



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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Pictures in the park aim to widen appeal of brain research

Bold and striking images capturing the beauty and complexity of the brain have gone on display in St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.

The pictures showcase world leading research by the University of Edinburgh that seeks to improve our understanding of the brain and how it is altered in people with learning disabilities and other neurological conditions.

'The brain – is wider than the sky' includes arresting snapshots that pinpoint the effects of neurological disorders such as autism and Fragile X Syndrome, the most common cause of inherited intellectual disability.

The 38 images highlight the advanced technologies used by the University to visualise brains and their cells in action.

Researchers from the University's Patrick Wild Centre for Research into Autism, Fragile X Syndrome and Intellectual Disabilities collaborated with the Scottish charity Mindroom, to devise the exhibition.

Dr Sally Till, Walter Muir Autistica Research Fellow at the Patrick Wild Centre, said: "The human brain has more cells than there are stars in the Milky Way and these cells communicate through a thousand times as many connections. Our goal is to understand how even small changes in these connections can have such detrimental effects on learning and memory."

Sophie Dow, founder of Mindroom, said: "These images are simply too beautiful to be hidden away in a lab. They were created to further our understanding of the brain but they can also be viewed as stunning examples of abstract art. Our hope is that people admiring the pictures on show will also come away with a greater awareness of what it means to be affected by learning difficulties and other brain conditions."

Professor Peter Kind, Director of the Patrick Wild Centre, said: "Each of these images tells a story about vital brain research that is taking place right here in Edinburgh. We are delighted to offer people a rare glimpse into our work in such a prestigious location at the heart of our city."

It is estimated that at least five children in every school class in Scotland are affected by some form of learning difficulty. Mindroom is an independent Scottish charity committed to raising

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awareness of all types of learning difficulties and to providing advice and support for those who need it.

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