**A Brief History (updated 4/6/2015):**

Morehead Planetarium and Science Center introduced the North Carolina Science Festival in September 2010. The inaugural Festival had 413 events, 78 event partners and 85,860 participants. The Festival's first ticketed signature event, "An Afternoon with Adam and Jamie" featuring the hosts of the popular TV series "MythBusters," drew more than 5,500 fans.

After evaluating the Festival's inaugural year, Morehead presented the second annual North Carolina Science Festival in April 2012 with several important changes:

* The two-week annual Festival moved from September to April.
* School programming became an important part of the Festival, with the introduction of the Science Night program (for elementary schools) and the Invite-a-Scientist program (for middle schools).
* Kelvin, the Festival's popular "spokesbot," made his debut.
* Time Warner Cable became the Festival's first "festival champion" (presenting sponsor).

The second annual Festival had 566 events, 273 event partners, 233,750 participants. Adam and Jamie returned for one ticketed signature event, and the Festival added a second ticketed signature event featuring Neil deGrasse Tyson.

The Festival continued to grow in 2013 and 2014, adding the Statewide Star Party (2013) and an additional school program, Science Spotlight for high schools (2014). Ticketed signature events featured "kitchen scientist" Alton Brown (Food Network) and "sports scientist" John Brenkus (ESPN). Collaborative programs including STEM Day at the North Carolina General Assembly and the Institute for Emerging Issues Science Summit brought additional attention to the North Carolina Science Festival.

As the Festival entered its fifth year in 2015, it announced major gifts from the Biogen Foundation (a three-year commitment as the Festival's presenting sponsor) and the Burroughs Wellcome Fund (a $1,000,000 gift to create an endowment for the North Carolina Science Festival). The Festival also partnered successfully with other science festivals and related organizations to develop two grant proposals that received funding from the National Science Foundation.

The North Carolina Science Festival will recognize its one-millionth participant in April 2015.