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## Leading in Difficult Times



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**This issue of the Ecsite newsletter takes a timely look at how our institutions are coping with the consequences of the economic crisis. Kirk Ramsay, director of Glasgow Science Centre, UK, offers his views to fellow CEOs on how our science centres and museums can weather the "perfect storm."**

Leaders of many organisations often see significant difficulties in achieving their goals and consequently get into the habit of defending limited progress by relating this to the 'difficult times' in which they are operating. It has been surprising to see how consistently this has arisen in various settings and discussions with science centres around the world. Lack of time by CEOs and directors to focus on future developments and new ideas has far too often been cited because "we are operating in exceptional circumstances".

The truth is that running any business is a difficult thing to do well. Science centres are businesses that have some particular issues in their setup and operations that can make them very demanding and sometimes more complex than an equivalent sized production or service company in a more

'traditional' business area. However, the privilege of being in a leadership role in a science centre is a rare opportunity to stretch all of our skills, competences and knowledge to produce outcomes that have a high degree of 'feel good factor' for all associated people whether employees or customers and to have significant long-term impacts on our surrounding regions.

Being fortunate to have been involved in setting up and leading a number of different businesses and therefore able to compare experiences, my personal view is that the science centre has been the most challenging but also the most rewarding of all. So, what about these difficult times? The reality is that we are presently in the midst of an economic situation that has not been experienced in living memory. This situation has been described as the 'perfect storm' as the mountain of debt which had sustained asset prices and produced apparently limitless short-term gains throughout the last decade has fallen apart and generated a global recession at a faster rate and more widespread than ever seen before. Predictions have consistently highlighted a likely 10% reduction in national economies and in practice we have seen many consequences of that and even now we see increasing unemployment in many countries as the impacts continue to feed through the system.

*Article continues on page 2*

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**Next issue**  
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Recent GDP reports have suggested that some countries are coming out of recession but the reality is that any growth in GDP is very small and building from a significantly depressed level which still leaves us a very long way behind where we started and looking at a number of years, perhaps 10 years to get back to where we were in economic terms. So, these are genuinely difficult times.

## “Stick to the knitting”

Good business advice in difficult times is to ‘stick to the knitting’, look after your core business and make sure that you do that as well as you possibly can. In science centres, that raises particular questions over actions we may consider. As a preface to considering that, it is worth remembering that many of the most successful businesses and new ventures have started in the midst of economic recession. There are new opportunities during ‘difficult times’ that do not arise or are not as readily available as options to pursue in the good times. To take advantage of any such opportunity a leader must

be in a position to see it first and then to act quickly and effectively. If ever there was a time that proved the need for us to be guided by the old adage “a CEO should work ON the business NOT IN it,” this is it! It is when the situation appears to demand all of your time and energy to deal with it that you need to slow down, take a hard look at what needs done, who can do it, who should do it and what you should do. If you become buried in the daily issues of the business then your skills as leader are not being exploited to best effect and in fact your ability to genuinely lead will become more limited as time passes.

## The only constant is change

You may be faced with significant change in your business profile. Sponsors and donors have less cash available, public funders will come under great pressure as governments deal with the national debt burdens that have grown so quickly, public visitors may have less money to

spend or be more selective in how they spend, families will be affected as unemployment continues to grow, schools may have less discretionary funding available to support visits. Capital project funding already committed may be withdrawn - during these times there are no guarantees. It is almost certain that one or more of these and other issues will affect your institution. So, what to do?

We are in changing and unpredictable times. One thing we can be confident of is that anyone who claims they can project forward with certainty does not understand the situation. The only constant is change. Therefore, we need to be well-equipped to deal with change and to act effectively as change agents, building confidence and comfort in change for all of our staff, partners and associates. Key in this is the Board who are usually not close to the business and therefore can become alarmed by things they see as important when we do not. Increase the level of communication with Board members, find good reasons for one-to-one chats with them, give them ownership by asking



Glasgow Science Centre, UK

their advice or opinion on options you are considering. You need to be more visible to your Board now than ever before, they need to have confidence in you, and you must know them well enough to take issues of concern up with them on the basis of their individual disposition to the issue in hand before any associated matter arises at a board meeting. What happens outside the Boardroom is more important than what happens inside it.

The same applies to all staff. They will have their own concerns about how things are in the business and some of them may already be suffering at home with reduced income or unemployment of family members. MBWA (Manage By Walking About), be seen, be optimistic and confident but realistic. If there is bad news, share it. If hard decisions are needed like letting staff go, find ways to involve them in the planning of that and then get on with it. Do NOT dither! Do NOT make promises you cannot keep. Be prepared to discuss any issue raised by staff members at any time. You cannot possibly be 'too busy' for this. YOU cannot get the business through a difficult situation, but the staff can. Give them your support and confidence and they will respond to your guidance and perhaps surprise you with their abilities.

As changes arise and work their way through your organisation remember that the majority of people do not like change. They prefer the comfort of the status quo even when that situation looks bad to an outside observer. To those involved it seems better to deal with something that they understand is bad but have knowledge of how to live with than to step out into a new and unknown situation. You are likely to have seen the need for the change ahead of the majority and you will be clear about what the benefits. Having initiated the change, there is a real danger you will lose touch with the position of your staff in seeing the need, understanding what it means, accepting that it should happen, seeing themselves as part of it, taking ownership of activities, implementing and consolidating the change. The leader's role in change is to slow down, make sure that the case for change is clear, concise and compelling and then communicated and understood BEFORE being implemented. If others do not see the need and the urgency of the change, then it will stall. Start with the 'why' of the case and keep revisiting this with all parties so that you are clear about where progress actually is in taking

the change on and they see that you are interested in the effects on them. People are more afraid of loss than the change itself: loss of position, loss of control, loss of money, loss of resources, loss of friends; remember that in your approach. This area of change management is probably the most poorly executed in most organisations and yet the critical factor for success in current times will be how effective change can be adopted throughout the organisation.

## Key questions

What is it that makes the science centre or museum of continued value to regular visitors? What key aspects of its activities should take precedence when choices must be made? What are the dos and don'ts when trying to grow, or perhaps even just survive in difficult trading conditions? Every science centre and museum will have specific responses to each of these questions and hopefully as leader of the organisation you will be asking these and other questions on a regular basis. But now, we must ask them more frequently and be more thorough in evaluating our responses because the internal and external environments could change at web speed - are we thinking at web speed? It could be said that financial markets thought and acted at web speed to cause the current economic downturn while those who could have acted to prevent some of the worst outcomes thought and acted in traditional models, apparently ignoring the fact that the global environment of which they are part is now very different.

Going back to basics is an essential step in current conditions. Managing costs is good practice at any time, but now even closer focus than usual should be applied. In conversation with a number of centres it has become clear that many of us have moved cost control to the top of the agenda for all our managers. One approach has been to create a 'savings brigade' which reports on a weekly basis on what savings have been made and new more cost effective actions to be implemented. Simple things like switching off all lights one hour earlier or switching them on one hour later do make a difference. These actions also carry strong messages to all staff members about the importance of small contributions that they can make.

External relations are likely to be key to future success so at this time we need to pay close attention to them as well. The current economic

crisis has changed things for the long term. More organisations than ever will be interested in partnership working to reduce risks, increase throughput and reduce costs. Look at those around you who have or could have some dependence on you as partner to deliver on their aims. Keep your focus on what makes the science centre different and make sure your messaging is very clear on that. Your ability to complement what a potential partner does is your best selling proposition.

## Our added value

Science centres and museums have strong brands that potential partners should value highly if that brand and its values are communicated clearly. An example we have found is that in corporate hospitality the science centre as a charitable operation has become a much more attractive venue for commercial customers because they can see that profits from their event are supporting a public good. As conditions ease, and companies start to spend again on events, they will be more selective in choice of venues. We now have more advantages than ever, so use them. The connection with a charitable operation will be valued, so look for the potential to get commitment for a number of years. We have found that works.

There are temptations to react to the economic downturn by making special offers, reducing prices, giving more for less. Resist these temptations. Now is the time to make sure that you are extracting maximum return from every customer and that your value proposition is strong. A number of science centres have removed special offers or increased prices during this recession. We have done both with success. In some areas our customer numbers are down a little, but revenue is higher. This is preparing for the upturn which will come so that you emerge stronger and able to drive forward at maximum speed as general conditions improve. The science centre typically within its region has a strong brand, well understood values, a high quality customer experience that is not found elsewhere, and is seen to be a value for money visit. Protect these and use them to full effect in building the new relationships and options for the business that will become available during these 'difficult times'. This is the time to take a leap forward rather than fall back as many think inevitable.

In the first quarter of this year, Kirk Ramsay of Glasgow Science Centre, UK, and Bryce Seidl of Pacific Science Center, US, launched a survey to help assess how the world economic recession was affecting science centres. Information on both operational and planning within the science centres was sought to help develop a picture of short and medium term impacts. This report summarises those responses. For the full report, see [www.ecsite.eu/?p=6290](http://www.ecsite.eu/?p=6290)

## Impact on operation and development

This survey covered mainly Ecsite and ASPAC members. ASTC members had been surveyed through a series of open questions in December 2008. The model used for Ecsite and ASPAC was an online survey that included closed questions using a Likert scale and open questions for free text responses.

### Income and Visitors over last six months

A significant number of centres have experienced reduction in admissions and sales income, but very few have had major downturns. Interestingly more centres have seen an increase than those that have a major decrease.

The majority of those involved in commercial activities including sponsorship have seen a significant downturn. Of those receiving public funding about 40% have suffered reductions. Visitor numbers overall are on target or better for the majority although public visitors seem to be down for about 40% of centres.

### Income and Visitors over next six months

Now a significant change is apparent. Most were relatively pessimistic about income and visitors over the following six months. The areas showing retained or improved performance were: admission revenue, public funding, education visitors and outreach. All other areas generally expected to be down. There is an implication here that publicly funded activities are seen to be more reliable but is that really the case?

### Cost savings measures

A relatively small numbers of centres had cost-savings of these types on their agenda. Given the relative pessimism over the future is there a hidden issue in there? Of those taking action, reduced staffing, reduced staffing hours and reduced

business hours were the most popular approaches. This overall impact here seems to present a stark contrast to actions in the USA where a very large number of science centres and museums have taken major cost-saving actions and in particular laid off staff in the same period, most acting very early in the cycle to do so.

### Developing the business

About 60% of respondents retained plans to improve their permanent exhibitions in the short term and slightly more had plans for bringing temporary exhibitions in the same period. This looks like a healthy approach to managing the visitor experience and is surely an encouragement to us all.

### General issues

The most commonly raised issue was public funding either because of the lack of it or likely reduction of it. From the previous sections it is apparent that public funding is a contributor to about 75% of respondents, consequently there is likely to be substantial concern about it. However, in projected performance it also appeared that the publicly funded elements of performance were the most stable or likely to increase. Here we have a paradox. The other significant factor arising here is our customer offer. Comments were made about the need to be clear about what our offer is and ensuring it is of highest possible quality to face increased competition from other sectors for our visitors and their spend. Value for money is likely to be an increasing element of family decisions on where to go and how often, so we need to be well prepared to provide that. Some related points were made about annual memberships being a means of both retaining visitors and giving them best value for money.

### Shared actions

The most common shared action between science centres that respondents suggested was



How has the crisis affected visitor numbers?  
Photo: Glasgow Science Centre

lobbying for support from government and other primary funders. Presenting a common definition of what science centres do and their value is a key part of this. The use of clear statements describing the value for money outcomes we generate in words that are easily assimilated by the general public, politicians, civil servants, potential sponsors and all stakeholders was mentioned a number of times. Here is a clear action line.

Collaboration was the other significant item. Collaboration on exhibit development, marketing, EU funding proposals, travelling exhibitions, building the 'nice to necessary' case, were all mentioned. There was some reference to resistance to fully open collaboration in some cases, but perhaps the current economic conditions will help remove that where it does occur. Again, it is very good to see that there is a strong appetite for collaboration and a number of fertile areas to pursue.

We hear from science centre directors from five different European countries as to how the crisis has affected their institutions.

## The economy and me

### Goéry Delacôte, At-Bristol, UK

Crisis? What crisis? Our numbers are all above plan and are above last year.

Maybe it's because we've opened an exhibition on Animation (37% more visitors than last August), maybe it's because of the bad weather in Bristol (though not as bad as last summer), maybe it's because of the Banksy exhibition in Bristol during July and August which was so popular it attracted 300,000 visitors from around the world, or maybe it's because of The Wellcome Trust which we still can claim money on our 1.5 year grant. Yes, our Corporate Hire results are a little bit in decline (-2%), but this is really the only thing I am able to find in decline.

It is certainly one of my best summers ever. And in the fall there's more to come with the opening of a Blue Reef Aquarium in the building we closed 2.5 years ago together with the re-opening of the IMAX cinema.

I wish us an extension of the crisis for next year; but maybe it's not the crisis which is responsible for those successes!?

### Asger Høeg, Experimentarium, Denmark

The Swedish Kroner and Norwegian Kroner have lost approximately 20% of their value. It has meant that the proportion of visitors from our friends in the Nordic countries has dropped by 5%, equal to 16 000 visitors and €250 000 less income. And the missing income gravitates directly to the bottom line as a minus! In the last 3 weeks the currencies of Sweden and Norway have gained some strength - luckily!

Private and corporate events has declined. Up to now the drop has been at the level 50% - which is quite alarming - but in the fall and winter we can foresee a large number of events, so I actually hope that we will gain in the second half of 2009 what we lost in the first half of 2009.

Experimentarium has described a bold €60 million € plan to reshape the building from 18 000 m<sup>2</sup> to 30 000 m<sup>2</sup>. The financial crisis has postponed the project one or two years.

The commercial activity has been quite good this year, so in total I still foresee that Experimentarium's result for 2009 will be in balance!

### Olle Nordberg, Teknikens Hus, Sweden

Running a science centre is a constant juggling with sparse resources; you could say that crisis is a constant state of the business.

Of course topping the situation with a world-wide financial crisis is not making it easier! At Teknikens Hus we have had to lay off 4 of the staff, a significant number if you are a total of 25. A restructured and more compact organisation and a reduced board of directors is the result. The capacity for school visits will be reduced and on the technical side external production will be purely responsive. Finding sponsors to different projects and events has been more difficult and hence we are not running the First Lego League competition this year.

But as always we are on the lookout for new possibilities; building extended teacher networks in the region and locally, new exhibitions on e-health and medical technology to mention some projects in the pipeline! A new partnership with the regional authority is formed. The light in the tunnel is not an approaching train!

### Bernard Burel, Cité de l'Espace, France

The Cité de l'espace has not really been affected by the economic crisis up to now in terms of attendance rates. Since the beginning of the year, it has recorded attendance levels comparable to last year's. Total attendance by visitor "groups" has been maintained thanks to an increase in school groups and despite a slowdown in "tourist" group activity. "Individual" visitor attendance has also remained stable and even recorded a significant increase in July (+20%). There has also been a substantial increase in visitor spending in the shop and the restaurant.

This year the Cité de l'espace developed a special programme to commemorate the 40th anniversary of man's first steps on the moon and the International Year of Astronomy. Even though we should remain prudent, it may be assumed that the strategy of permanent renewal of its offer and the intensification of communication and marketing campaigns to spread the word as widely as possible, have enabled the Cité de l'espace to contain the impacts of the crisis.

### Andreas Heinecke, Dialogue Social Enterprise GmbH, Germany

*This is an abridged version – for Andreas Heinecke's full article on this subject, please see [www.ecsite.eu/?p=6290](http://www.ecsite.eu/?p=6290)*

Our essential understanding of the world owes a great deal to Sepp Herberger, amateur psychologist, part-time prophet, and football coach in Germany in the 1950s. From his mouth have come phrases like "The ball is round", and "After the game is ahead of the game."

As a social enterprise using exhibitions to employ people with disabilities and changing people's perceptions of them, we move outside the traditional framework. We are a hybrid of a commercial operation with a social mission and we function without donations or government grants. We can only survive by remaining extremely flexible and resilient. To address any uncertainty among staff, especially in crises, we need leadership and confidence building. This is only possible with transparency and authenticity. No-one can predict how human relations or the world economic situation will develop. We are undergoing a constant process of change, and can assume that our heydays are followed by slowdowns, just as upturns follow seemingly hopeless situations. Nothing is as constant as change - we are always ahead of the game. And that is positive, and it keeps the ball moving.



MIDE, Mexico



The Scientific Center Kuwait



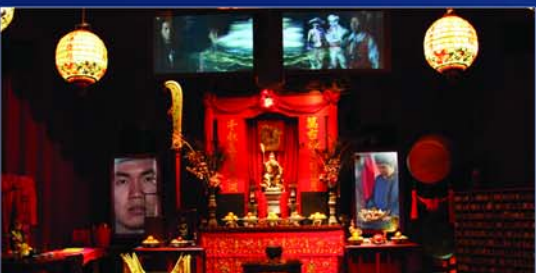
Museum of Australian Democracy



Canadian Museum of Nature



Liberty Science Center, USA



Sovereign Hill Goldmining Museum, Australia

*we undertake*

- project planning .
- media design .
- media production .
- content development .
- software design .
- software development .
- technical design .
- infrastructure design .
- hardware specification .

*we work with*

- interactive multimedia .
- audio and soundscapes .
- on-line media .
- touchscreens .
- video .
- wireless handhelds .
- object theaters .
- theaters .
- presentation spaces .

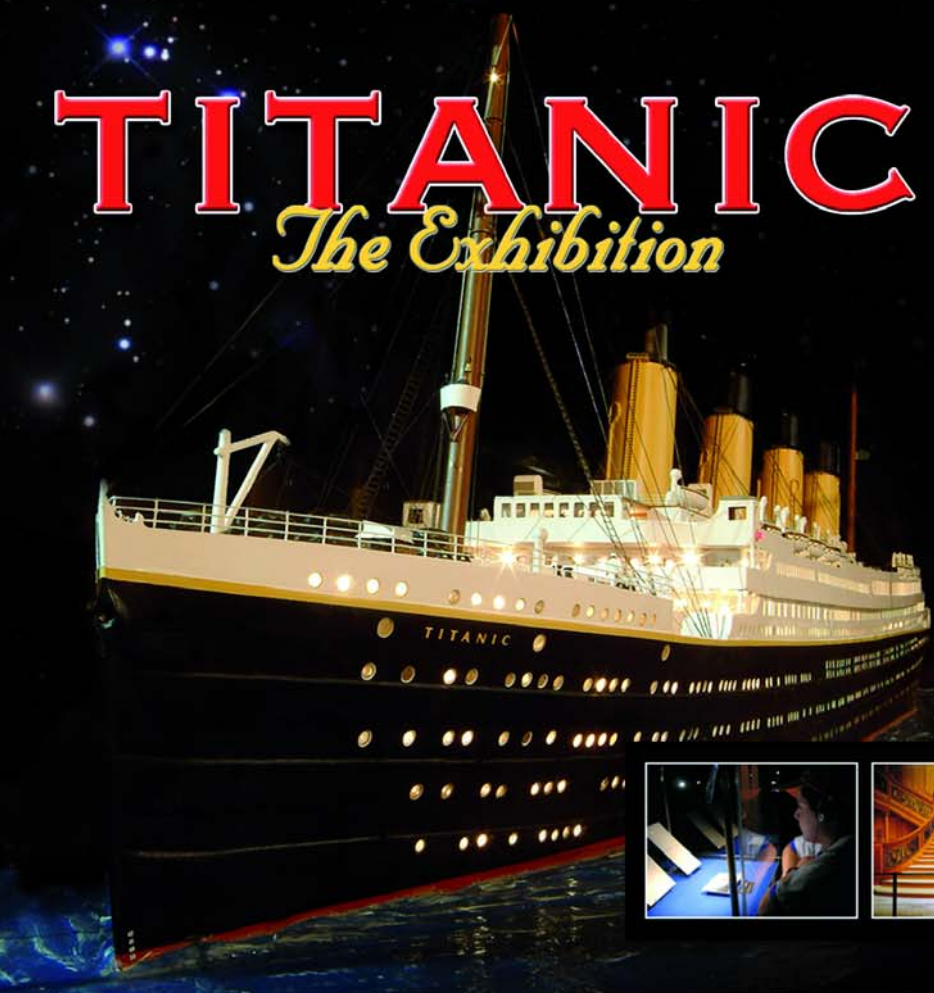
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# TITANIC

## *The Exhibition*



### TITANIC, The Exhibition

- 🚩 The most original exhibition on Earth comes... from the bottom of the sea.
- 🚩 A unique experience with audio-tour included for the entire family.
- 🚩 150 original artefacts, recreations of inner parts of the ship.
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### Once upon a time.... LIFE: The Human Body

- A fascinating experience through the human body, where you will see your anatomy and the way your body works, learn how to look after your health and prevent diseases.
- Full human bodies and more than 100 organs.
- Audiotour experience for each visitor.
- Scientific rigor and educative value.
- Endorsed by the pedagogical team of the famous TV series seen by over 200 million people worldwide.

## *Once upon a time... life:* THE HUMAN BODY *The Exhibition*



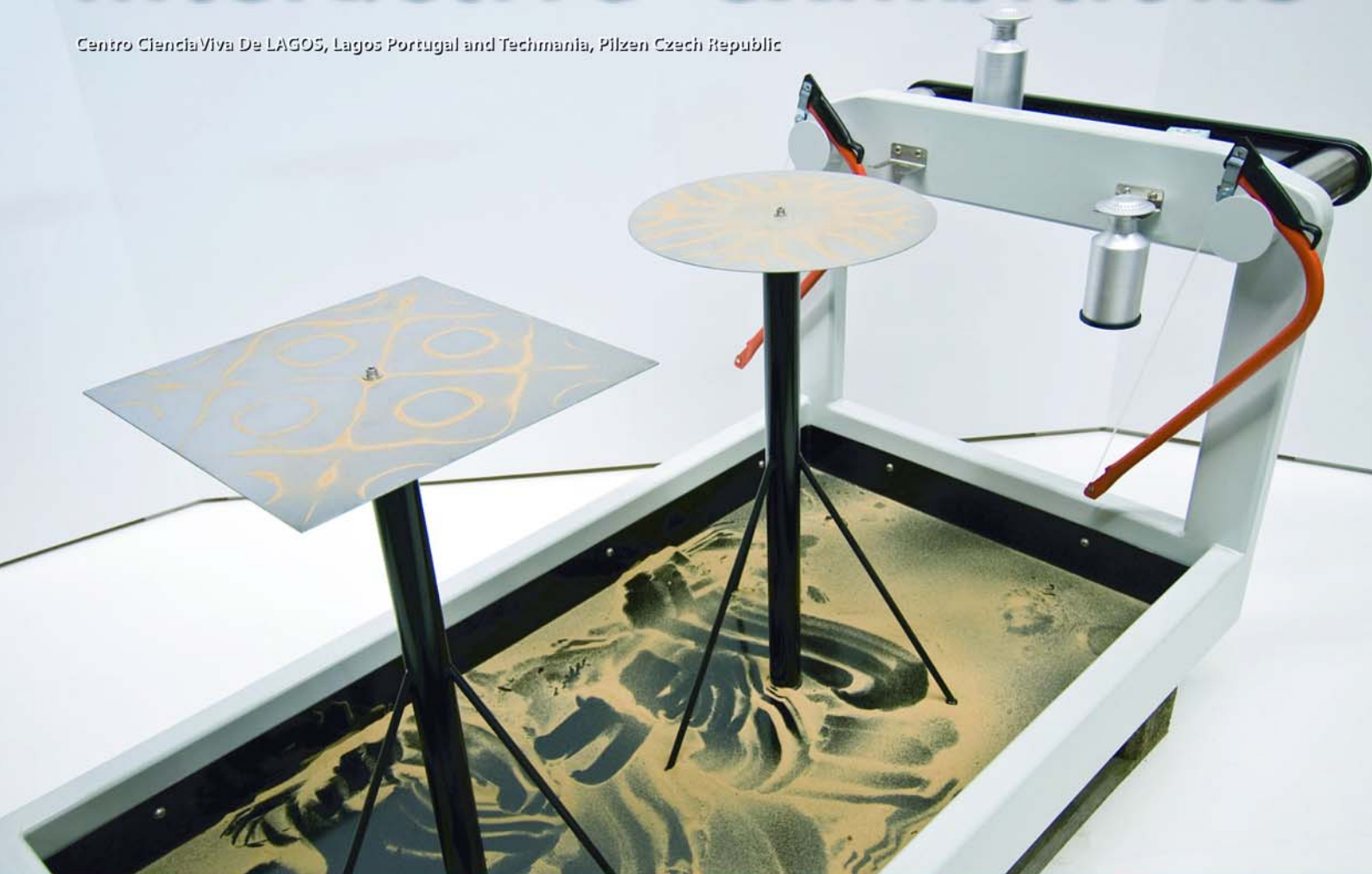
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# interactive exhibitions

Centro CienciaViva De LAGOS, Lagos Portugal and Techmania, Pilzen Czech Republic



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W [www.bruns.nl](http://www.bruns.nl)

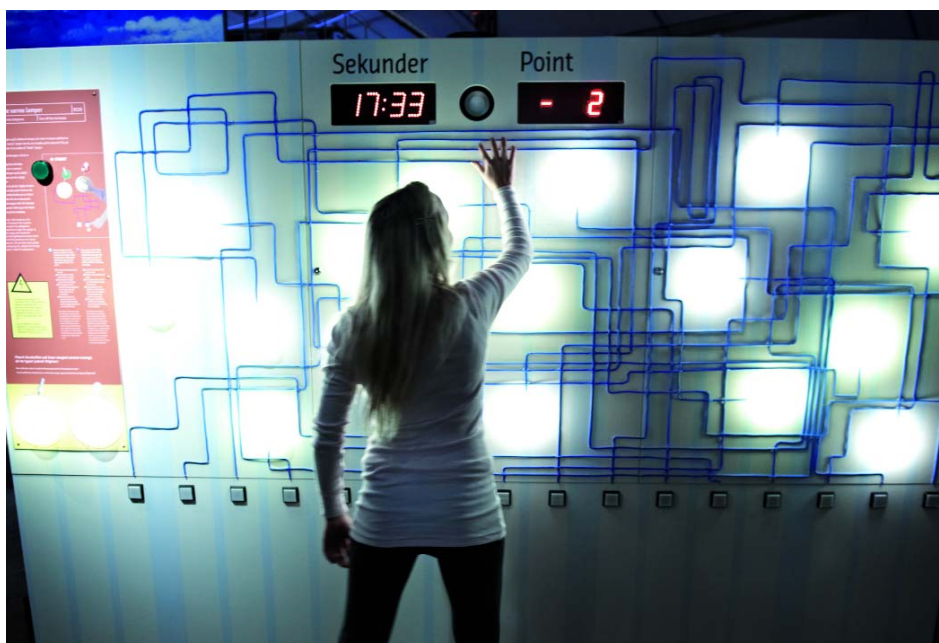


## ECSITE DIRECTORS' FORUM 2009- SCIENCE CENTRES AND MUSEUMS: PLATFORMS FOR THE COMMUNICATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN SOCIETY

The Ecsite Directors' Forum 2009 will be held in the Experimentarium, Hellerup, Denmark between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2009. At Ecsite's Directors Forum the directors of the 90 Full Members of Ecsite will discuss the questions: How do we best communicate the science behind the climate change? How do we communicate the risk that the climate change imposes upon us? Three weeks before the COP 15, the United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held in Copenhagen, Ecsite members will meet to discuss how our community is tackling this global issue. How can our institutions be the best platforms for the communication of the science behind the climate change between the researchers, the industry, the politicians and the society? The format of the DF will be a combination of peer discussions in small groups and inspiring keynote speeches. An invitation is now sent to the directors of the Ecsite Full members. For those of you interested to find out what is the Ecsite Directors' Forum see the Ecsite website: [www.ecsite.eu](http://www.ecsite.eu).

## ECSITE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2010 - CALL FOR PROPOSALS NOW OPEN

We are pleased to invite you to the 21st Annual Conference of the Ecsite network that will take place between 3rd - 5th June 2010 in Dortmund, Germany at the DASA. We have now opened the call for proposals for the conference and we look forward to receiving your session proposals! We invite you to have a glance at the first announcement of the Conference on our Ecsite Conference website. You can submit your session proposals electronically, via the Conference Website. You will also find a page with helpful guidelines on the Call for Proposals with additional information on the session formats and tips for how to submit a good session proposal. Remember that we encourage the



submissions of as many as possible complete session proposals and of interactive and innovative session formats. We finally encourage you to submit session proposals that are relevant to our Focus. The Ecsite Annual Conference 2010 will take place at DASA in Dortmund, Germany. In 2010, the Ecsite Annual Conference meets the European Capital of Culture in Dortmund, Germany's green metropolis. We will take the opportunity to look at the world of our own work, with three days of challenging sessions and heated discussion, social events and business opportunities, preceded by two days of in-depth pre-conference meetings and workshops. The theme selected for this year's conference is exploring risks! For the 2010 Ecsite Annual Conference, we invite you to abandon your comfort zone! Join us in a critical and thought-provoking look at the work of science centres and museums, learning from shared experiences both positive and negative. What happens when we stop playing it safe? Whether you come from a science centre or museum, a natural history museum, a university, an aquarium, a zoo, a research institute or a private company, the network's 21st Annual Conference is the date for your calendar. For more information see [www.ecsite-conference.eu](http://www.ecsite-conference.eu)

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS ONLINE FOR ECSITE

Since Ecsite has now launched the new website and logo, we invite you to promote Ecsite by establishing

a link with us on your website using the new Ecsite logo and web address at [www.ecsite.eu](http://www.ecsite.eu). By doing this you will increase the search engines ranking of hits of the Ecsite website and thus raise the awareness of our field. The new website also offers you the possibility of promoting your own activities. You should have received a login name and password by email - please check your member page, add your news and events, and update your institutional information at [www.ecsite.eu](http://www.ecsite.eu). Finally, Ecsite now has an account on the popular free micro-blogging service, Twitter. Follow us on Twitter in order to find out what we are developing at the moment and let us know what you are doing too! [www.twitter.com/ecsite](http://www.twitter.com/ecsite)

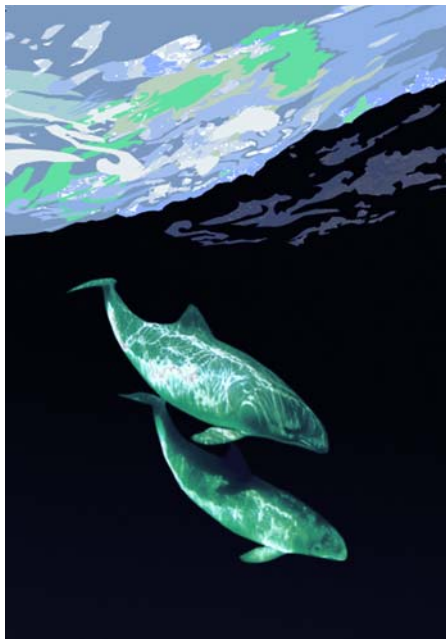
## PILOTS

The Pilots project will shortly open registration for its third training workshop, taking place 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010 at La Cité des Sciences, Paris, France. The full programme will be available at [www.thepilots.eu](http://www.thepilots.eu). The fourth and final training workshop will take place at the Ecsite Annual Conference 2010, June 1st-2<sup>nd</sup> at DASA, Dortmund, Germany. Funding to attend the final workshop will be available through a Grundtvig grant - we will let you know when registration opens. Meanwhile we encourage your explainers to join the Pilots Hub, the online community for science explainers, now with over 300 members at <http://pilots-hub.ning.com>.

For more information, contact Michael Creek, Ecsite Projects Coordinator, at [mccreek@ecsite.eu](mailto:mccreek@ecsite.eu)

## WHALES AND DOLPHINS AT THE BRUSSELS MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCES

In the temporary exhibition Whales and Dolphins you are immersed in a fantastic world - that of mammals which have become fully adapted to life in the water. Unfortunately though, they have come to symbolise all endangered species.



The exhibition runs from 14th October 2009 to 29th August 2010. This exhibition was previously on display at the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris and has been adapted for the Brussels public.

**Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences**  
Contact Yannick Siebens:  
yannick.siebens@naturalsciences.be  
www.naturalsciences.be

## DIALOGUE IN THE DARK AT TROMPO MÁGICO

Dialogue in the Dark, the interesting laboratory of Andreas Heinecke, now arrives to Jalisco, Mexico,



in the installations of Trompo Mágico Interactive Museum. This Space contributed its creativity to construct some places that recreate the state tourist sites, from the conception of aromas to the recreation of textures and sounds. This is added to the talent of our blind guides that share their experience of life to guide people that can see, through their world of dark, to wake their other senses.

**Trompo Mágico, Zapopan, Jalisco, Mexico**  
Contact: wesley.taylor@jalisco.gob.mx  
http://trompomagico.jalisco.gob.mx

## CHOOSE THE RIGHT FISH

Nausicaa - Centre National de la Mer (France), Acquario di Genova (Italy) and Acuario Finisterrae (Spain) will launch in October 2009 an international campaign to improve the knowledge of their visitors and of all the consumers about sustainable fish consumption, to motivate and equip them to take up concrete actions in their everyday experience so as to reduce human pressure on fisheries. The campaign will include several actions, like temporary exhibitions and educational activities for families and schools inside the aquariums, promotions of sustainable species in local fish shops and restaurants, etc.

**Acquario di Genova, Genoa, Italy**  
Contact: sangelini@acquariodigenova.it  
www.acquariodigenova.it

## NANOYOU

NANOYOU is a project funded by the European Commission that aims to increase young people's basic understanding on nanotechnologies and to engage in dialogue on their ethical, legal and social aspects. A vast range of participatory multimedia activities and tools will be available on the NANOYOU portal - which will be fully operational in January 2010. NANOYOU will carry out a strong school programme for young people aged 11-18 and a wide range of activities in science centres for those aged 18-25.

**Barcelona Science Park, Barcelona, Spain**  
Contact: nanoyou@pcb.ub.cat  
www.nanoyou.eu

## CREATURE FEATURES: AN EXPLORATORIUM HALLOWEEN

Celebrate Halloween-Exploratorium style! Join us in costume for our 2nd annual extravaganza of scary

science and frightful fun. We'll explore the scientific and cultural phenomena behind Halloween, Dia de los Muertos, and a host of creeping, crawling, flapping, and otherwise fascinating creatures. If you dare, step inside the Neverwas Haul (a haunted Victorian house on wheels) and tiptoe through our Cemetery of Dead Science. Meet a menacing menagerie of spiders, insects, bats, leeches, black cats, and more-then gasp at the macabre minutia of magnified creatures and objects.

**Exploratorium, San Francisco, US**  
Contact: rosen@exploratorium.edu  
www.exploratorium.edu

## BEHIND THE SCENES STEEL TOURS

Join us at Magna on 29th October 2009 for a behind the scenes Steel Tour. This is your chance to go into the heart of this steelworks and see areas not usually open to the public. The tour will conclude with pie and peas and a drink in the Fuel Restaurant.

**Magna Science Adventure Centre, Rotherham, UK**  
Contact: info@magnatrust.co.uk  
www.visitmagna.co.uk/events

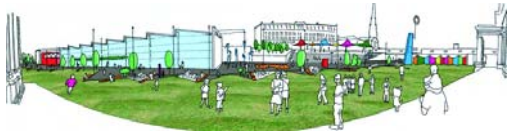
## EXPERIMENTARIUM TV

Television production is set up at the science centre Experimentarium. The TV project is run by four young people and an experienced TV journalist. The project is intended both as a springboard for education within new media, but should also be an eye opener for other young people for everyday scientific phenomena. There will be a TV studio at Experimentarium where classes can come and experiment with making television. The TV project is also focused on integration of young people with different backgrounds. Half of the TV crew should have an ethnic background other than Danish.

**Experimentarium, Hellerup, Denmark**  
Contact: mortenb@experimentarium.dk  
www.experimentarium.dk

## EUREKA! NEXT GENERATION

Eureka! is being repositioned as the UK's National Children's Museum, and the development of the existing site to deliver the most inspiring play-based learning experience possible.



The plan opens up the museum's site to improve the physical connections with the town, the station and the Piece Hall. The museum's outdoor space will be transformed to create an urban park that can be accessed by children and their families at any time. Inside, Eureka!'s galleries will be updated, extended and renewed in keeping with the museum's unique style. Eureka! will become a centre of excellence for green technology, with environmental sustainability threaded through all aspects of the museum's activities.

#### **Eureka! Halifax, UK**

Contact: [Nina.Rogers@eureka.org.uk](mailto:Nina.Rogers@eureka.org.uk)  
[www.eureka.org.uk](http://www.eureka.org.uk)

#### **THE BIG DINOSAUR SHOW**

As well as the educational and fun Hands-on Science and Nature Exhibition with over 80 exhibits, The Look Out has a brand new show in September. Help our herd of Brachiosaurus to survive a number of dangerous challenges. Find out what the breath of a T Rex would have smelt like and how much poo the biggest dinosaurs would have made! Shows run at weekends and Berkshire school holidays, 12th September 2009 - 4th January 2010.

#### **The Look Out Discovery Centre, Bracknell, UK**

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/be](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/be)  
[thelookout@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:thelookout@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

#### **FIRST LEGO® LEAGUE, A SMART MOVE!**

The FIRST LEGO® League is an international science competition for children in the age of 8 up to 15 years old. As a hand-on experience they enjoy thinking, planning and creating a robot with LEGO® MINDSTORMS® materials. At the same time they dive into doing research about each year's theme, placing science and technology in its social context.

This year the teams enter the world of transportation. The key to the 2009 'Smart Move' Challenge is accessing people, places, goods and

services in the safest, most efficient way possible. Teams start working on the project in September.

#### **Stichting Techniekpromotie, Eindhoven, Netherlands**

Contact: [s.j.b.ezendam@techniekpromotie.nl](mailto:s.j.b.ezendam@techniekpromotie.nl)  
[www.firstlegoleague.org](http://www.firstlegoleague.org)  
[www.firstlegoleague.nl](http://www.firstlegoleague.nl)

#### **CHILDREN'S SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS - CITÉ DE L'ESPACE, TOULOUSE**

On October 16th 2009, the Cité de l'Espace will organise the first Children's Scientific Congress in which 250 children from 8 to 12 years old will participate as real researchers.



This project is part of the Cité de l'Espace's activities to make science more attractive to young people. The congress dedicated to the theme of The Moon will propose 20 short sessions including poster sessions, plenary conferences and oral presentations. Pupils will be helped to design their presentations by six PhD students from Toulouse University, a partner of the project. This event is also supported by the French Ministry of Education and the City of Toulouse.

#### **Cité de l'Espace, Toulouse, France**

Contact: [c.chaffardon@cite-espace.com](mailto:c.chaffardon@cite-espace.com)  
[www.cite-espace.com](http://www.cite-espace.com)

#### **THE BIG BANG GAME**

The Science and Technology Museum of Catalonia (mNACTEC) will be offering a virtual game themed around the universe, accessible in Catalan and in Spanish, from October to

December 2009. Young people will be able to discover the scientific vision of the universe through a series of ingenious and instructive new Internet games. A team of experts in multimedia games, CERN researchers and educators, have created them expressly to open new routes towards scientific knowledge and promote social networks and the dissemination of particle physics through an entertaining museum activity.

#### **mNACTEC, Terrassa, Spain**

Contact: [sistema.comunica.mnactec@gencat.cat](mailto:sistema.comunica.mnactec@gencat.cat)  
 Website: [www.bigbang.cat](http://www.bigbang.cat) and [www.mnactec.cat](http://www.mnactec.cat)

#### **THE BEAGLE'S COURSE**

The Museo di Scienze Naturali of the University of Camerino in partnership with the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) organizes from October 8 to December 20, 2009 a temporary exposition dedicated to Charles Darwin and its travel around the world. Strictly connected with its mission as "University Museum" the object of this event is to offer a large public the opportunity to discover and understand the Theory of Evolution by interactive exhibits, laboratories, multimedia didactic materials, workshops and public lectures.

#### **Museo di Scienze Naturali dell'Università di Camerino, Camerino, Italy**

Contact: [annalisa.albanesi@unicam.it](mailto:annalisa.albanesi@unicam.it)  
[www.unicam.it/museoscienze](http://www.unicam.it/museoscienze)

#### **ENGINEER YOUR FUTURE**

In September the Royal Armouries are launching their new Engineering Sessions: 'Engineer Your Future'.

The Royal Armouries at the Tower of London are committed to offering curriculum based, interactive and inspiring science sessions. We are aiming to enhance our offerings further with the addition of Engineering sessions to support the new 14-19 Diploma in England. Using their collection as a focus students will be encouraged to think about engineering applications past and present both here on our site (in the Tower of London) and also at partner sites.

#### **Royal Armouries, London, UK**

Contact: [amy.preece@armouries.org.uk](mailto:amy.preece@armouries.org.uk)  
[www.royalarmouries.org](http://www.royalarmouries.org)

**Noyce Leadership Institute launched submission of applications on September 8<sup>th</sup>**

The Noyce Leadership Institute is pleased to announce that information and application materials for the 2010-2011 Noyce Leadership Fellows programme is available since September 8, 2009 at [www.noycefdn.org](http://www.noycefdn.org). This third cohort of Fellows is targeted first and foremost to senior managers inside and outside the field with the passion and potential to work as a CEO, COO, or other senior executive positions within a science centre or children's museum. Existing CEO's early in their careers in the field may be considered, based on their possible fit with the senior managers admitted to this programme. Admission to the programme assumes candidates already have a working knowledge of management in the field. Participants are selected through a competitive process. The selection process strives to include participants from diverse backgrounds. After reviewing the full information at [www.noycefdn.org](http://www.noycefdn.org), questions can be directed to Sheila Grinnell, NLI Field Liaison, at: [sheilagrinell@cox.net](mailto:sheilagrinell@cox.net)

**7th international Hands On! Europe Conference, 3-6 November 2009, Paris, France**

What is the future of children museums? Are they going to turn into digital places or continue to give priority to traditional mediation? From 3rd until 6th November 2009, la Cité des sciences et de l'industrie, in partnership with the European association of children's museums Hands On! Europe, hosts the 7th International Conference of Hands On! Europe, entitled "High Tech! High Touch!" This conference is a privileged event for all professionals who deal with children to debate this controversial and topical question. On the occasion of the opening of "La Cité des enfants, next generation", its brand new children's spaces, la Cité des sciences et de l'industrie, its partners and the conference's speakers will share with you their experiences, questioning and visions of children museology. All information is available on the Hands On! Europe's website: [www.hands-on-europe.net](http://www.hands-on-europe.net). Do not hesitate to register for the Conference before September 30th to benefit from a reduction.



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for Ecsite - the European Network of Science Centres and Museums

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**SciTech Brussels 2009: Innovation Across Europe, 12 November 2009, Brussels, Belgium**

Are you involved in Science and Technology? Would you benefit from meeting and networking with 300 fellow professionals from across Europe? Are you interested in listening to speeches from some of the top speakers from the Science and Technology Sector? PSCA International are pleased to announce the launch of a new conference for the Science and Technology Sector in Europe. The event promises to bring together leading industry stakeholders, academic experts and key policy makers to outline a collaborative approach to European science and technology frameworks. For more information on the programme see [www.publicserviceevents.co.uk/main/overview.asp?ID=94](http://www.publicserviceevents.co.uk/main/overview.asp?ID=94)

**10th ISSA Annual Conference, 14-17 October 2009, Bucharest, Romania**

If you are working in early childhood development and education, if your job involves making decisions regarding children and families, if you want to contribute to making the world a better place for every child, don't miss the ISSA Conference this October. Join and be part of the team developing a leadership agenda on how to create a global village where all children enjoy opportunities to reach their full potential! The call for proposals is now open, if you are interested see the ISSA website at [www.issa2009.ro](http://www.issa2009.ro)

**Communicate Conference, 21-22 October 2009, HP Labs, Bristol, UK**

Now in its sixth year, Communicate is the only conference to focus specifically on improving the standards and effectiveness of communication about conservation and the environment. Communicate delivers an intense and exciting programme, which includes presentations from prestigious international speakers, debates, creative activities and networking, learning and skill development opportunities. This year, our theme is "Valuing the Invaluable". Biodiversity is so valuable, it's priceless. But how do we convince people it's not a luxury but a necessity? Registrations are now open. Visit [www.communicatenow.org.uk](http://www.communicatenow.org.uk) or contact +44 117 370 0973 for more information.

**European Training Certificate and learning in practice on how to develop a European project**

Course 1 "Developing European Competence for Regional Civil Servants and Managers" and Course 2 "Developing successful projects under the Seventh Research Framework Programme". The courses will take place between 19 October 2009 and 15 March 2010 and include a six weeks period of distance learning, one week seminar in Brussels and twelve weeks for self-project and individual work. The courses are jointly organised by Euridit (European Institute for Development and In-Service Training) and IES (Institute of European Studies) a department of the VUB the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgian Free University). For more information and the detailed programme, see [www.euridit.org/events.html](http://www.euridit.org/events.html)

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