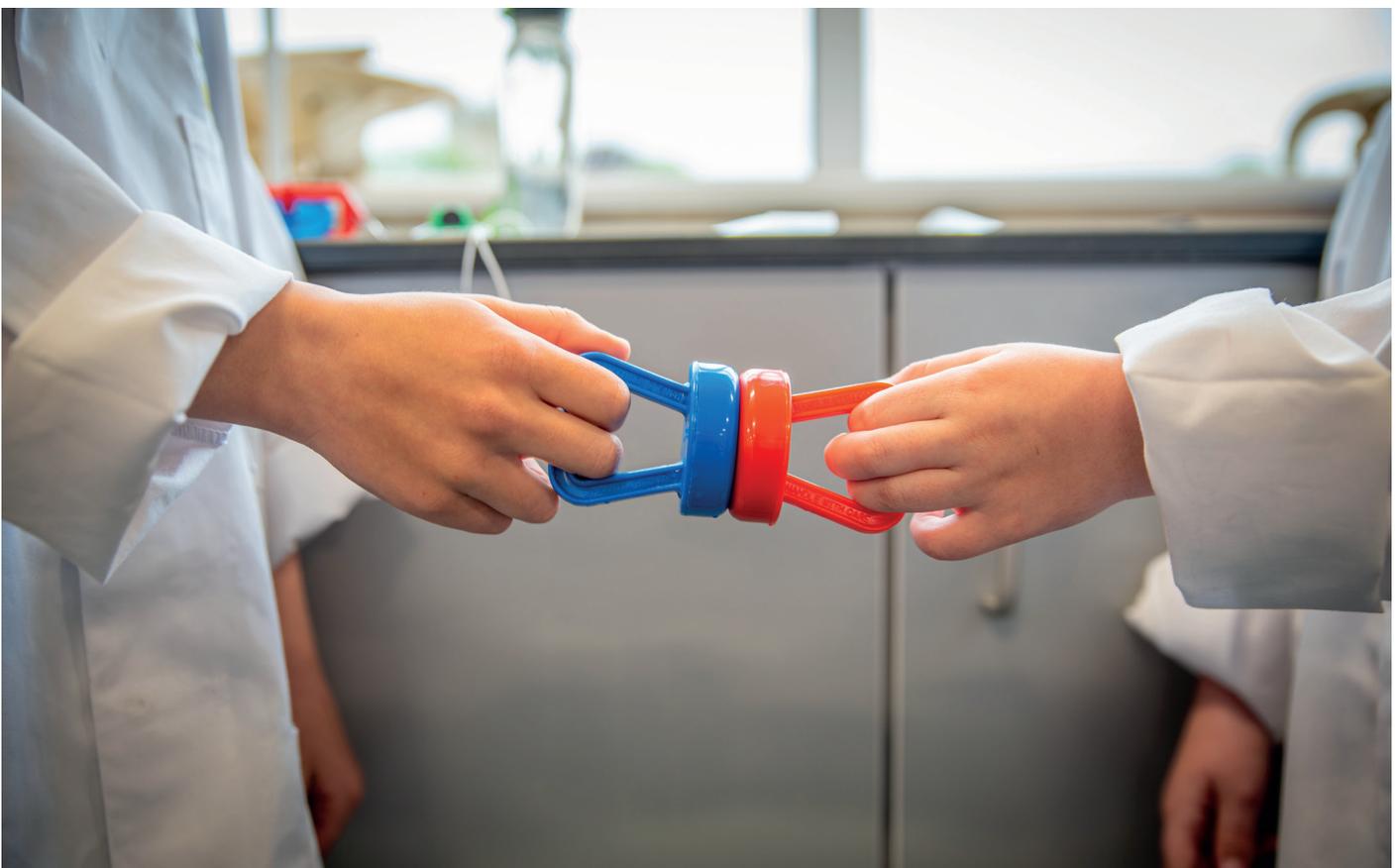
- teacher professional development to help improve the teaching of physics; empowering teachers so they can inspire their students to take physics further.
- the wider learning environment, including support for technicians and teaching assistants, and investment in physics learning spaces and resources.
- enrichment through family and community group engagement, and networking with local employers to provide a range of broader physics experiences for pupils.



The School Partnerships programme is encouraging local physics communities to work together; building solid foundations when partnerships are first established is sustaining continued development and helping to cement improvements in physics teaching and learning. The partnerships cover all phases of education, sowing the seed for science from early years and building progression through to sixth form.

By working across phases, schools and regions, the School Partnerships programme can:

- affect sustained change in attitudes, approaches and opportunities in physics.
- help build momentum in physics learning from primary through to secondary, and beyond, raising the profile and standards of physics across schools.
- contribute to a far-reaching improvement in the physics education provision within areas of significant social and economic challenge.



Pupils at partnership schools learn about forces following the Phizzi Forces CPD programme.

Teacher support

Effective support for teachers of physics at all ages, from 4-18, underpins the Trust's strategy; inspiring and committed teachers in the classroom are fundamental in changing the learning landscape.

Engaged, inspiring and enthusiastic teachers throughout the education phases can better develop and encourage learners. High quality physics teaching, coupled with a broader understanding of physics beyond the classroom, is a key factor in young people's decisions to pursue physics at a higher level.

The Trust works hard to develop meaningful relationships with teachers throughout their careers so that they feel supported and nurtured in their profession. The conversation starts with Teach Physics internships for physics undergraduates whilst still at university. A Teacher Network provides professional development opportunities for teachers in primary and secondary schools, working to ensure that they feel valued, appreciated and able to do their jobs.

- Early career programmes provide mentoring and peer group support from teacher training through the first five years of a teacher's career.
- Research opportunities for primary science subject leads and secondary teachers of physics build engagement and enthusiasm for continued teaching.
- Opportunities to work on projects related to the teaching and learning of physics, and coaching other teachers of physics, help to develop leadership in physics education.

This ongoing support aims to improve retention of teachers through:

- building subject and pedagogical confidence.
- offering opportunities to develop skills and physics leadership.
- improving job satisfaction.

Opportunities for all

Through leadership, action and ideas, the Trust aims to ensure access to physics-related enrichment and future pathways are open to all regardless of socio-economic constraints.

A young person is making career limiting decisions by age 10, which are often consolidated by age 14; providing access to a broad range of enrichment opportunities will help to keep more pathways open for all.

The Trust is expanding and supporting opportunities for universities, employers and community groups to engage with young people, taking physics beyond the classroom and giving an insight into the real-world application of science.

- The Outreach Officer programme supports universities so they can offer sustained and wider access to higher education research, learning and outreach; strategic, repeat interventions can influence real change in attitudes, learning and prospects.
- Ogden internship programmes provide a vital springboard into future possibilities, broadening access to career insights and providing meaningful work experience.
- Working with key organisations such as local community groups and industry partners can help raise awareness of opportunities for families and other key influencers on student aspirations.

Physics education and career pathways should not be limited by social or economic factors; ensuring opportunities are open to all is a key strategic aim of the Trust as it endeavours to:

- create sustainable, effective programmes that meet the needs of young people.
- provide support and networking opportunities for universities, employers and community groups.

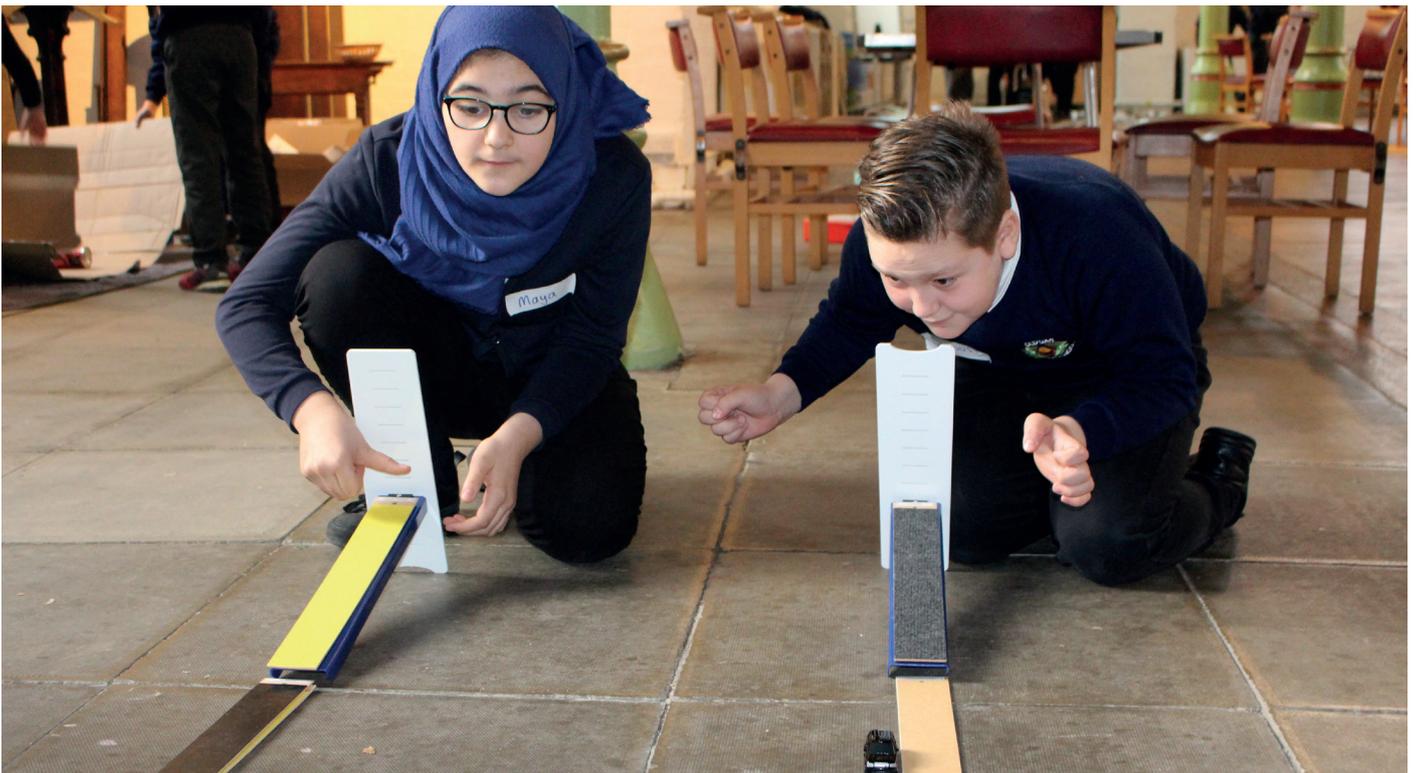
Grant giving

Alongside the core Ogden programmes, the Trust awards a limited number of small grants to support innovative teaching and learning initiatives, and other projects aligned to the charitable interests of the Trustees.

The Ogden grant-making capacity gives the Trust flexibility to support ideas and initiatives that fall outside of the core programmes. Ogden grants allow investment in smaller, innovative initiatives that can kickstart physics education opportunities or make a contribution to broader issues in education and other social philanthropy.

- Physics education grants support projects and initiative that develop the teaching and learning of physics, especially in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.
- Trustees' grants support charitable organisations, projects and causes that are outside the sphere of physics education.

Funding will always be an enabler for change and The Ogden Trust is committed to using its financial resources to support worthwhile causes and initiatives. Whilst the core focus of the grant funding is physics education with an open application process, the Trust is fortunate to have the flexibility to also make contributions to other charitable causes.



Ogden funding to support community initiatives.



making physics matter

The Ogden Trust
The Phoenix Brewery
13 Bramley Road, London W10 6SP
T: +44 (0)20 8634 7470
E: office@ogdentrust.com
W: www.ogdentrust.com
@ogdentrust

Registered charity: 1037570

