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First COST Training School in Australia: an Outstanding success

Australia currently conducts leading research on the topic of cyberbullying. A training school on this topic was an outstanding success with the potential to lead to extra funding.

The training school on cyberbullying took place in Melbourne, Australia, from 11 to 16 April 2010. This first event - held outside Europe - between COST and a reciprocal agreement country was convened by Dr Phillip Slee from the Flinders University of South Australia.

Nine faculty members – five from Europe and four from Australia – submitted 30 early stage researchers from COST countries and 30 researchers from Australia and neighbouring countries to an intensive 5-day schedule of lectures, workshops, roundtable discussions and presentations.

The event started with an indigenous 'welcome to the country' by a representative of the local aboriginal community from Reconciliation Australia, a not-for-profit organisation that builds relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. A moment of deep emotion swept across the room when he reminded people of the difficult past when aboriginal children were taken away from their families while their parents were often deprived of their land.

He welcomed the current efforts undertaken by his organisation and the National Government to move on from the past and was grateful that the occasion of a worldwide cooperation brought about by COST gave an opportunity to convey a message of hope and human relief.

On behalf of Professor Francesco Fedi, President of the CSO, COST was presented by Dr Michel Gorlicki, COST CSO delegate for France. After highlighting some outstanding COST success stories, Dr Gorlicki focused on the importance of global partnerships initiated by COST.

These partnerships facilitate international cooperation between the EU and important scientific players all over the world. He outlined the shift from the old 'Mare Nostrum' to Northern Atlantic Ocean during the early 20th Century, and then now to the Pacific Ocean as the emerging exchange arena. All participants agreed that Australia and New Zealand could play a major role in linking the region with the European Research Area.

Dr Julia Stamm, COST Science officer for the ISCH Domain, then presented the domain activities and major achievements.

After the launch event, Dr Gorlicki and Dr Stamm met with Nancy Pritchard, Manager - International Programs at the Australian Academy of Science, and Katharine Campbell, Counsellor at the Australian Australian National Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research. The prospect of the collaboration with COST was addressed, and the Australian parties expressed their great satisfaction with the cooperation to date. They announced that the Australian contribution to the COST reciprocal agreement would be carried over and that, most probably, the funds earmarked for this purpose would be tripled!

The Australian cooperation is a good example of the leveraging effect COST has towards international cooperation. There is no doubt that all training school participants will benefit from this event and that COST, through the strategies elaborated by the CSO, is playing an active role as a forerunner in the service of European science and performance.

Related Links

[COST Action IS0801 on Cyberbullying](#)



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