



Improving Co-operation between NGO's. Universities and Science Shops

NEWSLETTER 1

November 2002

Contact

Dr. Michael Strähle
Wissenschaftsladen Wien - Science Shop
Vienna
Währinger Str. 59, A-1090 Vienna, Austria
T (43-1) 4012128, F (43-1) 4012165
wilawien@adis.at

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INTERACTS is funded by the European Commission, DG 12

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State-of-the-Art Report

The first INTERACTS reports, the State-of-the-Art Report, is available for download at <http://members.chello.at/wilawien/INTERACTS/reports.html>.

The reports provides an overview of political and institutional conditions for the co-operation between small to medium non-governmental organisations (NGOs), science shops, and universities in Denmark, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Spain, and Romania. This report serves as a basis for case studies which will examine the expectations from and the practical experience with interaction between NGOs, scientists, and science shops. The analysis of the public and political framework will also provide issues to be discussed in group discussions about future expectations and perspectives for co-operation between NGOs, scientists, and science shops.

Case Study Reports

After the State-of-the-Art Report has been finished, the INTERACTS consortium is working on case study reports. In three case studies per partner, the consortium examines the expectations from and the practical experience with interaction between NGOs, scientists, and science shops. Thereby researchers produce an inventory of the impact direct co-operations mediated through science shops had on NGO's, researchers and science shops.

The consortium expects to present the six national case study reports from Austria, Denmark, Germany, Romania, Spain and the United Kingdom at the end of December.

Presentations of INTERACTS

In November, INTERACTS is presented at the following events:

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| Nov, 5th | <i>Voluntary Sector Studies Network meeting</i> , Manchester University |
| Nov, 11th-13th | Exhibition accompanying the conference <i>European Research 2002</i> in Brussels. Further information at http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/conferences/2002/index_en.html |
| Nov, 28 th -30 th | Conference <i>Envisioning Scientific Citizenship: Science, Governance and Public Participation in Europe</i> , University of Vienna. Further information at http://www.univie.ac.at/wissenschaftstheorie/opus/ |

Workshop on Science Shops in Brussels

During the conference *European Research 2002*, Nov, 11th-13th, in Brussels, a workshop on science shops is held in the exhibition area on Nov, 12th.

This workshop was initiated and is organized by the European Commission, Directorate General Science & Society.

ISSNET, the International Science Shop Network, under negotiations

The European Commission has approved the proposal for a Thematic Network of science shops, the International Science Shop Network (ISSNET). At the time being, ISSNET is negotiated with the European Commission.

Coordinated by the Science Shop Biology at Utrecht University (The Netherlands), organisations from Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom and the USA will strengthen their relations with each other by exchanging good practice and exploring options for trans-national research co-operations and, last but by no means least, for establishing a sustainable network, thereby building up a basis for a future International Science Shop Network.

INTERACTS is an Accompanying Measure to ISSNET, the International Science Shop Network.

On INTERACTS

INTERACTS is a pioneer cross-national study by organisations and institutions from seven different countries collaborating across disciplines to identify necessary changes in structures and routines in the RTD system for improving the future interaction between NGO's, researchers, and intermediaries like science shops. Bringing together the results from different countries will allow a broader picture to emerge concerning past experience with impact of science shops, future expectations and policy relevance. Thereby, INTERACTS contributes to the strengthening of the interaction between research institutions and society and gives more in-depth understanding of processes and effects of knowledge production.

<http://members.chello.at/wilawien/interacts/main.html>

On Science Shops

Science shops provide independent, participatory research support to NGO's on a demand driven and affordable basis. Thereby, science shops promote and support public access to, and public influence on, science, research and technology.

Most science shops are university-based, while others are independent research institutes. Most of them – university- and non-university-based ones alike – act as intermediaries between universities and NGO's and mostly engage students for doing research, thus enhancing the students' skills in putting science to practical use. Others are independent research institutes where professional researchers do all research work.

According to estimates about 70 science shops exist in Europe alone. Most of them are located in the Netherlands, from where the idea of setting up science shops spread to Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Luxemburg, Romania, and the United Kingdom since the 1970's. In their respective countries, science shops are known under different names such as "Wetenschapswinkels" (The Netherlands) and "Wissenschaftsläden" (Austria, Germany). Science shops also exist in the USA – where they are called Community-Based Research Centers -, Malaysia, South Africa and South Korea.