

## Living Knowledge – Building Partnership for Public Access to Research

### Newsletter – May 2003

Dear reader!

This is the first issue of the Living Knowledge Newsletter which will be sent out bimonthly. It is intended as a link between the Living Knowledge Discussion List with its brief information and ongoing discussion and the Living Knowledge Magazine with its detailed reports and articles that represent the current state of the discussion on community based research matters. Though information and public relation tool for the International Science Shop Network, this newsletter lives from your participation: So please feel free to criticise, prompt and contribute news, events, short reports or experiences from your special field of work.

Yours sincerely  
Norbert Steinhaus

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### **International Networking**

#### **Linking Local Knowledge to International Policy**

Different types of interfaces exist between researchers and society, one of which are the "science shops". Science shops are organizations created as mediators between citizen groups (ad hoc neighborhood groups, non-profit organizations, environmental groups, consumers, etc.) and research institutions (universities, independent research facilities).

Over the last few years international interest in the science shop model has developed, and similar organizations have been established in a wide range of countries. Initiatives in international cooperation of science shops are INTERACTS (Improving Interaction between NGO's, Science Shops and Universities: Experiences and Expectations) ([members.chello.at/wilawien/interacts/main.html](http://members.chello.at/wilawien/interacts/main.html)) and ISSNET (Improving Science Shop Networking) ([www.scienceshops.org](http://www.scienceshops.org)).

In general, science shops are small and local organizations, bound to local conditions. Thus they are highly diverse in respect to organization, approach, funding and focus. By facilitating collaboration, a network allows for breaking out of the local. Access to a larger network broadens the base of knowledge and experience. Network activities within strategic and political settings will enable science shops to continue working for and with citizens on a long-term basis. Most science shops are too small for these activities, therefore, the network's role is crucial.

This international cooperation of science shops will be beneficial to create opportunities to learn about and discuss current community-based research projects, to share experiences and to learn from one another's failures and successes.

ISSNET is a first step to establish a network. By adopting the Science and Society Action Plan ([ftp.cordis.lu/pub/rtd2002/docs/ss\\_ap\\_en.pdf](ftp.cordis.lu/pub/rtd2002/docs/ss_ap_en.pdf)) the European Commission intends to support the establishment of such a network of science shops. This network will not only focus on Europe. Its activities will increasingly connect with parallel efforts in other regions of the world to amplify local voices so they can be heard globally. This will be beneficial for science shop-like organizations and citizens all over the world. Because of size of most science shops and their common goals these issues can best be dealt within close cooperation.

If you are looking for further information or want to join the network, please contact Caspar de Bok, [C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl](mailto:C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl), [www.scienceshops.org](http://www.scienceshops.org)

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## European Social Forum

Based on the discussions at the meetings of the two project groups of ISSNET and INTERACTS in March in Rinn near Innsbruck in Austria the possibilities for organising a seminar as part of the European Social Forum (ESF) in Paris from November 12th to 16th are considered. A seminar with the working title "*Co-Operation Between NGO's, Researchers and Universities: Impact On Societal Development*" should serve several objectives (in order to attract a reasonable number of people). It should act as an international dissemination event for the INTERACTS project and a possibility for ISSNET (or rather the international network of science shops) and the individual science shops to establish dialogue with NGO's, researchers and policy makers.

It can be a seminar on the role of scientific knowledge in societal development and on strategies for NGO's access to scientific knowledge and on co-operation between NGO's, researchers and universities, including the role of intermediaries.

The preferred day for the seminar is November 15th. After the seminar the idea is to have a (more or less) joint INTERACTS and ISSNET meeting 16-17 Nov.

**Contact:** Michael Sjøgaard Jørgensen, [msj@IPL.DTU.DK](mailto:msj@IPL.DTU.DK) or Claudia Neubauer, [claudia.neubauer@WANADOO.FR](mailto:claudia.neubauer@WANADOO.FR)  
Website: [www.fse-esf.org](http://www.fse-esf.org)

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## New Science Shop in Spain

Almost eight months ago at the University of Leon (Spain) a Science-Shop named "Bazar de las Ciencias" has been established. People of the Science Shop. have developed four science-demanded projects, organized an introductory seminar on research, edited LeónCiencia (a magazine with articles done by local researches to explain their findings to non-university people) and participated in several university events. They are interested in keeping contact with other similar Science-Shops worldwide. Any information about activities and aims of Science Shops will be helpful.

**Contact:** Saúl Blanco Lanza, Área de Ecología - Universidad de León, E-24071 León (Spain), [degsbl@unileon.es](mailto:degsbl@unileon.es)  
[www3.unileon.es/bazardelasciencias/](http://www3.unileon.es/bazardelasciencias/) (website with English contents)

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## Call for expressions of interest

The European Commission has published an invitation to submit "expression of interest" (EoI) under the theme "Science and Society", see [fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call\\_details.cfm](http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm). The aim is to help the Commission identify topics that could be the subject of calls for proposals in 2004 and beyond. In this connection you are invited to submit relevant projects. EoI may be submitted from any individual, organisation or group of organisations.

**The deadline for submission is June, 2nd, 2003.**

Please note that the submission of an Eol gives no preference in subsequent calls for proposals. The text of the Eol, the submission form and a guide for submitters can also be found on the above mentioned web site.

Please bear in mind that the above mentioned expression of interest (deadline June 2<sup>nd</sup>) should be used as a means to propose Science Shop activities, which, if accepted, could be included in the Commission's work programme 2004.

**Contact:** Caspar de Bok, [C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl](mailto:C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl)

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### **Update on ISSNET in Brussels**

On June 3rd, a meeting at the European Commission in Brussels will take place with the following provisional agenda:

- \* Update on ISSNET
- \* The contents of the Science Shop Brochure to be produced
- \* Submissions of expression of interest
- \* Any ISSNET topic which still can be set on the agenda

Mr Guy Vaerman from ESN (European Service Network) will participate in the meeting, as he is in charge of the production of the Science Shop brochure. In this connection we are asked to consider what projects and information in our opinion should be presented in the brochure.

**Contact:** Caspar de Bok, [C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl](mailto:C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl)

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### **Living Knowledge – Journal of Community Based Research (LK) Editorial Guidelines**

Living Knowledge – Journal of Community Based Research will be the official publication of the International Science Shop Network. It will be published three times each year in March, July and November. The magazine will be distributed to the members and subscribers of the network as well to journalists, mediators and project partners.

The purpose of LK is to disseminate timely and informative articles that represent the current state of the discussion on science shop / community based research matters. The articles are selected for appeal to readers engaged in research and applications across the broad spectrum of community based research. Although a moderate level of scientific understanding is assumed by the authors, articles should be clear enough to inform readers who work outside the particular subject area.

Every LK article receives a professional editorial review.

Information about LK and the editorial guidelines can be found at the homepage of the science shop network ([www.scienceshops.org](http://www.scienceshops.org)).

**Contact:** Norbert Steinhaus, [norbert.steinhaus@wilabonn.de](mailto:norbert.steinhaus@wilabonn.de)

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### **Grassroots Goes Global**

The current issue of PRAGmatics – a publication of the Policy Research Action Group, a collaborative partnership between Chicago-based universities - illustrates different ways in which the global movement connects world citizens at the grassroots level. Here Caspar de Bok discusses European science shops and the project "Improving Science Shop Networking" (ISSNET) financed by the European Commission

The issue is on PRAG's web page: [www.luc.edu/curl/prag](http://www.luc.edu/curl/prag).

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### **Communication between scientists and public needs to be more efficient**

*Interview with Gregorio Medrano, Head of Unit "Public Awareness of Science; young people and science", DG Research, European Commission, in cordis focus, No. 217, 24.3.03*

"An improved connection between science and society is a fundamental part of the European Research Area, including diverse sectors such as the public understanding of science, ethics, science and governance, women and science, etc. As mentioned in the Action Plan for science and society, science is not an independent activity performed in ivory towers ..."

“The role of the scientific community in communicating science and technology (S&T) is fundamental: scientists and researchers are the sources of information and, therefore, dissemination of scientific information is impossible without them ... Communicating science cannot be a sideline activity, performed by amateurs. Policy makers have to motivate scientists to communicate in order to improve the public awareness of science ...”

The complete interview can be downloaded from <ftp.cordis.lu/pub/focus/docs/217en.pdf>

Cordis focus, No. 217, 24.03.2003, [www.cordis.lu/focus/en/src/archives.htm](http://www.cordis.lu/focus/en/src/archives.htm)

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#### **Living Knowledge Website:**

[www.scienceshops.org](http://www.scienceshops.org)

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The newsletters are archived on the Living Knowledge homepage: [www.scienceshops.org](http://www.scienceshops.org).

#### **Please recommend this newsletter to your colleagues and partners.**

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[C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl](mailto:C.F.M.deBok@bio.uu.nl) or visit our website at

[www.scienceshops.org/list\\_and\\_newsletter.html](http://www.scienceshops.org/list_and_newsletter.html)

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