

Thousands of visitors discover the mystery of the senses thanks to ERC-funded research

Press release: November 30th 2017

The [ERC=Science²](#) project, which is funded by the [European Research Council \(ERC\)](#), engaged thousands of Spaniards at [Parque de las Ciencias](#) in Granada, Spain. Workshops, dialogue activities, guided visits, and an exhibition stand were some of the strategies used to approach people to ERC grantees' research projects that unravel the mysteries of our senses.

Most participants spotlighted the social relevance of this topic for its capacity to connect with many scientific fields such as health, robotics, longevity, and neuroscience. The fact that some scientists are actively working on a given project to help us see with our ears, feel sound, and explore new doors of perception has been very appealing to the visitors of all ages who engaged with the stand.

People were fascinated to discover how the human body can be a sense machine. In order for the public to acquire a better understanding of this issue, Parque de las Ciencias designed two workshops in which visitors could learn more about how we feel, and about the areas of our brain that are responsible of our senses. Furthermore, there were also hands-on activities where visitors were able to experiment by themselves with perception games, robots or wearable technologies, so as to understand that the body is a sense machine and to see how we are about to unlock its full power. Both the workshops and the hands-on activities were linked with the stand.

"The idea of combining the content of the stand with hands-on activities and workshops was very successful because people were able to understand the topic of the research presented in the stand by experimenting it by themselves", the Director of the Science and Education Area, Javier Medina, explains.

Almost **350** people participated in the workshops that were organized and more than **12.000** visitors saw the stand, which was located next to the museum's main entrance for six days, from **November 14-19**. The fact that all the activities were scheduled during the European Science Week was an excellent occasion to engage many people: "Parque de las Ciencias organizes each year a large activities programme during the European Science Week and many people, mainly young people, come to the museum to attend it. This year the programme was more appealing to them thanks to the ERC=Science² activities", added Javier Medina.

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 672302).



The dialogue activities were viewed favorably by the participants as well. The **60** attendees of the **Science Café** were students of Optics and Education Degrees and they expressed their excitement for having the chance to listen and speak with an ERC grantee and renowned scientist such as [Susana Marcos](#). The Director of the [Visual Optics and Biophotonics Lab](#) talked about her project [Presbyopia. María del Rosario Rueda Cuerva](#), who is a Professor of the Department of Experimental Psychology at the University of Granada, also participated in the Science Café, explaining her research related with the study of the cognitive process of babies.

The [ERC=Science²](#) activities programme was completed with a FabLab session. The Parque de las Ciencias education team was in charge of managing the FabLab, which was structured in two parts. First, the visitors used the [Myo bracelet](#). It is a portable device which allows one to control their phone, personal computer, etc., with a simple movement of the forearm. The education team explained to the attendees some of the main functions of this device, like the control of a prosthetic arm. Then, after this experience, the Parque de las Ciencias team encouraged a debate on cyborgs, sensory substitution, and other hot issues related to the ERC grantees' research, which is presented in the articles of the project's [website](#). **50** Education degree students participated in the FabLab activity.

About the project:

ERC=Science² is a Europe-wide communication campaign which uses popular scientific themes such as "Longevity" to tell stories about the breakthroughs in science projects funded by the European Research Council, and the potential impact they could have on our lives.

The activities of the science centers and museums are coordinated by [Ecsite](#) (the European Network of Science Centres and Museums), while the project is coordinated by [Science I Business](#).

To find out more about the ERC=Science² campaign, featured ERC-funded research, and the project multimedia content, please visit www.sciencesquared.eu.

To get the latest news and updates about this project follow us on [Twitter](#) and like us on [Facebook](#).

For press queries, please contact Ms. Livia Meirsman at livia.meirsman@sciencebusiness.net.

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 672302).

