



Tiernan



Sonia



Mossy



Maureen



Bernard

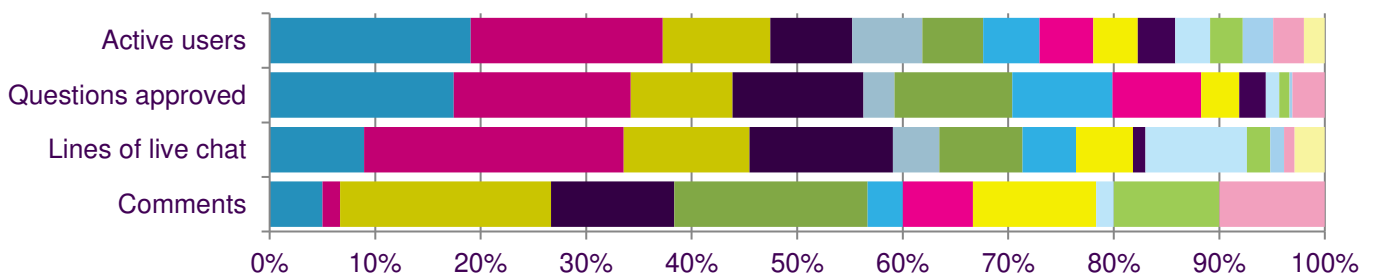
November 2018

The Neon Zone was a general zone supported by Wellcome and involved five scientists:

- Tiernan Henry is researching how water and the Earth interact, particularly the water just below the Earth's surface
- Sonia Lenehan, the zone winner, studies how the brain grows in the first two years of life
- Mossy Kelly studies how students learn physics and is also a lecturer at the University of Hull
- Maureen Williams studies the parasites that controls the behaviour of their hosts; fish, corals and other animals
- Bernard Leddy is a drug information pharmacist and consultant in toxicology, writing reports on drugs for lawyers

This zone was very busy in ASK with over 700 questions sent to scientists, who between them gave over 1,000 answers. Sonia and Maureen were the most active scientists, making up 90% of all chat lines between them.

School data at a glance

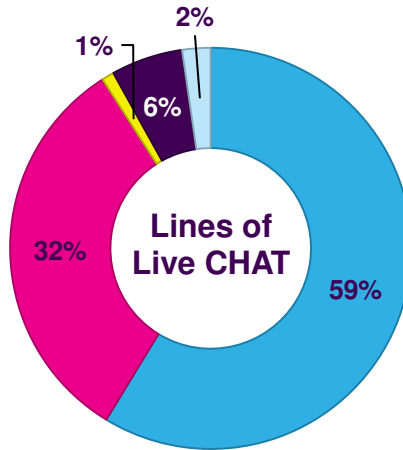


- Muire Na Nrael Ns, Louth (U)
- Coláiste Chillian, Dublin
- Le Cheile Secondary School, Dublin (U)
- S N Colm Cille, Clare (U)
- Killinarden Community School, Dublin (DEIS/U)
- St. David's C.B.S., Dublin (DEIS/U)
- Coláiste Cholmáin, Cork
- Mount Carmel Secondary School, Dublin (DEIS/U)
- St Molaga Senior Ns, Dublin (U)
- Ennis Community College, Clare (DEIS/U)
- Dún NA Rí College, Cavan
- Our Lady Of Mercy N S, Sligo (DEIS)
- S N Mharcuis B, Cork (DEIS)
- Lackamore N S, Tipperary
- S N Naomh Feichin, Co Mayo

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
Sonia Lenehan	1,030	Winner
Maureen Williams	775	2nd
Mossy Kelly	936	3rd
Tienan Henry	885	4th
Bernard Leddy	763	5th

Key figures from the Neon Zone and averages of the November zones

PAGE VIEWS	NEON ZONE	NOV '18 ZONES AVERAGE
Total zone	24,152	19,289
ASK page	3,076	2,268
CHAT page	1,424	1,171
VOTE page	1,030	800

	NEON ZONE	NOV '18 ZONES AVERAGE	IAS 2012-18 AVERAGE
Neon Zone Schools	15	12	11
Students logged in	502	392	373
% of students active in ASK, CHAT or VOTE	90%	87%	70%
Questions asked	1,445	1,011	665
Questions approved	716	416	289
Answers given	1,043	563	508
Comments	78	80	67
Votes	441	344	307
Live chats	23	18	16
Lines of live chat	5,826	4,692	4,232
Average lines per live chat	253	253	268

Popular topics

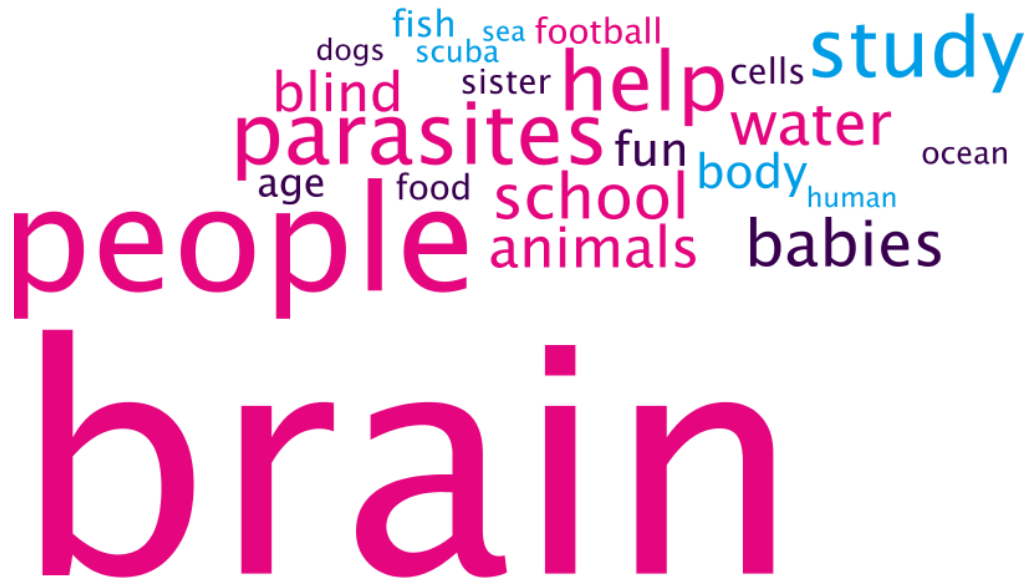
The students were very interested in the work of Sonia and Maureen's in live chats. The brain was very popular, with students asking about how the brain works and develops, as well as asking Sonia why she wanted to work in this area. Maureen was asked about parasites; what they are and the ways they can affect and control the behaviour of their hosts.

Over 30% of questions in ASK were about careers and education. Students wanted to know why the scientists had chosen their jobs, how they got into that area and the career path they had taken, as well as about their achievements in their work. Students also asked for advice on subjects to take at school and university.

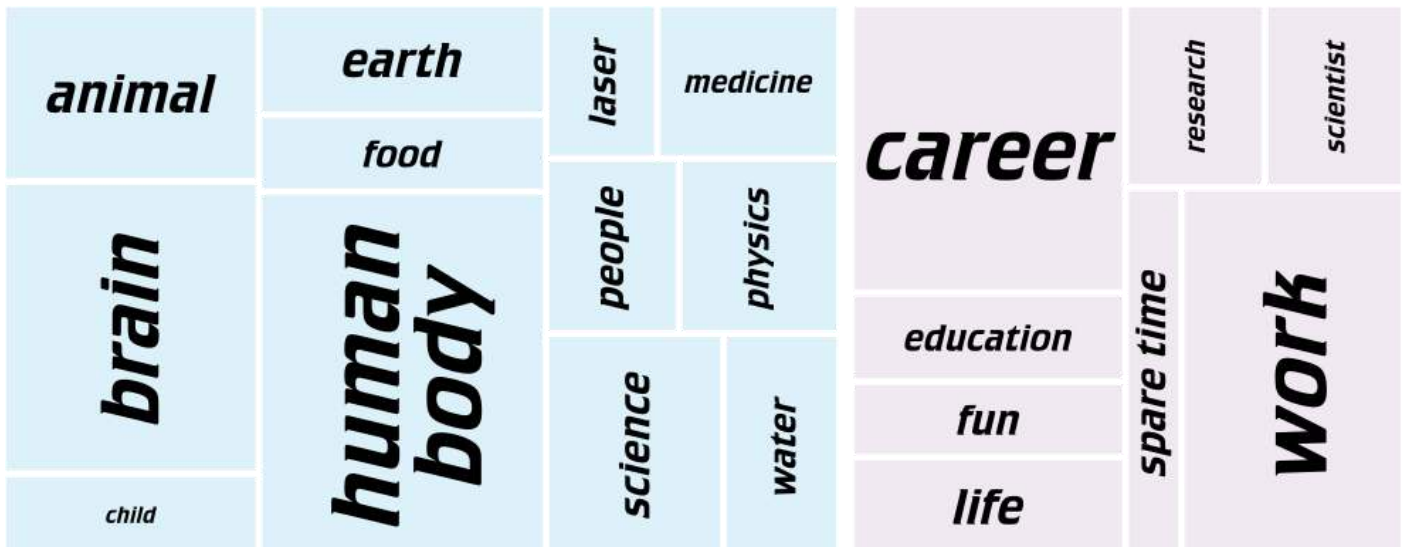
In ASK there were lots of questions about biology and the human body. Students wanted to know *how* things happened, usually things in their own body such as "how does your heart beat?"



Keywords from live chats in the zone. Size of the word represents its popularity



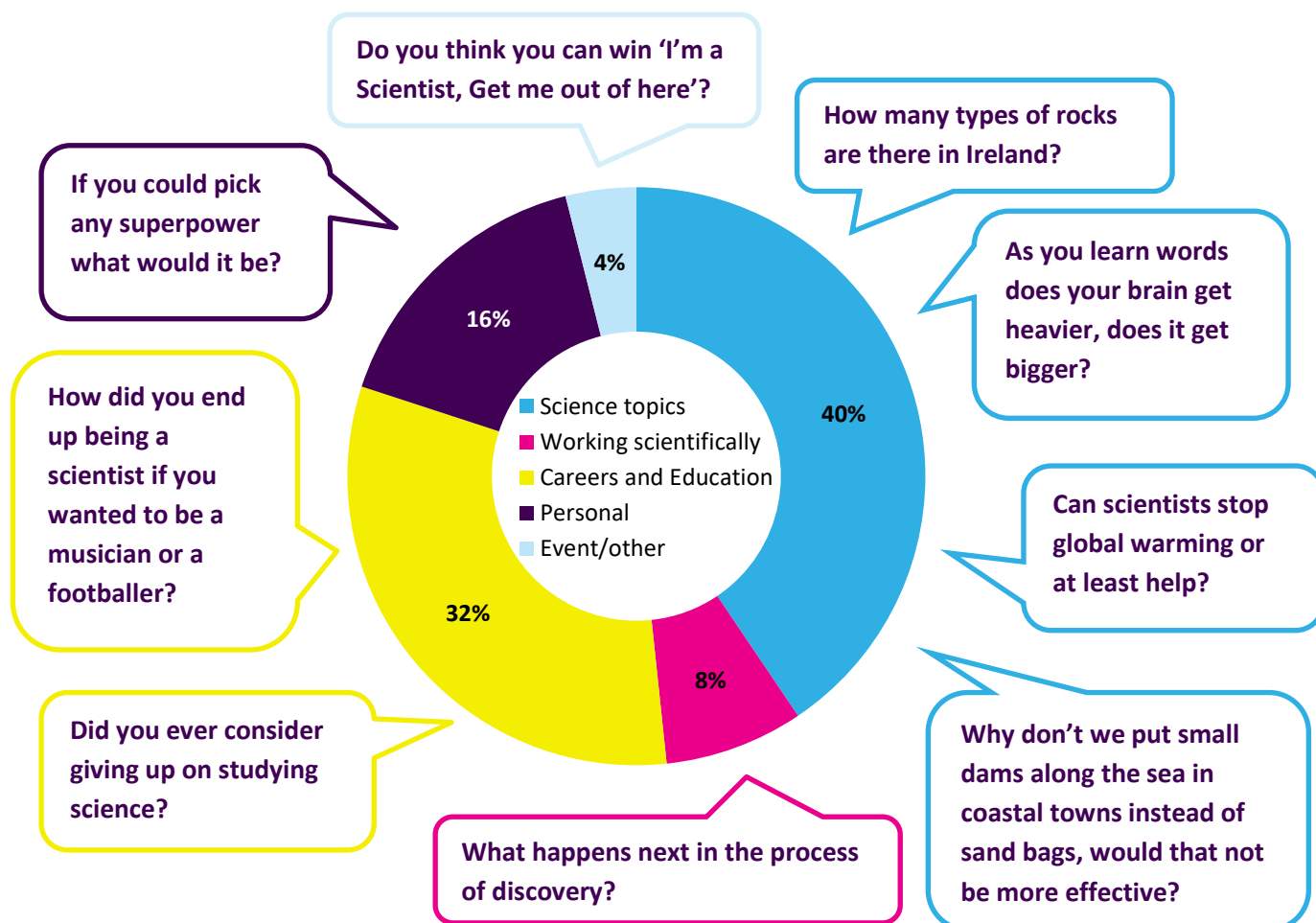
Top Keywords of questions approved in the Zone



■ Science ■ Being a scientist

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

Students asked lots of questions about what it's like to be a scientist and the different experiences in their jobs. Mossy gave a great answer to a student about a time he made a mistake in a lecture, showing scientists that scientists are human and can get things wrong too:

"What is the hardest part of your job?" — Student

"Great question. Well in my job as a lecturer I have to do quite a lot of teaching, which I love. However, sometimes it is very hard because I get quite nervous when I have to speak in public, particularly when I'm supposed to be teaching things to people. I'll give you an example...I spent a long time preparing a lecture which explains how current moves around a wire for my second year physics class at Uni. However, I didn't notice a mistake in one of the equations. So there I was, at the board, going through the maths when I realized it wouldn't work out. So I had to just stop and say "Listen, I'm sorry but I've messed this up, can we go back?". I felt quite bad about myself for a while after that...luckily my students are all super nice so they understood." — Mossy, scientist

In the chats, students showed interest in lots of different science topics, and often asked follow up questions:

"Maureen what do you think about stem cell research" — Student

"It can be really helpful! There are many types of stem cells, and some of them are why we might be able to help people heal their hearts and have organs" — Maureen, scientist

“Is it possible to make new organs with Stem Cells?” – **Student**

“Yes! There are reserach centres working on this at the moment around the world!” – **Sonia, scientist**

“Will we be able to grow brains from stem cell?” – **Student**

“Maybe some day!” – **Sonia, scientist**



Scientist winner: Sonia Lenehan

Sonia’s plans for the prize money: “help children who are blind or have visual impairments understand science.”

Read Sonia’s **thank you message**.

Student winner: Megan

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 learned that my favourite scientist likes to give money to charity like me and likes Taylor Swift like me – **Student**

They really enjoyed the live chat & were thrilled to speak with the scientists! It was a whole school activity and there was a fantastic buzz! Thanks so much for having us. – **Teacher**



Ciara Sheehan

Some great chats with all the scientists in the **@imascientist** competition over the last week! It even inspired a 1st year student to make a periodic table cake! **#StopAndAsk** **#ScienceWeek2018** **@lecheiless** **@scienceirel** **@ScienceWeek** **@JctScience**



I would highly recommend that every scientist participate in *I’m a Scientist*. It is fun, interesting and lively and takes you outside your comfort zone! It is also an incredibly rewarding experience and allows you to show how many different jobs there are in science! – **Sonia, zone winner**