

Sharing expertise: the European Network of Science Communication Teachers (ENSCOT)

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The European Network of Science Communication Teachers (ENSCOT) was established in early 2000, with the support of European Union funding. It will provide a flexible *workshop* that addresses the diverse needs of EU based scientists for training in different forms of communication and a *module* comprising written materials that would be used by EU-based teachers responsible for delivering science communication courses. The paper looks (with a sometimes critical eye) at the philosophy underpinning the establishment of ENSCOT and the way in which it has developed its 3 year production period.

A major aim of ENSCOT is to provide a unique European dimension to key issues, tailoring our approach to respond to what we perceive as an increasing interest throughout the EU in teaching science communication. The paper looks at the extent to which science communication straddles the national boundaries of the European Union and asks whether cultural diversity has proved a help or a hindrance to the process of identifying a common core of good practice.

The Political Initiatives module of ENSCOT is used as a focus for questions related to the 'Europeanisation' of science communication. Is there a common pattern amongst awareness-raising programmes in the EU and is there any evidence that their ambitious aims can be achieved? The paper ends by moving from an EU to a global perspective. Might ENSCOT materials and approaches have wider application? More broadly, how might science communication teachers throughout the world best use networking to share resources and ideas to support best practice?