

Advanced Science Communication

Training course overview

Focus

Recognising the importance of an appropriate communication strategy for the success of collaborative research Actions, COST is organising training workshops for a limited number of participants in collaboration with Ecsite, the European Network of Science Centres and Museums. The course will furnish you with the tools you need to communicate your research results effectively, both to your colleagues and to others.

The COST-Ecsite partnership offers you the best combination of competencies in the field of scientific collaboration and communication to support you in developing an excellent communication strategy to go beyond the scientific community and enhancing your capacity to communicate and build effective partnerships.

Added value

COST supports communication and network building in Europe, helping you develop your communication skills to advance your COST Action effectively. Thanks to this course you will:

- learn about funding opportunities and influencing decision-makers
- position yourself as an expert and gain visibility within the scientific community and enhance your reputation beyond your own field of expertise
- develop an excellent communication strategy to reach all relevant audiences effectively: politicians, researchers in other fields, the media, the public, funding agencies, scientific networks and others.

Learning points

Benefits for you when you participate in the Advanced Science Communication training include, but are not limited to the following:

- Increase the effectiveness of your communication strategy
- Fine-tune your skills for effective communication with non-specialist audiences
- Handle challenging and ill-informed questions with ease and confidence
- Deal with controversial topics in contemporary scientific issues
- Get to know the Ecsite network of science communication professionals and benefit from a wide variety of contacts to enrich your Action
- Tailor the message and the communication tools to the audience you want to reach with the help of the trainers' experience and expertise
- Gain tips and ideas to involve and coach junior scientists in communicating scientific topics

- Gain knowledge of different communication tools and live activities used in science centres and museums and understand how these can be applied to your Action
- Learn about the public's perception of science measured by European studies
- Advance your presentation skills and learn new techniques to catch the audience's attention
- Add value to your network by diversifying your contacts thanks to Ecsite's expertise
- Benefit from Ecsite's wide spectrum of experiences to tailor your message to the audience you want to reach

Who is it for?

This training course is aimed at COST Action Chairs and Vice-chairs. These are senior level scientists experienced in research and in communicating information among peers who coordinate international research projects and communicate scientific results. Additional senior scientists interested in public communication from the Ecsite network are invited to participate while places are still available.

This Advanced Science Communication training course is for you who:

- Have in-depth knowledge of your subject of expertise
- Regularly communicate with your peers
- Coordinate an international research project that requires you to disseminate the results
- Work on a subject that could be interesting for a wider public and/or is potentially controversial
- Recognise that networking will help you disseminate your results in an effective way that is not too time-consuming
- Work with junior scientists and need to involve them in dissemination activities
- Want to communicate effectively with non-experts, such as the public at conferences/events to make sure your message comes through correctly

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Rationale

The training is an efficient, cost-effective way to for COST Action Chairs to gain advanced skills in communication. The exercises and information presented by the trainers equips them with the techniques they need both to communicate directly with any kind of non-expert in the most effective way and to organise dissemination activities on a wider scale.

Format

Two experienced trainers introduce the subjects and moderate the discussion. Practical exercises and group work allow participants to adapt the results to their own specific needs and to the specificity of their subject. The course will be given in English, the programme is flexible in format and contents so it can be fine-tuned to every participant's needs and interests.

Style

The trainers will help create a dynamic atmosphere in the group with open discussion. Participants will present concrete examples from their professional experience to discuss with the group, the trainers will be on hand to offer one-on-one coaching and personalised feedback. It will be an excellent opportunity to learn while networking.

Training package

During the course, trainers will supply participants with the following materials:

- The exercises and background material distributed during the course with details on the most important tools and skills to use when talking about science
- some examples of things to do in order to respond to different situations during a live event in the most appropriate way
- a concrete outline of what specific kinds of live events look like
- a list of people to contact for more information or help in setting up the live event
- a checklist to help them prepare a communication strategy, taking into account different target audiences and fine-tune their message
- a feedback questionnaire to be returned after the event.

Logistics Overview

Times and dates: Registration opens at **10.30 on Wednesday 19 May 2010** and the programme ends at **17.00 on Thursday, 20 May 2010**. One hour lunch breaks and 15 minute coffee breaks morning and afternoon are foreseen on both days. A group dinner is organised on Wednesday 19 May 2010.

Venue: The hosting venue is [the Arctic Centre](#) in Rovaniemi, Finland. More information: <http://www.arcticcentre.org/?deptid=9015>

Two-day training participation: the training is fully financed by COST, therefore COST Chairs and Vice-Chairs, as well as a small number of senior scientists from the Ecsite network are invited to participate free of charge.

Travel and Accommodation: A block booking will be made for all participants who require accommodation. Participants are requested to make their own travel arrangements; COST Chairs and Vice-Chairs will be reimbursed for their travel and hotel following the COST guidelines. Additional participants travel at their own expense.

The Training Team

Ecsite has recruited two top-quality trainers to give you the full benefit of a wide experience in training and in organising communication events and activities.

Dr. Frank Burnet MBE

Emeritus Professor of Science Communication, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK [2009 -]

An independent consultant since 2009, Frank Burnet was the first Professor of Science Communication appointed in the UK. The unit he directed until December 2008 is based at the University of the West of England (<http://www.scu.uwe.ac.uk/index.htm>) and specialises in finding new ways of taking science to people, particularly hard to reach audiences. He was awarded the MBE for his work in 2000. He has worked extensively overseas, particularly in Latvia, Portugal and Croatia. He founded and for five years co-directed the Cheltenham Science Festival and is now its International Director establishing Cheltenham-style Science Festivals overseas. He was one of the architects of the bid that resulted in Bristol becoming the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement. He has given similar training courses for scientists before (http://www.scu.uwe.ac.uk/projects/training/meet_scientist.htm).

Dr. Paola Rodari

Senior Researcher at the Innovation in the Communication of Science (ICS) Group, International School for Advanced Studies (SISSA), Trieste, Italy

Paola Rodari works as content developer and project manager for new science centres and scientific exhibitions for SISSA Medialab (<http://medialab.sissa.it>). She has been the project leader for the realisation of several science centres in Italy (Immaginario Scientifico, Trieste; Museo del Bali, Saltara; Infinito, Torino and others), where she also worked as leader of educational services and other outreach programmes. She has extensive experience training professionals and young people. She coordinated the European project DOTIK (<http://www.dotik.eu>), on the training of explainers for participatory events, public debates and other new formats of mediation and she now leads the THE group (Thematic Human Interface and Explainers group) of Ecsite, the European network of science centres and museums. Paola Rodari teaches Museums Studies in the Master in Science Communication course at SISSA (<http://mcs.sissa.it>) since 2003.

Ecsite profile

Ecsite – the European Network of science Centres and Museums – is the European organisation for science communication. For the past 20 years, Ecsite has coordinated activities between science centres and museums, research centres, business groups and EU institutions. Ecsite is often charged with ensuring the dissemination of results in projects with EU institutions and organisations. Thanks to the wide variety of competencies available in the network, Ecsite is uniquely well placed to facilitate the exchange of information between groups and organisations.

Key activities include professional advancement opportunities and training courses in science communication and public engagement, participation in international projects and facilitating thematic groups on specific topics. The Ecsite Annual Conference welcomes 1000 professionals in science and communication across Europe to discuss current issues in science communication.

The Arctic Centre is a small science centre with an exhibition space focusing on the natural environment of the Arctic. It demonstrates how people have adapted to it and the ecosystems are changing as a result of development. This centre provides an insight into communicating contemporary and controversial science issues thanks to its unique position in the fragile Arctic landscape. Cutting-edge research is close at hand since the Arctic centre is part of the Lapland University.

More information: www.arktikum.fi or www.arcticcentre.org/?deptid=10384

For further information contact:

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