

# TEDxExeter

**x = independently organized TED event**

Press release

## **TEDxExeter audience grows to four times the size in 2015**

Streaming the conference live on the internet enabled more than four times as many people to watch this year's TEDxExeter speakers live on the day. For the first time this year, it wasn't just the audience at the Exeter Northcott Theatre that was dazzled by the wide range of talks. It also reached viewers in 36 other countries including Iraq, Swaziland and Canada.

The conference also reached a much wider audience within Exeter. Police HQ, Central Library, Exeter City Council, St Peter's School, Exeter School, Exeter College, Southernhay House and St Loyes all screened the event live, reaching an additional 1,200 or so people. Combined with the audience at the Northcott and the general livestream this added up to many more than the total audiences of all three previous conferences combined.

"Inspirational", "thought-provoking", "brilliant": these are just some of the adjectives that were flying around the room at the fourth TEDxExeter conference at Exeter Northcott Theatre last Friday. With a line-up that was arguably the best yet, the day was full of ideas worth sharing.

In response to the first talk, by Matthew Owen about saving the rainforest, Nick Cloke, head of communications & engagement at Dorset Police tweeted: "Some parallels for us in policing. How do we help empower communities to improve things for themselves long-term?". At the end of "a fantastic day of inspirational talks", Devon and Cornwall Police tweeted: "together we CAN make a difference – thank you TEDxExeter".

Highlights of the day included a brave and passionate attack on Islamic fundamentalism from Karima Bennoune. Dick Moore told a very personal story of the impact of mental illness on young people. Celia McKeon asked the audience compare the feeling of a clenched fist with holding out an open hand, as she outlined ways in which we could reimagine security? In one of the lighter moments, magician Keiron Kirkland read the mind of Jon-Paul Hedge, the editor of Exeter's local newspaper, the Express and Echo.

"Having one of the most mentally stimulating work days in a long time watching TEDxExeter. Some difficult questions being addressed," said Wesley Neary on Twitter.

"I have just had the privilege to be part of something really special. An amazing day," said Helen Patterson.

“Astonishing performance by Sara Hyde. Powerful theatre, hardcore data crunching and a powerful vision. Make her PM,” said Paul Trueman about her talk, “we need to talk about prisons”.

The team of volunteers that organises TEDxExeter is keen that people turn the inspiration of the day into action. So this year there were giant blackboards around the room and delegates were invited to complete the sentence “Before I die I want to...”. Delegates were also given a postcard, saying “Inspired by attending TEDxExeter 2015, I pledge that I will:”. They were invited to fill them in, and the TEDx team will post the card back to them in six months time as a reminder of their pledge.

“TEDxExeter is about ideas, and community, and action,” says organiser Claire Kennedy. “Our aim is to create a space where conversations that matter can take place and inspire action. We hope that these new initiatives will inspire more action. We are looking for spaces around the city that will host the “Before I die” boards, so that the idea can reach even more people.

“This year we also plan to introduce salons, meet ups and tweet ups to keep the ideas flowing and allow more people to join the conversations.”

And the audience at the Northcott Theatre rose to the occasion. Having heard an urgent cry for help saving the rainforest from [Cool Earth](#) co-founder Matthew Owen, they made donations to the charity that will save just over 13 acres of rainforest – that’s 3,140 trees saved.

Videos of all the TEDxExeter talks will be posted on the [TEDxExeter.com](#) within four weeks.

**For more information**, pictures or to interview any of the speakers, please contact Cathy Debenham, [cathy@tedxexeter.com](mailto:cathy@tedxexeter.com), 07786 440129. Photographs of speakers are available for download from the [TEDxExeter Flickr page](#). Click on individual pictures to see captions and picture credits.

## Notes to editors

[TEDxExeter](#) is organised by a team of local volunteers.

It is made possible by the generosity of local companies who support the event. The full list of sponsors and partners for TEDxExeter 2015 is:

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### **About TEDx, x = independently organized event**

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TED Talks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized. (Subject to certain rules and regulations.)

### **About TED**

TED is a non-profit organization devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. Started as a four-day conference in California almost 30 years ago, TED has grown to support its mission with multiple initiatives. The two annual TED Conferences invite the world's leading thinkers and doers to speak for 18 minutes on a diverse mix of topics. Many of these talks are then made available, free, at TED.com. TED speakers have included Bill Gates, Jane Goodall, Elizabeth Gilbert, Sir Richard Branson, Nandan Nilekani, Philippe Starck, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Isabel Allende and former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown. The TED2015 Conference takes place in Vancouver, British Columbia, along with the TEDActive simulcast in neighboring Whistler. TEDWomen2015 takes place in Monterey, California.

TED's media initiatives include TED.com, where new TED Talks are posted daily; the Open Translation Project, which provides subtitles and interactive transcripts as well as translations from volunteers worldwide; the educational initiative TED-Ed; and TEDBooks, short e-books on powerful ideas. TED has established the annual TED Prize, where exceptional individuals with a wish to change the world get help translating their wishes into action; TEDx, which supports individuals or groups in hosting local, self-organized TED-style events around the world; and the TED Fellows program, helping innovators from around the globe to amplify the impact of their remarkable projects and activities.

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For information about TED's upcoming conferences, visit <http://www.ted.com/registration>.

