

many of the participating countries, which are clearly keen to ensure that their educational systems maximise the benefits from taking part in the programme.

Henri Boffin and Douglas Pierce-Price from ESO presented workshops for teachers on the ALMA Interdisciplinary Teaching Project and an introduction to Gamma-Ray Bursts, respectively.

In another workshop, delegates learnt about and discussed the new European journal for science teachers, "Science in School". This journal is based at the EMBL and published by the EIROforum. It will be launched in spring 2006 and published quarterly. It is part of the NUCLEUS project funded by the European Commission.

An international jury presented "European Science Teaching Awards" to the best projects at the fair, in a ceremony attended by Jean-Michel Baer, the Director of Science and Society in the EC Directorate General for Research. The four general awards, together with individual awards from each of the seven EIROforum organisations, had a total value of 17 000 €.

ESO's prize was awarded to the "Einstein Year Library Project", by Mandy Curtis, from the United Kingdom. The general prizes were won by Catherine Garcia-Maisonnier of France for "Building a Weather Balloon at School" (1st prize), Wim Peeters of Belgium for "Physics is Cool! – the Box of Experiments" (2nd prize), Jerzy Jarosz and Aneta Szczgielska of Poland for "The Cardiovascular System" (3rd prize), and Tobias Kirschbaum of Germany for "Tracing Earthquakes (Chinese Seismograph)" (4th prize). The

other EIROforum prizes went to Maria Joao Carvalho of Portugal for "Lichen and Water Quality" (CERN), Eilish McLoughlin *et al.* of Ireland for "Teaching Science as a Process" (EFDA/JET), Evanthia Papanikolau of Greece for "DNA Helix" (EMBL), Agota Lang of Hungary for "Neurode, or Garfield the Lazy Cat" (ESA), Gianluca Farisi of Italy for "Humanism and Science" (ESRF), and Nanna Kristensen of Denmark for "Jewellery is chemistry" (ILL).

The next Science on Stage event will take place in Grenoble in April 2007.

Festival participants enjoy the magic of chemistry on stage.



Photo: H. Boffin, ESO

ESO at CER 2005

Claus Madsen (ESO)

On November 14–15, the Brussels Exhibition Centre (Heysel) was the home of a major international conference on science communication with the title "Communicating European Research" (CER 2005).

The conference was officially opened with speeches by Commissioner Dr. Janez Potočnik (Commissioner for Science and Research) and Commissioner Viviane Reding (Commissioner for Information Society and Media), with former Commis-

sioner Philippe Busquin, now a prominent member of the European Parliament, chairing the session.

Over the two days, about 2 100 participants from 56 countries, including more than 200 journalists, discussed all aspects of public science communication, including science education, informal science learning, science festivals and media work. The conference also saw the launch of the "Communiqué Initiative", a first step towards creating a European Media Centre for science.

ESO participated through the EIROforum partnership, that acted as organisers of two sessions – one on formal science education and one on media work. ESA and ESO were also represented in a lively panel discussion on communication of astronomy and space science. Finally, EIROforum had a major information stand in the exhibition area.

The conference offered ample opportunity for stimulating exchanges, not just between European scientists and media experts but also with participants from overseas, including the US and China. It

EU Research Commissioner Dr. Janez Potočnik (right) visiting the EIROforum stand in the CER exhibition hall.



seems clear that public awareness and understanding of science is not a “side-issue” *vis-à-vis* scientific progress. Rather, it is increasingly seen as central to the future of science in a democratic society. Thus it is a burning issue across the entire world and one that must be addressed through a large number of initiatives and on an appropriate scale.

Report on the Conference on

Science Perspectives for 3D Spectroscopy

Jeremy Walsh (ST-ECF)
Markus Kissler-Patig (ESO)

About four years ago when discussions were taking place to plan the proposal to the European Commission for a Research Training Network (RTN) on 3D spectroscopy, we decided to make an international conference one of the closing highpoints of the network. At that time there were only a few 3D instruments routinely taking data on large telescopes (such as Integral on the WHT and Oasis on the CFHT) and some of us thought that a full-scale international conference on science with 3D spectroscopy might be rather difficult to fill. However, as it transpired, we had problems containing the conference in four and a half days. The RTN, called Euro3D, shared the hosting of the conference with ESO and it was held at ESO Headquarters in Garching from October 10–14, 2005.

At the inception of the Euro3D RTN, in July 2002, it was perceived that Europe

had a strong instrument advantage in optical and NIR 3D spectroscopy. By 3D spectroscopy is generally meant the technique of obtaining multiple spectra over a 2D field of view; there are various implementations from scanning slits, to imaging Fabry-Perots, to integral field units (IFU) with fibres, lenslet arrays or slicers. A number of instruments were in the planning stage, not least three planned for the VLT – the IFU mode of VIMOS, the FLAMES/Giraffe Argus mode and SINFONI. However, the expertise in handling of the data was mostly confined to the instrument groups themselves and there was a perceived “difficulty” in reduction and analysis of optical/NIR 3D data. This is partly a result of the large quantities of data delivered by IFU instruments but also a reflection that significant development beyond the tools for longslit spectroscopy is required to analyse the resulting data cubes (2 spatial + 1 spectral dimension). One of the aims of the Euro3D RTN was to narrow the bridge of difficulty by training young researchers in 3D spectroscopy observation



Figure 1: The Euro3D Research Training Network (www.aip.de/Euro3D) initiated and sponsored this conference, together with ESO.

and analysis, so that they could spread the word that 3D data need not be intimidating. The RTN also planned software development, science projects, a conference and an IAC winter school.

The RTN funding will be completed as planned at the end of this year and has proved a great success. There were ten young post-doc researcher positions spread across ten European institutes all with connections to 3D spectroscopy (AIP (Potsdam), Cambridge, Durham, IAC (Teneriffe), IAP (Paris), Leiden, Lyon, Marseille, Milan, MPE (Garching)); there was also a team from ESO but without a post-doc. Despite worries that it would