

Ecsite affirms support for Città della Scienza in wake of fire

PRESS RELEASE

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BRUSSELS, BELGIUM - One of Europe's largest and pioneering science engagement institutions, Fondazione IDIS-Città della Scienza, was destroyed by fire on 4 March 2013 in Naples, Italy. The event marks a significant loss to Europe's science communication field.

Ecsite, the European network of science centres and museums, extends a resolve to support Città della Scienza in this difficult time. The centre is a founding member of Ecsite and has been an active and instrumental member in the organization, hosting an Ecsite Conference and taking its Presidency from 2007 to 2009.

"The staff of Città della Scienza need to know that Ecsite stands in solidarity with them and that our network will do everything possible to help regain what has been lost," says Catherine Franche, Executive Director of Ecsite.

"Città della Scienza is a European icon in the promotion of scientific culture and public engagement with science and its institutional essence cannot be destroyed," says Robert Firmhofer, President of Ecsite and Executive Director of Copernicus Science Centre in Warsaw, Poland. "The Ecsite network offers its Europe-wide support," he adds.

Reinforcing the notion that a science centre is more than the sum of its four walls, Città della Scienza is described on the Ecsite website as "above all a place where the informal and democratic dissemination of scientific knowledge becomes the lever for a new economic development. The history of the Fondazione IDIS-Città della Scienza is the history of a construction in southern Italy, of a new model of general development: a cultural and economic model to avoid the decline and enter into the Society of Knowledge".

The beautifully modern Città della Scienza structure converted an 18th century factory in the former industrial seaside Bagnoli district of Naples into a place of interactive scientific enchantment and curiosity for its visitors.

The Directorate-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), endorsed Città della Scienza as NGO in official relations with UNESCO in 2010.

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About Ecsite

Ecsite is the European network of science centres and museums, linking science communication professionals in more than 400 institutions in 50 countries. Founded over 20 years ago, Ecsite connects member institutions through projects and activities and facilitates the exchange of ideas and best practice on current issues. www.ecsite.eu

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