**Foreword**

Techniquest is an Educational Charity and leading Science Discovery Centre based in Cardiff Bay, created with the aim of making science accessible to all: seeking to embed Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) firmly into Welsh culture.

Having led the charity through the challenges of the pandemic and through significant changes to its funding model, as well as successfully delivering the Science Capital expansion which opened in 2020, our incumbent Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is now due to retire at the end of March 2024. This has led us to seek an early appointment to the role in order to ensure a smooth transition for all concerned.

Established in 1986 as the UK’s first Science Discovery Centre, Techniquest has welcomed millions of schoolchildren, families and independent adults into its centre over the years to explore the world of STEAM in an interactive, exciting and memorable way. In addition to this, outreach from the centre has enabled our passion for science to be shared more widely with community groups, families and school classes in the surrounding communities and across the whole of Wales.

Alongside other accolades, earlier this year Techniquest won the School Travel Organiser Award for Best Venue for STEM Learning, against strong competition from the Royal Observatory and the London Science Museum amongst others. Techniquest is also a finalist in this year’s Wales STEM Awards, in two categories: STEM Education Programme of the Year (not-for-profit) and STEM Company of the Year (under 50 employees).

Techniquest currently opens to the public every day throughout the Welsh school holidays, and in term-time from Wednesday to Sunday each week. Capacity has been reduced compared with pre-pandemic levels, to account for visitors’ preference for less crowded indoor spaces but, taking that into account, public visitor levels have made an excellent recovery since lockdowns were lifted. Schools’ attendances have also recovered to a large extent, supported by a variety of funders helping to cover their costs.

Enquiries for commercial Event Hire have improved significantly as people become more comfortable with face-to-face events, with private hires becoming more frequent during both our otherwise closed days of the week, and occasionally for evening bookings.

Thanks to funding from Garfield Weston and the KLA Foundation, a newly refurbished laboratory now operates for schools throughout the year as well as on selected public dates. A new projection unit for the Planetarium was added in 2022, improving and extending our offer to visitors. Other recent projects have included the introduction of a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, refreshing of the existing website and the introduction of an online shop.

Feedback from customers is reviewed each week with the intention of implementing change where possible to improve the visitor experience and to build resilience within the organisation. A new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) strategy is also now in place, along with a cross-departmental Working Group, set up with the intention of helping to create a culture across the organisation that values difference and aims to make everyone feel welcome.

While resources are limited, the small team involved are both dedicated and professional, and will provide strong support for the newly appointed CEO.

Leading this team, and operating closely with the directors and senior management on day-to-day matters, the position reports directly to the Chair of the Board and will work in concert with the Board of Trustees to deliver on its strategy to drive Techniquest forward.

***Karen Harris***

Karen Harris, Chair of the Board of Trustees