

News release



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Operation Earth: new family science show tackles some of the biggest questions facing our planet

We all know that the Earth is facing tough challenges, and that it will be up to future generations to take them on. Starting this month, Oxford University Museum of Natural History is set to inspire families and children in the science of the environment with a new free family science show all about Earthy and the Doctor.

In *Operation Earth*, Earthy is feeling a little under the weather, and has decided to visit the Doctor for a check-up. The show's audience will become trainee environmental scientists, helping to investigate the planet's land, air, and oceans to help Earthy feel better.

The new show launches at the Museum of Natural History on 13 February, with performances at 2pm and 3pm, with further performances on dates in March, April and May. With the shows continuing into the summer and autumn, the Museum aims to reach 10,000 people with the science shows and additional 'Meet the Expert' sessions, where visitors can get hands-on with science and ask scientists their burning questions.

The *Operation Earth* project is part of a two-year national programme to inspire families with children aged 6-11 with world-leading environmental research. Hands-on events and activities with families will highlight the relevance of contemporary environmental science issues to their daily lives and to society's future.

"We are really excited to bring the *Operation Earth* programme to the museum, enabling us to engage thousands of children and families in this crucial area of scientific work. It is an important



part of the museum’s strategy to inspire and nurture the next generation of natural scientists and enthusiasts, and *Operation Earth* will do just that,” says Janet Stott, deputy director and head of public engagement at the Museum of Natural History.

The museum’s *Operation Earth* shows will be performed by scientists, many from the University of Oxford, and members of the audience will get the opportunity to take part in the show and find out more about sciences of the environment.

“As a climate scientist I work with policy makers, scientists, businesses and members of the public to help them understand the importance of action in addressing one of the biggest challenges of our time. An understanding of the science is critical to bring about the change that we need, and projects like *Operation Earth* are a vital way of inspiring that change,” says Dr Peter Walton, Research Fellow at Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford.

Full details of the *Operation Earth* shows and ‘Meet the Expert’ sessions are available on the Museum of Natural History [website](#). The theme will also run through the museum’s family programming this year, a highlight being the Super Science Saturday: People & Planet family science fair on Saturday 10 March.



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Notes to editors

About Operation Earth

The Operation Earth programme is directed and project managed by The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres, in collaboration with NERC researchers and three members with considerable expertise in engaging the public with environmental science; The Natural History Museum in London, Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh and Eden Project in Cornwall.

Eleven science centres and museums will start delivering this programme to families in 2018 with most launching in the February half-term. Over 100,000 children and adults across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will take part in Operation Earth.

About the Museum of Natural History

Founded in 1860 as the centre for scientific study at the University of Oxford, the Museum of Natural History now holds the University's internationally significant collections of entomological, geological and zoological specimens. Housed in a stunning Pre-Raphaelite-inspired example of neo-Gothic architecture, the Museum's growing collections underpin a broad programme of natural environment research, teaching and public engagement.

In 2015, the Museum was a **Finalist in the Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year**. In 2016, it won the top accolade, Best of the Best, in the **Museums + Heritage Awards**.

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