



Our European Union



Ecsite president Vincenzo Lipardi, European Commissioner for Science and Research Janez Potočnik and Philippe Busquin MEP open the proceedings at the Ecsite Parliament Event

At Ecsite's Science Communicators Advancing European Knowledge Society event on February 18th 2009, we brought the Ecsite community to the European Parliament, Brussels, to raise awareness among policymakers of the role that science communicators play in order to advance the European knowledge society.

We believe that the Ecsite network has a key role in contemporary society, and can contribute to the objectives of the Lisbon agenda to create a working knowledge-based economy in Europe, an open society which is both collaborative and competitive with new models for sustainable development.

At the Parliament, through best practices from all over Europe, an interactive exhibition and a roundtable discussion, we looked together at the ways in which, through its networking activities, Ecsite facilitates co-operation among science centres, setting standards, sharing expertise, developing training programmes and disseminating best practices. Ecsite encourages the integration of experiences, building a feeling of shared values and aspirations among our citizens.

On behalf of Ecsite, I would like to thank everyone who provided ideas and suggestions and helped to organise the event. Our thanks go to the European Commissioner for Science and Research,

Mr. Janez Potočnik, who has always shown great interest in our community and who accepted our invitation today by acting as a partner rather than as a "guest". Special and sincere thanks to Mr Philippe Busquin for supporting and giving his patronage to the event, but in particular for all the support he has provided during the growth of the network in the recent years. Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to the honourable guests who accepted our invitation to participate in this meeting.

This issue of the Ecsite newsletter is a chance to share in some of the outcomes of the event. Contributions from figures such as Janez Potočnik as well as José Mariano Gago, Portuguese Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education, and Luc Van den Brande, President of the European Union's Committee of the Regions show the regard with which our community is held, and the mutual expectations we hold in our relationships with policymakers.

I look forward to seeing you in Milan in June for our key event in the year's calendar, the Ecsite Annual Conference, hosted in 2009 by the Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci.



Vincenzo Lipardi,
President of Ecsite
Fondazione IDIS-Città
della Scienza, Executive
Committee

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Janez Potočnik is the European Commissioner for Science and Research. Here we reproduce his speech from the opening of Ecsite's Science Communicators Advancing European Knowledge Society event at the European Parliament, February 18th 2009.

Ecsite: A Community for Public Engagement in Science

Dear Philippe,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

It is a pleasure to be here today with so many talented and committed people and some of the best (and busiest) science communicators.

In this financial and economic crisis, when many people are worried about their jobs and their abilities to look after their families, one may question the relevance of your conference topic. Is this the right time to make the general public more aware of the importance of science and to explain them how and why "their" money is being invested in research? Is this the time to explain and talk about needing more investment in science? About the 54 billion euros that the European Union is currently investing in the

Seventh Framework Programme? And the even larger sums invested, in total, by individual Member States? Is this the time to push home these messages?

The answer is yes! Because we are talking about productive investment - investing in people and in our future! We are talking about working towards our European knowledge based economy - which is the only way of overcoming the current crisis, reinforcing our strengths and then of ensuring a long term prosperity for Europe. Yes, this is the time to talk about science and investment in research - but more than that, we need to explain and engage more with the public, we need to listen actively to the diverse range of views expressed and we need to take account of those views.

This is why this conference, held here at the European Parliament - the European Institution

most closely connected to the general public, is both important and timely. I know that Ecsite is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, and I am sure you will agree that the process of communicating science to the public has evolved significantly over that time.

We have learnt that we need to go further than approaches such as "This is the research that was done and this is how it could benefit you," or "This is what science or research looks like, isn't it exciting?" We need to bring the public into the debate and welcome challenging responses such as "yes, but" or "what if?" or even "no, no but what about...?" This is why in recent years the Commission has placed increasing emphasis on truly participatory process for engaging the public, NGOs and other independent bodies alongside the research community to agree a common way forward in areas of genuine public concern such as



150 participants took part in the event Science Communicators Advancing European Knowledge Society at the European Parliament, February 18th 2009, with many more visiting the Exhibition Area

nanotechnology, neuroscience and biotechnology.

It is not about losing or gaining control; it is about sharing democratic responsibility and ownership - the need to involve all parties from the beginning and to involve them all in the process of determining the best way forward. Public engagement is not a "rubber stamp" for decisions that have already been taken or for how technology is already been exploited - that doesn't work!

A good / bad example of that was the negative public reaction in Europe to GM food, where little debate took place before the technology had been developed and once it had been, it was too late.

Fortunately more recent and more promising examples exist. Take the rapidly developing area of neuroscience research. Nearly 4 years ago the Commission funded a project called "Meeting of Minds".

This quite radical project you all know or, at least, have heard about, brought together more than 100 citizens from 9 countries (and in 8 languages). Their job was to come up with views on how to deal with the latest research into the workings of the human brain. What ethical, social and legal implications could arise from the use of new technologies and medicines? Following interaction and lively debate with researchers, ethicists, clinicians, patient organisations and others - these "non-scientists" produced novel and very relevant recommendations which were presented here, to the European Parliament and disseminated to policy makers across Europe.

But the biggest value from this project was the much wider finding. It demonstrated - *contrary no doubt to many scientists' expectations* - that people of varied backgrounds, with no special expertise in the scientific issues are able to hold a fruitful intelligent dialogue with experts and produce meaningful and useful results. Such "Citizens panels" can help produce a useful overview about how to use research results, and on the direction of future research. As a result, a similar model is being used to organise the current "European citizens' consultations" throughout Europe - another complicated subject even if not strictly a scientific one!

Another example of an activity supported by the Commission is the project entitled "Citizen Participation in Science and Technology", supported by the Cité des sciences et de

l'industrie, Paris, represented here today by François d'Aubert. This project is constructing a pan-European platform of decisions makers and organisations to increase public involvement in the process of setting research agenda. Training, based on the experience of around 40 international organisations is offered to help participants find and use new ways of engaging society actively and avoiding the obvious pitfalls.

In both of these projects ("Meeting of Minds" and "Citizen Participation in Science"), active roles have been played by science centres and science museums.

This is definitely an area where the Commission would like to see more activity. Ecsite and its members are ideally placed to come forward with proposals.

But it really isn't any good having public acceptance of science if there aren't enough researchers to do it! The lack of researchers in Europe is another wide concern for us. This is an issue we have been addressing for some time. Back in 2003 my predecessor, Philippe Busquin, invited Professor Gago (both in attendance today) to chair a group of experts to look at the causes behind the lack of scientists in Europe and make recommendations. Professor Gago's wide ranging report "Europe needs more Scientists" has had a pronounced impact on the shape of the Commission's support for science education. Its influence continues still today.

The work was completed by what we call the "Rocard report" that focused on formal science education in schools. As a direct consequence of his report, so far over 12 million euro is being committed to support pan-European activities to promote the use of inquiry based science education techniques in primary and secondary schools across Europe.

We intend to continue this action so as to work towards a critical mass of activities in support of science education. Science centres and Ecsite members have without any doubt a vital role to play here. However to have real impact we need more effective collaboration with similar activities at the national level and with education authorities across Europe. We have to work more and better with industry and other employers of science. But also with city authorities and other local actors which can play a pivotal role in reaching out to a diverse public through activities that both engage the public and involve it in two-way



CIPAST built a pan-European platform of decisions makers and organisations to increase public involvement in the process of setting research agenda

exchanges of views on science issues of concern or interest.

Ladies and gentlemen, in these uncertain times we must do more, not less, to engage with the public. The big challenges of today are not scientists' challenges, they are challenges for the whole of society. Society needs science and scientists to help us solve these big challenges, but equally importantly scientists need society's trust and understanding.

To end with a more optimistic touch and in a good mood in these uncertain times, let me quote Groucho Marx, who replied to a friend protesting that: "Life is difficult." He said, "Yes, but compared to what?"

I wish you all a productive and very communicative conference.

José Mariano Gago, Portuguese Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education, spoke in the round table at Ecsite's Parliament event on February 18th, 2009. He presented a manifesto, in the form of a proposal for an elementary guide for action, starting with a proposal for a check-list for the benefit of current and future science centres, in ten points.

Science, Society and Science Centres: A manifesto

I - Networking of scientists and non-scientists

Science centres are predictable hosts for this networking. But science centres also develop high-level research and development, and advanced training on new exhibits and science-based modules and installations, with universities and research laboratories.

II - Delivering science news

Science centres announce, explain, and connect science news back to its sources.

III - Debating science-based controversies

Science centres also address public interests and motivations.

IV - Providing room for (and stimulating) visitors' active participation

This is the Oppenheimer programme: exploring perception and surprise, physical contact, experimenting and questioning. To do it properly requires educated personnel to be available.

V - Helping to bring science "alive"

Promoting socialisation of the visitor to "real science" (cf John Ziman) in its context of science

stories, real apparatus and experiments, science organisations, ideas, values and people, and real life.

VI - Promoting science centres as "Science Browsers"

By this, we mean guides for further exploration, travel agents for the next science stop, starting points to explore - with the help of science and the scientists - the environment and the local region, other science centres as well as research labs and industry. Bridge indoors and outdoors. Mobilise visitors to extend their curiosity outside your own science centre. Encourage the visitors to provide their own "seeds of science" (mobile phones, spectacles, blood samples, etc) and require their use indoors, for specific exhibit purposes.

VII - Science-based books, films, toys, do-it-yourself guides and kits

These are expected to be found in science centres.

VIII - After all, science is international

Fight nationalistic propaganda and other social stereotypes related to science.



José Mariano Gago Portuguese Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education visiting the exhibition area at Ecsite's Parliament event, Science communicators advancing European knowledge society'

IX - A science centre is certainly not a classroom - but should have room for a class

Science centres should respond to schools and challenge schools.

X - Develop a "WikiScienceNetwork"

This is in the spirit of Wikipedia, that most recent recreation of former popular education movements and institutions. Make a network of WikiScienceCentres, multilingual and multicentered, both real and virtual. Emulate projects like the FNAL - NSF Newton project ("Ask a Scientist!") at the scale of the WikiScienceNetwork. Develop science centres into main sources for digital web based science content, able to collaborate at a global scale with other media.

Brussels has been the birth place of a number of political and artistic manifestos that have shaped history. Science centres and other initiatives for expanding a culture of science for all may need such a manifesto. Not unlike the most famous of them all (The Communist Manifesto, finalised in Brussels in January 1948) I wish it could finish by a strong appeal:

Science centres, scientists and non-scientists - unite!

To science centres I would certainly add: You have nothing to lose but your chains! (Not even your sponsors!)

And your public will love you even more...



The round-table session at Ecsite's Parliament event on February 18th, 2009 brought together (l-r): Luc Van den Brande, President of the Committee of the Regions; Alain Perroy, Director General of CEFIC, European Chemical Industry Council; Claudie Haigneré, Advisor to the Director General of ESA; François d'Aubert, president of La Cité des sciences et de l'industrie; José Mariano Gago, Portuguese Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education; José Manuel Silva Rodriguez, Director-General of the Research DG, European Commission; and Bob Winter, Lord Provost of Glasgow

In the Interactive Exhibition at the European Parliament event, ten Ecsite members gave delegates a feel of the activities they hold and the atmosphere they provide. Each institution contributed one or more hands-on exhibits, displays and panels to the exhibition. Explainers also participated with live demonstrations and shows. Just as we endeavour to bring policymakers to our exhibitions, at this event, we brought our exhibitions to the policymakers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all Ecsite members who provided exhibits, and the explainers and other staff that joined us in bringing the interactive exhibition to life.



Participants at the Parliament event got a shock thanks to the Van de Graaff generator from the team at Science Center Nemo, Amsterdam, Netherlands



DASA from Dortmund, Germany got hearts racing with their Electrocardiogram Chair



Explainer Wiktor Gajewski of Copernicus Science Centre, Warsaw, Poland, got back to basics with a demonstration of their Simple Science show



Explainers from Ciência Viva - Pavilion of Knowledge, Lisbon, Portugal gave policymakers a real taste of our work, with their enquiry-based learning activity, "The Kitchen is a Lab."

Luc Van den Brande is President of the European Union's Committee of the Regions. At Ecsite's event at the European Parliament, he underlined his vision of how science centres and policymakers can work together. Here we reproduce his speech in full.

Science centres and citizenship: a message to policymakers

Dear Mr. President of the European Parliament,
Dear Mr. Commissioner,
Dear colleagues and friends,

This afternoon I would like to take you back in time. Let's not go too far away and let's try to beam you to April 1996. At that time I was minister-president of the Government of Flanders and alongside that, one of my competences was science and technology. At that time I was quite impressed by the negative image of science and technology with the general public. My government was looking for ways to entice people, especially young people into scientific careers. A few months later, on an official visit in Finland, I visited Heureka, the Finnish Science Center in the city of Vantaa, just next to Helsinki. We spoke to Dr. Per-Edvin Persson, the director of the science centre. We looked around and especially we experimented ourselves and discussed with children. After that visit I really shouted out: "Eureka, I have found it!"

A year later my government decided to set up Technopolis®, the Flemish science center in Mechelen, just north of Brussels. One of the first steps, when preparing Technopolis® was to invite ten science centre directors from all over Europe to our offices. We organised a round table seminar - really at a round table - on how to set up our science centre. Today I still believe that this move was one of the most important steps we made in those days. Our future colleagues gave us an insight in the do's and don'ts, the pitfalls and the reasons for success of science centres worldwide. They shared with the Technopolis® team their successes and failures.



Luc Van den Brande has been President of the European Union's Committee of the Regions since 2008

Technopolis® joined the board of Ecsite, the European network for science centres and museums, in 1998 and still is a member of the board today. So the first lesson we learnt when entering the science centre field was: cooperation and networking. Reason one for the immediate success of Technopolis®, which opened in February of the year 2000, is networking and I can't thank the international colleagues enough for that. But can science centers really entice people into science and technology and influence their way of thinking? And if so, whom should we aim for? And the answer is simple: yes, they can. From Athens in Greece to Lulea in the North of Sweden. Let me explain why.

Science centres fill in a need within our communities:

1. People are curious and really want to get to know something; but they don't want to be taught.
2. People are more open to enrich their knowledge if they feel comfortable.
3. We understand and remember a certain phenomenon or event better, if we experience it ourselves instead of reading about it or listening about it on the radio.
4. In today's society and also in today's economic crisis people are looking for real experiences. An in depth pan-European research, which has been done the second half of last year by the network of advertising agencies in Europe, shows the following:
European families attach importance and are willing to spend money on two things:
 - a. Things with added value for their children, in order to be able to educate them better.
 - b. European families are looking for experiences to escape once in a while from their daily routines.
5. Research also shows that the earlier younger children are confronted with science and technology, the better. This is only logical: don't we all know that small children learn languages as they speak? The older they get, the more difficult it gets.

Having said all this, let's have a look at science centres from Dublin to Budapest: they provide European citizens with a fun interactive experience. Often these experiences are limited to daily life, so a comfortable environment is provided. They satisfy the curiosity of their visitors both young and old. Of course science centres should not only target children. Research in Flanders shows that when it comes to choosing a study or a career, children are influenced in a strong way by their parents: 68% of the overall external influence on children's choices is determined by their parents.

People learn when experimenting. They don't realise that they are learning and that their way of thinking is being influenced positively; so we politicians have to acknowledge that science centers worldwide are unique communication tools which have more stopping power than an advertisement in a newspaper or magazine, and which create lifelong lasting memories for everyone. A good example of this is Evoluon, the hands-on science centre in Eindhoven, in the southern part of the Netherlands, which closed down by the end of the eighties. Lots of Flemish schools tended to visit Evoluon in those days on a school trip. Still today visitors at Technopolis® speak about it: Technopolis® really makes me think about Evoluon. I visited it when I was a child and I had a good experience pedaling the bike which generated electricity for the television. So, ladies and gentlemen, to make a long story short: the 30 million visitors in European science centres each year are becoming better European citizens. Better in the sense that they are better informed, better educated, better prepared for the future. Dear colleagues, policymakers, let us make optimal use of science centres as instruments in our policies towards European citizens. Dear science centre directors, we policymakers challenge you to provide your experiences to more European citizens. It would be nice if you could report to us in a few years from now that all over Europe at least 50 million citizens, both young and old are better prepared for the future by visiting your centres. We count on you. Thank you.

As every issue, we take a look at what is going on across Europe on a specific theme. This issue focuses on our members' European collaborations.

LA LETTRE DE L'OCIM

La Lettre de l'OCIM is a professional French-language bi-monthly publication dedicated to the science museography news and more broadly to museology and scientific and technical culture. It is published by the Office de Coopération et d'Information Muséographiques, founded in 1985 to support the work of French natural history museums. A trial edition is published in English in May 2009, to raise awareness of La Lettre de l'OCIM among those involved in scientific culture working in European and wider international networks. It includes a series of articles published in 2007 and 2008 which is representative of the content of the publication. All Ecsite members will receive a copy.

OCIM - Office de Coopération et d'Information Muséographiques, Dijon, France

Contact: ocim@u-bourgogne.fr
www.ocim.fr

WORLD OCEAN DAY 2009

The United Nations has now declared June 8th as World Oceans Day. Since 2003, with the support of the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, the World Ocean Network and the Ocean Project have helped to coordinate this event as an international celebration with participation of aquariums, zoos, science centres, museums, conservation and education organisations, government agencies, NGOs and businesses around the world. In Europe the pioneer efforts to celebrate World Ocean Day started in the Oceanics project with Nausicaä and other partners a few years ago. The logo that has been developed then is now used all over the world. This year's theme for World Ocean Day celebration activities: "One ocean, one climate, one future."

Nausicaä - National Sea Centre, Boulogne-sur-Mer, France

Contact: projects@nausicaa.fr and info@worldoceannetwork.org
www.nausicaa.fr and www.worldoceannetwork.org

10th MESOZOIC TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS SYMPOSIUM

The next Mesozoic Terrestrial Ecosystems Symposium will be held in Spain, 14th to 21st September 2009. The Fundación Conjunto Paleontológico de Teruel-Dinópolis and two Spanish Universities - Universidad Autónoma de



Madrid and Universidad Complutense de Madrid - are involved in the organisation of the meeting. Sessions will be carried out in Dinópolis-Teruel (Spain), associate member of Ecsite. Deadline for reduced registration fee: 31st May 2009

Dinópolis-Teruel, Spain

Contact: fundacion@dinopolis.com
www.fundaciondinopolis.org
<http://www.meetandforum.net/MTE2009/>

INDO-FINNISH WORKSHOP - A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH FOR NEW INTERACTIVE EXHIBITS



As the follow up of the resolution taken during the Ecsite conference 2005 held at Heureka in Finland, a collaborative programme between NCSM, India and Heureka, Finland was worked out. Until now, three workshops with a view to conceive ideas for new exhibits on themes "Water", "Sports & Games", and "Images" have been organised alternately in India and Finland each year. The fourth workshop will be held in India from Nov 25-Dec 08, 2009 on the theme "Measurements". These collaborative workshops have resulted in several interactive exhibits and science demonstrations.

National Council of Science Museums, India

Contact KG Kumar: kgkumar@ncsm.gov.in
www.ncsm.gov.in

SCIENCE PICNIC OF POLISH RADIO AND THE COPERNICUS SCIENCE CENTRE

Want to investigate the texture of moon's surface and trigger your own private earthquake? Come

to the Science Picnic of Polish Radio and the Copernicus Science Centre, in Warsaw on 30 May 2009! The theme of this year's 13th annual event is "Science Among the Stars."

The Science Picnic is Europe's largest outdoor popular-science event, drawing in more than 100,000 visitors on a single day. It offers an incredible chance to try many hands-on experiments, watch demonstrations by researchers from Poland and many countries, and participate in fun science-related contests.



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UWE WÖLCKE - PHOENIX IN THE ASHES - FROM FUNCTION TO FORM IN THE WORLD OF WORK

Forgotten industrial sites or old agricultural landscapes: man-made structures left to decay. These are the topics of about 50 photographs developed by Uwe Wölcke. They show the world of work of yesterday, embedded in our contemporary society. The exhibition was conceived by DASA and is on show from 03.04.09 in Denmark's Industrimuseum Horsens.

Contact Monika Röttgen:
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www.dasa-dortmund.de



ACCENT - SCIENTIFIC CONTENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The University of Lapland - Arctic Centre is a partner in the ACCENT project. The scientific topics addressed in ACCENT approach climate change issues from a multidisciplinary perspective. Its scientific content covers basic information such as that related to climate mechanism, climate variability and change. It includes further scientific information related to the causes of climate change such as greenhouse gas emissions and their anthropogenic dimensions. The project integrates scientific topics such as impacts of climate change on environment and societies, and on how to respond and adapt to such pressures. Methods used by researchers to carry their research are also introduced.

University of Lapland - Arctic Centre, Finland
Contact Dr. Nicolas Gunslay: ngunslay@ulapland.fi
www.arcticcentre.org

TIME FOR NANO

The TIME for Nano FP7th Project just started! the kick off meeting was held in Bristol early in March. The project aims at engaging young people on benefits and risks related to nanoscale research, engineering and technology, through a nano-kit and the organisation of a web contest each year. TIME for NANO is already in a very active working phase: in fact on April 6th to 8th a very important preparatory workshop at Città della Scienza in Naples, organised jointly with Ecsite. The aim of this interactive and participative workshop (in which the partners worked with external experts in nanosciences and related social and ethical impacts, experts in role playing and games, artists, etc) was to define the main guidelines for the production of the prototype nano-kit and for the website.

Città della Scienza, Naples, Italy
Contact Alessandra Zanazzi: zanazzi@cittadellascienza.it
www.timefornano.eu

INAUGURATION OF THE NEW CITÉ DES ENFANTS

After the success of the new exhibition for children aged 2-7 which received 300 000 visitors since its inauguration in December 2007, the new Cité des enfants for children of 5-12 years was inaugurated on 1st April 2009. Thanks to its novelty, originality, the quality of its contents, and the know-how of its designers, the Cité des enfants has generated great enthusiasm since its launch. Several "Cité des enfants" designed from the same model have spread in Genoa, Beirut, Valencia, Mons, Singapore,

and more. In 2008, Dubai and Macao have in turn acquired a Cité des enfants.

La Cité des sciences et de l'industrie, Paris, France

Contact Edwina Saint-Narcisse:
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www.cite-sciences.fr

A SAFE HAVEN FOR EUROPEAN THREATENED PLANTS



The Museo Tridentino di Scienze Naturali organises from the 24th of June to the 4th of July the final meeting of an EU - FP6 network called ENSCONET dealing with seed conservation of endangered European plants. The network of 24 partners includes 3 Ecsite members (the coordinator, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London, UK). This meeting aims to release a series of standard operating protocols validated at European level after 5 year of joint co-operation. Case studies of best practices will be demonstrated during 5 days of field works in the Dolomites and around Lake Garda to the benefit of all European threatened plants.

Museo Tridentino di Scienze Naturali, Trento, Italy
Contact: Costantino Bonomi bonomi@mtsn.tn.it
www.ensconet.eu

REGIONAL SCIENCE CENTERS FORUM

Representatives from science centers Techmania (Pilsen), AHAA (Tartu), Copernicus (Warsaw), House of Experiments (Ljubljana) and Palace of Miracles (Budapest) gathered at the Regional Science Centers Forum on April 17th - 18th. They discussed their experience with building a science centre in a country where such type of institution is new - how to get funding and support, how to develop an exhibition,



hire and train the staff etc. The crucial topic of the forum was suggestions for mutual cooperation.

Techmania Science Center, Pilsen, Czech Republic

Contact Barbora Cernikova:
barbora.cernikova@techmania.cz
www.techmania.cz

RESEARCHERS' NIGHT AT CITÉ DE L'ESPACE

Since two years, the Cité de l'espace leads the organisation of the Researchers' Night in Toulouse, in collaboration with several partners in public research. The objective of this event, launched by European Commission in 2005, is to offer a large public the opportunity to discover, "hand in hand" with researchers, the fabulous world of their experiments. In 2009, in the scope of the International Year of Astronomy, the Planetarium of the Cité de l'espace will be specially dedicated to the research carried out at the Pic du Midi Observatory.



Cité de l'espace, Toulouse, France
Contact Sandra Henry-Baudot: s.henry-baudot@cite-espace.com
<http://www.nuitdeschercheurs-france.eu/>

TECHNOPSIS® PROVIDES SAFE HAVEN FOR M/S HULDA

The M/S Hulda is a Baltic trade and freight vessel, acquired in 1965 by the Turkish-Swedish artist Ilhan Koman who used it as his residence, workspace... and as a source of science inspiration. With the support of the European Union, the M/S Hulda is stopping for 2 weeks in 9 harbours where shows and activities will take place to share the artist's timeless experiments in art and science with the young generations. From 29th of May to the 7th of June, the vessel will anchor in Antwerp. Technopolis® welcomes the ship and invites school children and families to practice science workshops and to visit the ship.

Technopolis® the Flemish Science Center, Mechelen, Belgium
Contact Steven Roeland: StevenR@technopolis.be
www.huldafestival.org

ECSITE DIRECTORS' FORUM 2009

This year's Directors' Forum is hosted by Experimentarium, Hellerup, Denmark, 20-21 November 2009. This event brings together directors and management staff of Ecsite's full members. The theme this year is climate change, preceding the COP15 Conference which takes place in Copenhagen the following month.

ECSITE THEMATIC GROUP ON NATURE - JOIN T-GROUP

Nature is becoming a priority as a scientific and societal topic as it covers issues of growing interest for our societies as biodiversity, evolution, climate change, sustainability and much more.

The Ecsite T-Nature Group is a group of experts working with Ecsite to enhance the exchange of information and sharing of emblematic experiences on nature and related issues and activities.

A pre-conference full day workshop during the Ecsite Annual Conference will be dedicated to the launch of the T-Nature Group. The T-Nature Group will also be developing a web community on the Ecsite website. The group is looking for science communicators willing to share knowledge and experiences on communicating nature-related topics to the public.

To find out more about the group's activities write to Alikì Giannakopoulou: agiannakopoulou@ecsitem.eu

NEWS FOR THE ECSITE MEMBERS IN THE UK

From Wednesday April 1st, Ecsite UK became the UK's Association for Science and Discovery Centres. The association has begun operations as an independent legal entity with its own finance and is now working from a new office in Bristol.

While the name has changed, there will be no change to the membership structure for Ecsite members based in the UK until January 2010. Members of the Association for Science and Discovery Centres are therefore also Ecsite members for this year. Ecsite and the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres will still be working together on various projects with their shared goals of facilitation, cooperation and raising the profile of science centres and museums.

New web address: www.sciencecentres.org.uk

ECSITE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2010

Next year's Conference is hosted by DASA, Dortmund, in the 2010 European Capital of Culture region of the Ruhr, Germany.

The dates are now confirmed as June 1st-5th 2010.



Enquiry based learning, tips and tricks, the role of the explainer and sparking debate: participants at the Pilots training workshop in Mechelen tackled all this and more

ECSITE PROJECT NEWS

OPEN SCIENCE RESOURCES

On 1st July 2009, the kick-off meeting will take place in Brussels for a new EU project coordinated by Ecsite, Open Science Resources: Towards the development of a Shared Digital Repository for Formal and Informal Science Education.

The aim of the project is to make digital collections in European science museums and science centres easier and more attractive to use in a variety of learning occasions. This will be done by improving accessibility through state of the art organisation schemes and ensuring user interaction with tools such as social tags (the collective assignment of keywords to resources). The consortium brings together a balanced mix of science museums and science centres, pedagogues, educational technologists, metadata experts, user groups and standardisation bodies.

OSR is c-funded by the European Commission's eContentplus programme.

If you would like to learn more about this project, please contact Jennifer Palumbo, Ecsite Projects Coordinator, jpalambo@ecsitem.eu

PILOTS TRAINING WORKSHOPS

30 explainers from across Europe took part in the first Pilots training workshop from the 1st-4th April at Technopolis - The Flemish science centre in Mechelen, Belgium.

Pilots is building a European and worldwide online community of science explainers. Pass the message on to your explainers to join the Pilots Hub at www.thepilots.eu!

The second Pilots training workshop takes place 2nd-3rd June 2009, in the framework of THE Group Pre-Conference Session at this year's Ecsite Annual Conference, at the Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia, Milan, Italy.

Pilots is co-funded by the European Commission through the Lifelong Learning Programme.

For more details on this project, please contact Michael Creek: mcreek@ecsitem.eu or see www.thepilots.eu.

ACCENT

The ACCENT (Action on Climate Change through Engagement, Networks and Tools) project, kicked off in April at the Città della Scienza, Naples, Italy.

Thanks to this project European science centres and museums will strengthen their efforts at the local level in a global European action, gathering their practices in science communication and public engagement about climate change issues.

Ecsite's role is to coordinate these communication activities, and to ensure the dissemination of the results, through a dedicated web platform.

The ACCENT launch event is organised by Experimentarium and will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark in December 2009 in the context of the UN Climate Conference COP15.

If you are planning activities related to climate change in 2010 and you would like to know more about becoming involved in ACCENT, please contact Michael Creek, Ecsite Projects Coordinator at mcreek@ecsitem.eu.

Accent is co-funded by the European Commission through FP7 Science in Society.

For news on all Ecsite projects, see our monthly e-Newsletter.



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School And Science Museum: Cooperation For Improving Teaching, Learning And Discovery

Fifth Edition 22-29 November 2009
Deutsches Museum, Munich, Germany

European In-Service Training Course For Teachers And Museum Educators

The course is one of the outputs of the European project SMEC, which was funded by the Socrates programme of the European Union from 2001 to 2005. The main aim of the project was to encourage the use of the museum as educational resource for the teaching and learning of science in primary schools, and to contribute to the training of teachers for the development of competence and expertise in using museums. The course is now in its fourth edition. It aims to develop the knowledge and competences relative to science education through the use of museums as an educational resource. It is open to museum educators and primary school teachers, headteachers, advisory teachers and teacher trainers. The course is held by an international group of experts from Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy and Spain specialising in museum education, science education, teacher training, research

and evaluation, new technologies. The structure of the course consists of lectures, round tables, museum visits, interactive workshops and practical activities. The language of the course is English but the materials used will be available in different languages. The course will be held inside the Deutsches Museum in Munich, where the collections, staff and educational programmes will be used as an integral part of the course activities.

Practical Information

To find information about the procedures for applying please look at the websites of the Socrates National Agency of your own country.

The course participation fee is 600 euro.

Contacts

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Sara Calcagnini
National Museum of Science and Technology,
Milan, Italy
calcagnini@museoscienza.it

How to participate

Please visit the website for further information and to complete the Pre-registration Form.
www.museoscienza.org/smec/courses.html

Looking to the Future of Science Centers, Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel

Clore Garden of Science, Rehovot, Israel
June, 28th, 2009

The Symposium "Looking to the Future of Science Centers" is going to take place in the Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot, Israel, on June 28th, 2009. The symposium will be commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Clore Garden of Science and honoring the retirement of its funding director, Dr. Moshe Rishpon. Three keynote speakers are now confirmed as Dr. Per-Edvin Persson, Director of Heureka - The Finnish Science Centre, Dr Goery Delacôte, Chief Executive of At-Bristol, and Dr. Alan J. Friedman, consultant in the areas of museum development and science communication.

The program will include:

- Educational Activity in a Research Institute, ("Science Education by Scientists")
- A Round-table Discussion on Exhibits and Demonstrations in Science Centers ("What is left after the fun?")
- Future Trends of Science Centers or Thoughts about the Future of Science Centers

Participation is free of charge.

For more information on the event please contact:

Roni.Ashkenazi@weizmann.ac.il



Symposium: Research on interactive exhibits, Vienna, Austria, 25-26 May 2009

The Austrian Science Center Netzwerk will host a symposium in Vienna on May, 25th - 26th 2009, in English. International experts will report about state-of-the-art visitor research in museums. The focus of the symposium will be on interactivity, learning, target groups, design and methods of conducting research on museum visitors. We address (inter)national museum staff, science and culture mediators, exhibition architects, designers, etc. The symposium will take place in the Technical Museum of Vienna and is supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF) within its programme forMUSE - research in museums. For more information please contact Ulrike Oberhammer, oberhammer@science-center-net.at

 **Science Communication Conference, British Science Association, 22-23 June 2009, London**

The Science Communication Conference organised by the British Science Association and in partnership with the Wellcome Trust is taking place 22-23 June at Kings Place, central London. The 2009 Conference will be addressing the key issues facing science communicators today, bringing together those engaged in public engagement and is a fantastic opportunity to network, share ideas and good practice. The closing date for bookings is 12 June.

For more information visit www.britishsociety.org/sciencecommunicationconference

 **6th World Conference of Science Journalists, Central Hall, London, UK, 30 June - 2 July, 2009**

The 6th World Conference of Science Journalists in 2009 (WCSJ2009) will bring established and aspiring reporters, writers and science communicators from around the world to debate, network, develop their professional skills and report on the latest advances science and technology. By bringing journalists and science communicators together from across the world WCSJ2009 will be a forum for debate on critical science journalism issues, and an opportunity for reporting about the latest developments in science and technology.

For more information on the conference see <http://www.wcsj2009.org/programme.php>

 **Euroscience Mediterranean Event (ESME) 2009, "THEATRON" cultural centre "Hellenic Cosmos" 15 - 19 October 2009, Athens, Greece**

Under the auspices of Euroscience, the European Association for the promotion of science and technology, ESME 2009 is the first in a series of biennial events, dedicated to scientific research and innovation. ESME provides a platform for dialogue on science and technology, society and policy, following the pattern of the Euroscience Open Forum, while focusing on the specific characteristics and needs of the Mediterranean region. The call for proposals for the conference sessions is now open. Deadline for abstracts submission: 10 July 2009. For more information on the event visit: <http://www.esme2009.org/node/2>

 **Euroscience Open Forum 2010 (ESOF2010) - Torino, Italy, 2-7 July 2010**



The next Euroscience Open Forum (ESOF2010) will take place in Torino, Italy, on 2-7 July 2010, under the slogan "Passion for Science". Founded by Euroscience in 2004, ESOF is a European meeting dedicated to research and scientific innovation, held every two years in a major European city. ESOF2010 will be a unique opportunity to meet and discuss important issues in which science and technology play a central role.

Everyone is encouraged to participate and answer to the Call for Proposals, on-line at www.esof2010.org. The deadline for proposal submission is June 15, 2009, and for the Outreach, Career and Science to Business Programmes is September 15, 2009. Contact ESOF2010 Project Team: info@esof2010.org www.esof2010.org

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