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Engaging the public: science as a cultural endeavour

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What is culture?

It is what a population of people engage with and use to define themselves. Music, art, religion, sport, literature – all feed culture

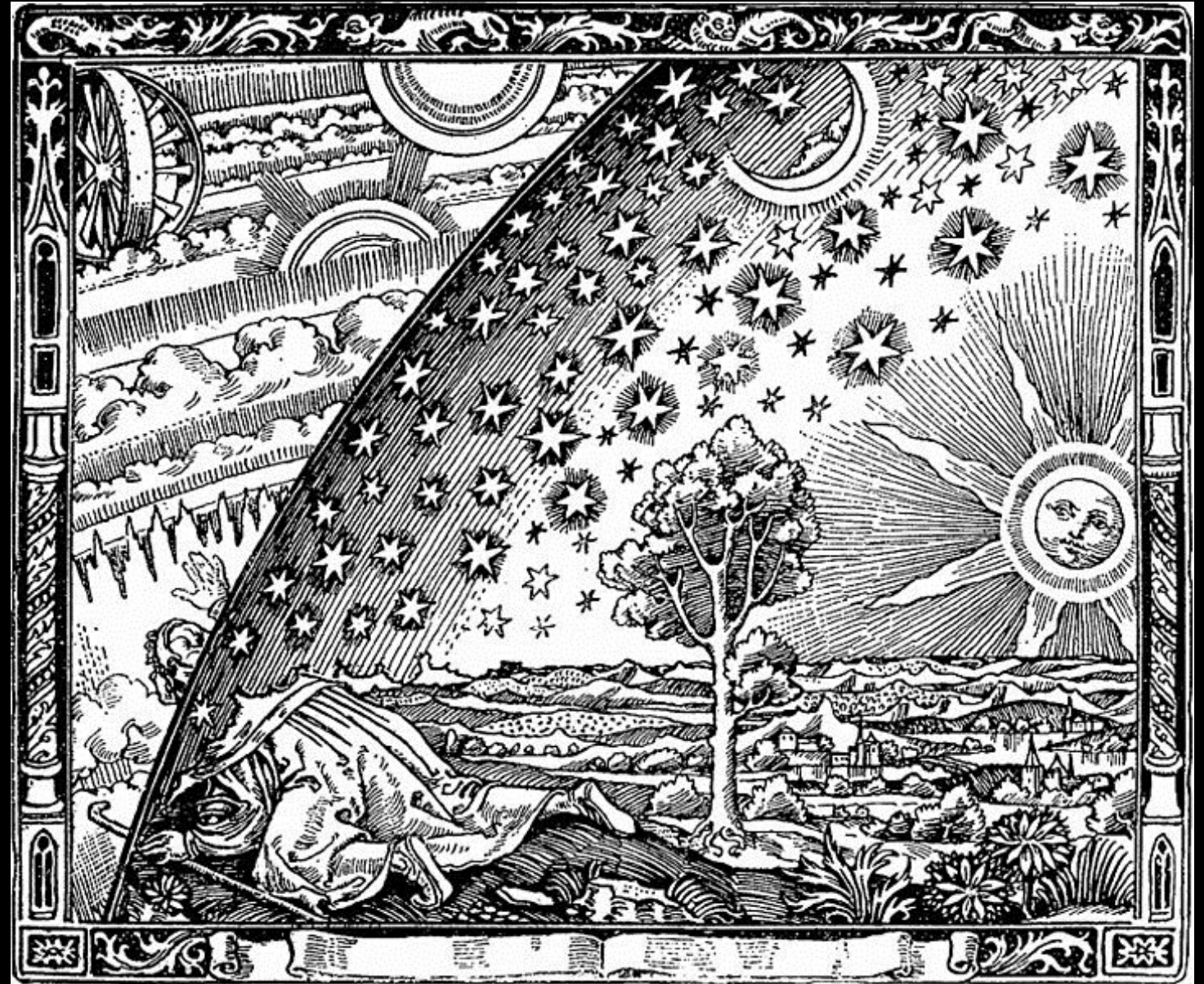
Why isn't science in there?

What is science?

scepticism and
curiosity

The Scientific Method

- Observation
- Hypothesis
- Prediction
- Experiment



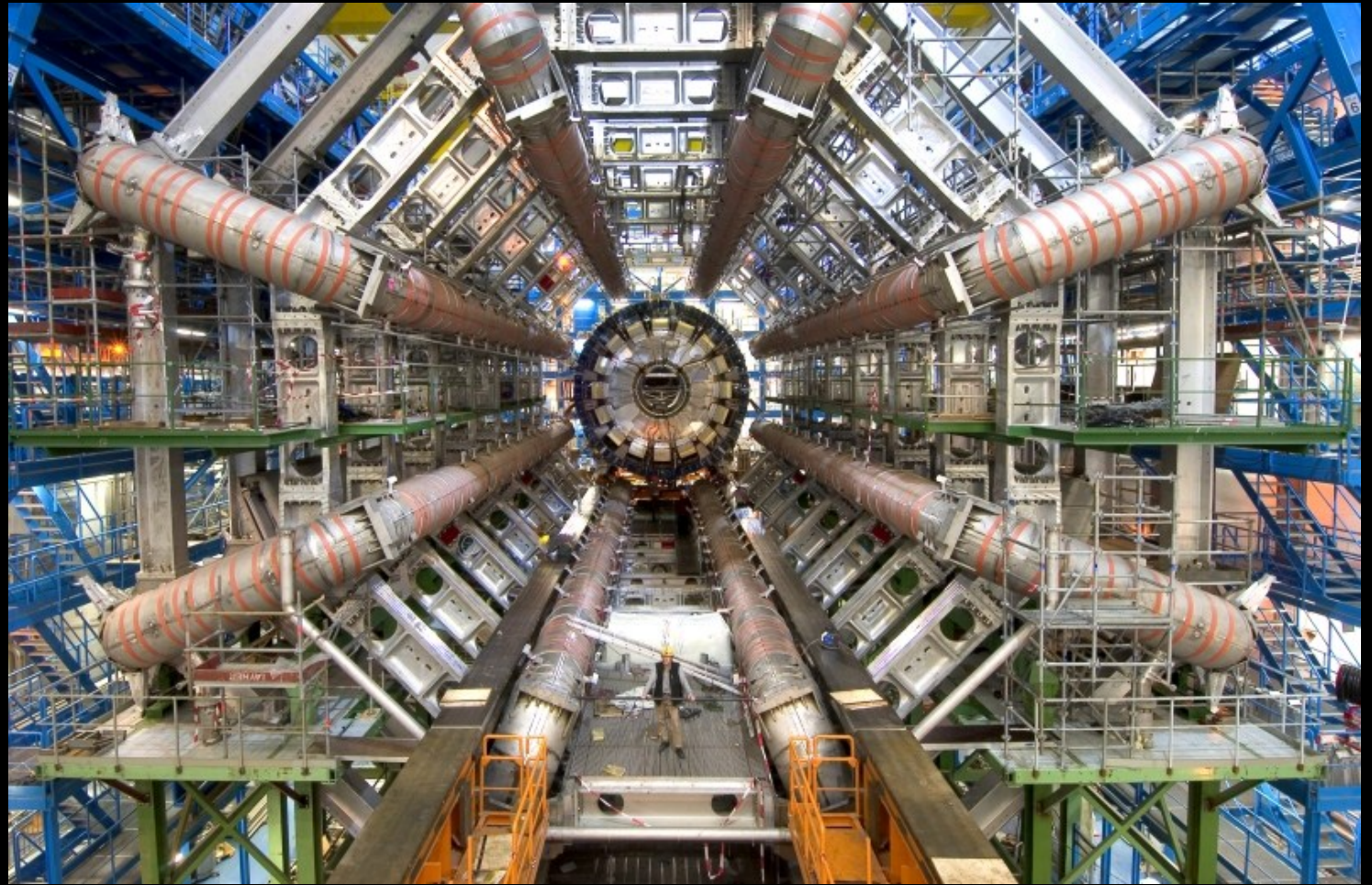
Science is unique as a route to knowledge

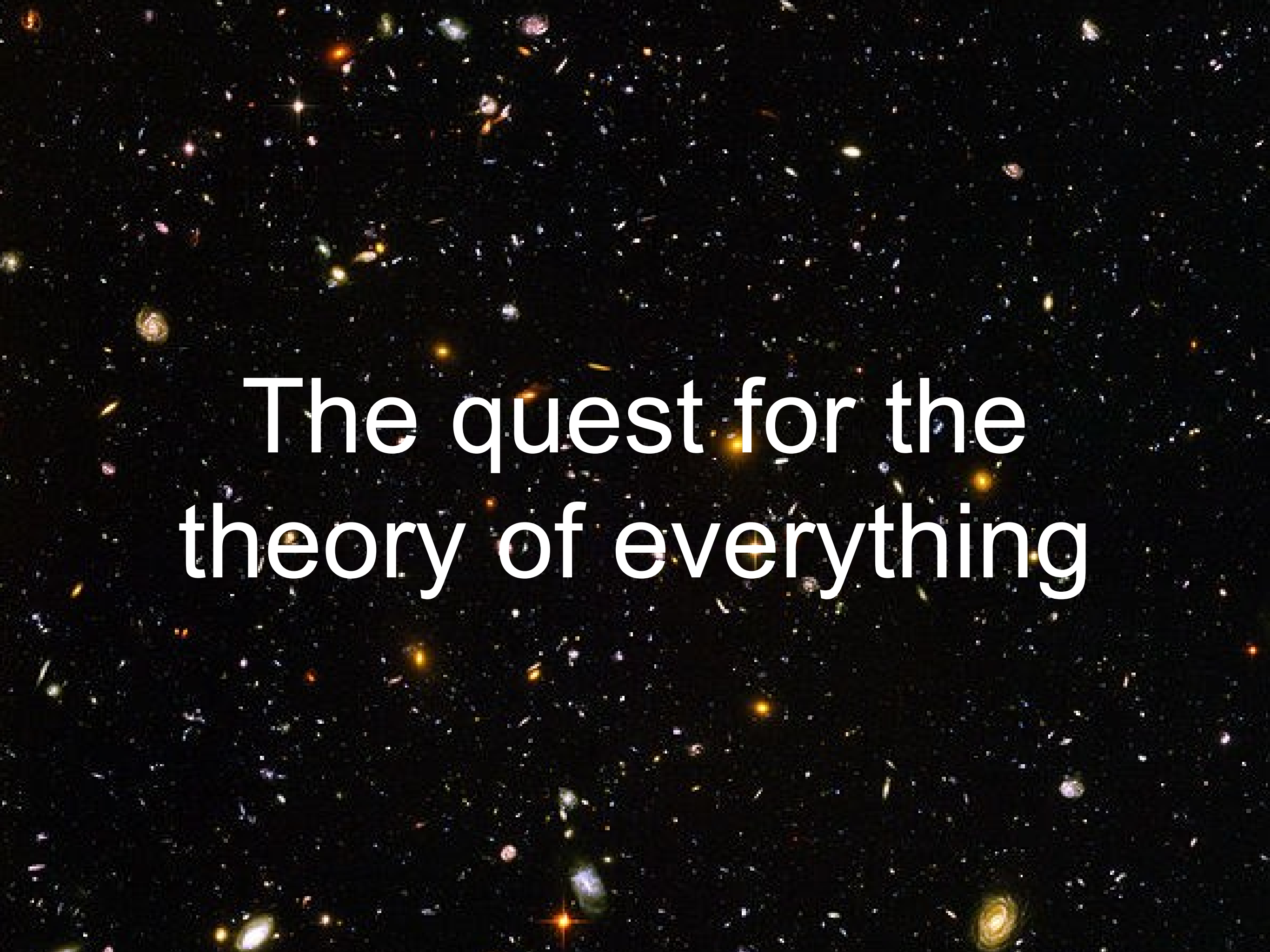
- It has rules that all agree on
- In principle it can be right or wrong
- However, in reporting we have no maths to back up our arguments and so debate can seep in.



- Critical thinking must be taught in schools.
- This is an urgent societal need because of increased access to information.
- Evaluation of evidence, sifting of data is essential for a functioning knowledge economy.
- How can science communications help?

What do
these have
in
common?

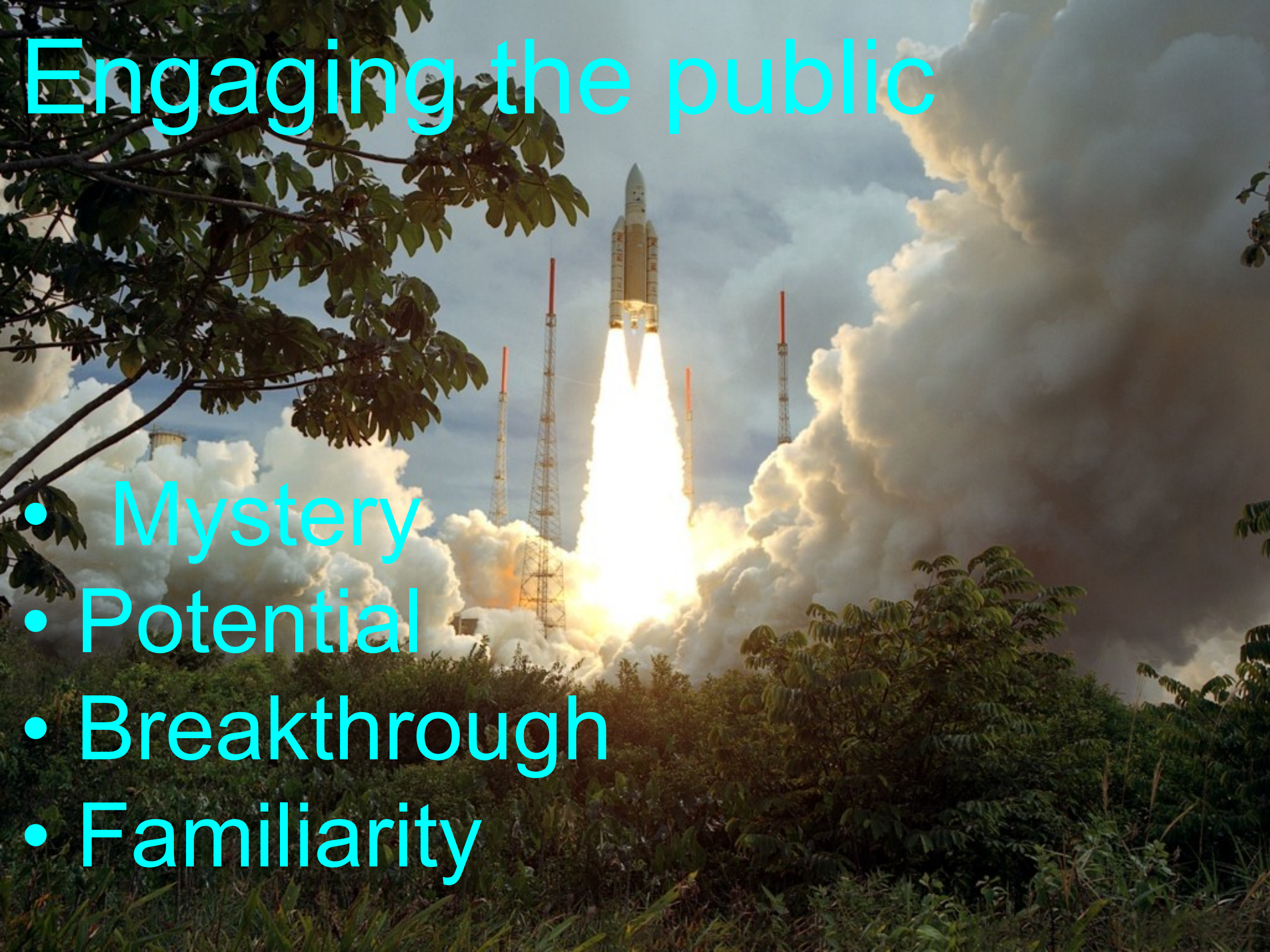


The background of the slide is a deep space photograph, likely from the Hubble Space Telescope, showing a dense field of galaxies and stars. The galaxies are of various shapes and sizes, some appearing as bright, irregular clouds of light, while others are more distant and faint. The stars are scattered throughout the field, some appearing as sharp points of light and others as more diffuse, glowing spheres. The overall color palette is dominated by the deep blacks of space, with highlights in white, yellow, orange, and blue from the celestial objects.

The quest for the theory of everything

Engaging the public

- Mystery
- Potential
- Breakthrough
- Familiarity



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Story structure:

Beginning, middle, end
Beginning, middle, end

The inverted pyramid

Elements of a story: Who, what, where, when, why?

‘Why?’ is the key to deeper engagement

engagement not education

consequences and
motivation

accuracy vs precision

what to put in/what to leave
out



Biggest stories:

How to see the Perseids

Curiosity's 'historic' discovery

Newton: scientist or sorcerer?

Einstein: no Nobel for relativity



How people find the blog:

20% Bookmarks

20% Website links

20% Social Media

40% Search engines

Geek culture is now alive

and well

Will this mature into a

generation of

Renaissance men and

women?

Science communication

has a key role to play.