**BACKGROUND**
Naked Science was a pilot series of contemporary science dialogue events that took place in the Dana Centre, London over a period of 18 months between August 2002 and February 2004. They were aimed at independent adults aged 18-45 years. The Visitor Services Group was commissioned to conduct a front-end evaluation of the pilot.

**PROJECT AIMS/OBJECTIVES**
- To develop a reliable understanding of the needs, wants, and expectations of the Dana Centre audience, its sub groups and entirety.
- To understand the potential difficulties of engaging the Dana Centre target audience in a dialogue about contemporary science issues.

**ENGAGEMENT OUTPUTS**
- 16 dialogue events.

**EVALUATION APPROACH**
The process of evaluating dialogue events poses problems - How do you measure something that lasts for a matter of hours only, and is not numerically quantifiable? What is a measure of dialogue, and how do you know if an event has truly been successful?
Naked Science developed a model based on Maslow’s theory of self actualization. It described what an effective event should look like to assess successes and failures of each event. If all of the identified stages were reached (at least in part) then it was judged genuine dialogue with longer lasting implications for the participants at that event. At each level, a number of measurable indicators determined the event’s success both during and after the event. These factors were then used as the basis for evaluation of an event.

For example:
- **Physical**: anything pertaining to the physical comfort of the participants – speakers and audience.
- **Emotional/social acceptance**: participants feel emotionally comfortable, they feel that they belong there, they do not feel as if they are being judged. This level could be described as how someone feels that the other participants view them.
- **Intellectual**: all participants feel they have something to contribute, that their opinion is of value, and that they have learnt something.
- **Social capital**: participants feel that they have taken part in something worthwhile and constructive, participants leave with a sense of accomplishment, the effect from attending the event lasts longer than the event itself.

**EVALUATION TECHNIQUES USED**
- Detailed observation
  The introduction of detailed observation has allowed to track dialogue and take note of any barriers to the audience’s engagement whilst the events are taking place.
- Email questionnaires
  To provide qualitative information about an event and conducted with the audience and speakers
- Focus groups
  Focus groups to develop an understanding of the motivations, concerns and pre-conceptions of the target audience.
- Accompanied surfs
  Online material was evaluated using accompanied surfs with the target audience.

**THE EVALUATOR’S KEY FINDINGS**
- Controversy can often be an effective route into dialogue about a topic.
- The format of an event itself is critical in facilitating dialogue at an event.
- By addressing the physical, emotional, intellectual and social capital needs of an audience the potential for engagement is increased.
- As with ‘live events’, participants in online discussion boards experience a range of barriers and opportunities.