



# CREST: Building project work into the curriculum

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*What we did • Results • Benefits • How you can get involved*

## What did we aim to do in this project?

CREST Awards is the British Science Association's education scheme that inspires young people to think and behave as scientists and engineers. It does this by providing pupils with the opportunity to do their own STEM-related projects, often within curriculum time. CREST is supported by UKRI and Urenco.

The 'CREST: Building project work into the curriculum' project was supported by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation. Its intention was to encourage more schools to use open-ended student projects within the formal curriculum, and for this to have a positive effect on students.



**Attainment  
in science**



**Attitudes towards  
science**







**Employability skills**

According to Gatsby research published in 2017<sup>1</sup>, 15% of schools in England gave all students the opportunity to do open-ended and extended investigative projects in science at some point in the course of their secondary school career. The approach was most often used in Key Stage 3 with 11-14-year-olds where there was more flexibility and less exam pressure. This approach helped engage and motivate students, which had the potential to support engagement with science and programmes like CREST further up the school.

## How did we encourage more open-ended student projects?

This guidance document was published in April 2021 and enabled people to get a good overview of this approach, with information specifically tailored to CREST. The guidance features:

-  Help identifying curriculum links, particularly in Key Stage 5
-  Practical case studies
-  Project planning and timeline suggestions
-  Prompts to spark conversation and thinking



[Download the guidance](#)

<sup>1</sup> The Gatsby Charitable Foundation (2017) Good Practical Science

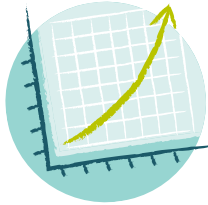
# Results



CREST can and is being done successfully in curriculum time



CREST improves the inclusiveness of the curriculum as is for ALL children



The number of CREST projects in the curriculum have increased as a result of increased teacher, pupil and senior leadership buy-in



CREST directly links to qualifications as part of Key Stage 5 assessments

## What are the benefits?

### For teachers



Having more motivated students



Developing positive relationships with students



Can reduce extra working hours outside of curriculum time

“It opened their eyes that a science project can be fun. It also gives me time to talk to students individually, to find out more about them and what drives them.”



### For students



Providing a more realistic impression of how science works



Understanding that there is not necessarily a correct outcome to practical work



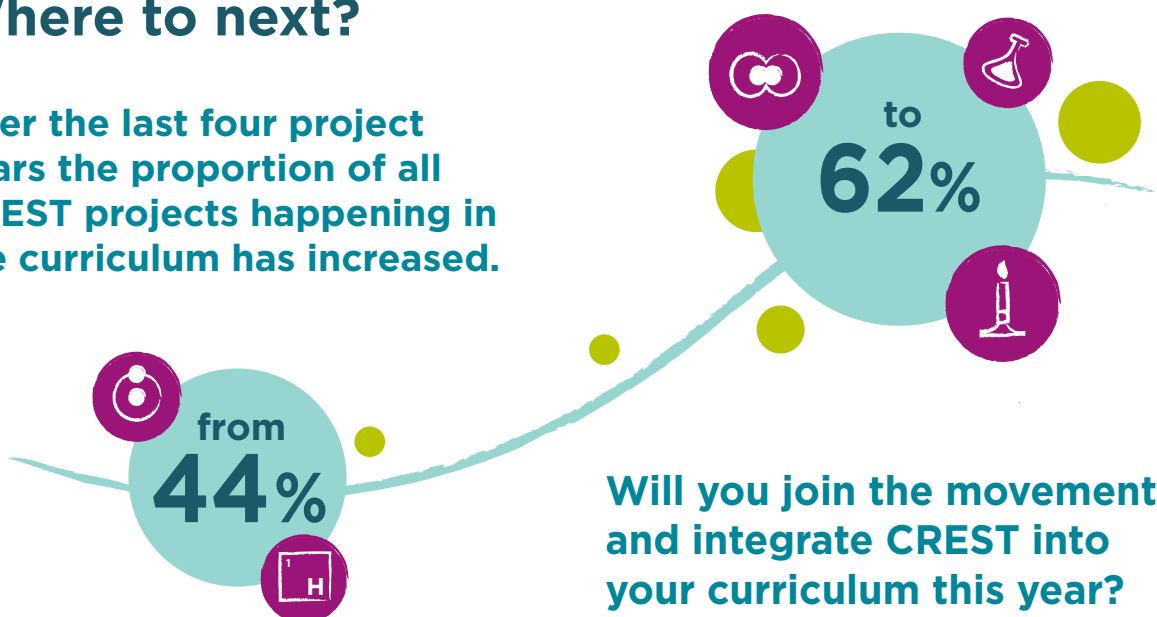
Valuing practical work as a learning experience itself

“I think there is an obsession with having an all singing, all dancing project. I stressed to people that they don't have to have success. It's about the journey.”



# Where to next?

Over the last four project years the proportion of all CREST projects happening in the curriculum has increased.



Will you join the movement and integrate CREST into your curriculum this year?



Start planning your CREST projects for the year ahead by downloading our guidance pack:

[secondarylibrary.crestawards.org/  
investigative-practical-science-in-the-  
curriculum/65418842](https://secondarylibrary.crestawards.org/investigative-practical-science-in-the-curriculum/65418842)

Or scan the QR code:



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