

Science & Society

A science centre and museum's action plan

PCST7 - 5 december 2002.
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Executive director.

New hopes and fears of citizens



- Robotics.



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New hopes and fears of citizens



- Medicine and Biology.



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New hopes and fears of citizens

- Environment



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New hopes and fears of citizens

- Electronic networks.



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All are linked to scientific and technological innovation.



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Scientific literacy of the citizens.

- The dinosaurs survival.



Euro barometer results

- 80 % of Europeans believe that science will one day overcome diseases such as AIDS or cancer, but...
- 46% of Europeans are both uninformed and uninterested in science
- Citizens do not always trust science and scientists: 80 % believe authorities should oblige scientists to observe ethical rules
- Young people do not find scientific studies and careers very attractive

Visions on science and scientists



- Responsibility of the scientists.
- Regular museum visitors concerns.

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Actual debates.



Real objects >< hands-on.

Emotion >< education.

Scientific phenomena >< real life.

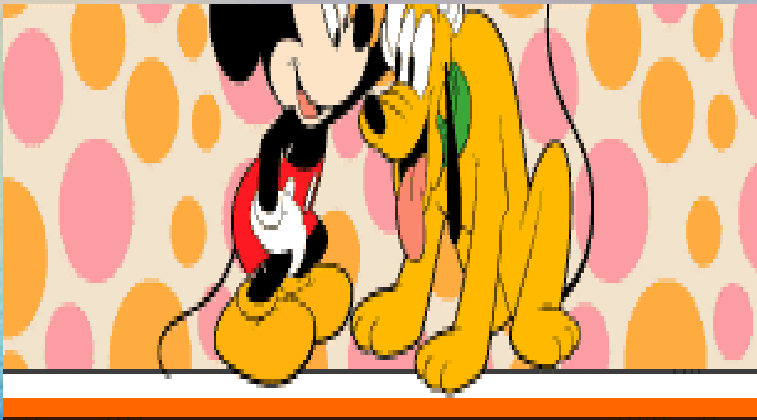
Science centres >< botanical gardens.

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Science teaching >< entertainment.



The Disney philosophy.

Closed space.

The science centre/museums philosophy.

Open space.

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Expectations from partners.



- Public authorities.
(National, European).
 - more students in scientific study's
 - more choices for scientific careers.
- Sponsors.
 - impact
 - numbers

Expectations from the public.



- How does it affect my daily life?
- What can I do?
- Will my child's have a job?
- Will I have my say?

The EU response

To help create an environment where...

- the public at large - and young people in particular – are more aware, knowledgeable and excited by science...
- where scientific endeavour is naturally responsive to public concerns and aspirations...
- and where both policy makers and citizens can make informed choices from the range of options thrown up by technological progress

Why we can deliver what they ask?

- People believe in what we say.
- All kinds of potential actor's come to us.
- Communicating about science is our job.
- We use the best adapted technology.
- We increase our links with schools.
- We make the difference

Political debate today.

- Citizens concerned by themselves in the first place.
- Trend in European countries is to reduce debate to individual security matters.
- Debates on controversial scientific issues could regenerate general political debate.

Action for science centres/museums

- Bring actors together inside the institutions or virtually.
- Prepare the debates on basis of collected scientific content.
- Create new tools for dialogue between actors.
- Find ways to implement outcomes of debates.

Benefits.

- For us: redefining the professions in our field; redefining our role in society; becoming actors of social change.
- For authorities: having a better knowledge of citizens views and aspirations, on local and European level.
- For companies: find new ways to address the citizens.

Additional benefits, for EU policy.

- Regarding the tools that we create.
 - Permanent monitoring of citizens views.
 - Easy adaptation of the tools to new needs.
 - Dissemination of tools to other actors in science communication.
 - Training of the research community in the field.

What is our mission today?



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