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The future of communication and outreach for accelerators

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[Accelerator Communication and Outreach ARIES](#)

Members from the accelerator communication community gathered at CERN for a workshop.



The ARIES consortium organized a workshop for communication officers of the European accelerator infrastructures and Physics centres. Under the name Accelerator Communication and Outreach (ACO) Workshop, the event took place on 5-6 November, at CERN.

“We wanted to engage communication officers in defining how to increase the effectiveness of outreach activities for particle physics’ and light sources’ accelerators,” said Phil Burrows, leader of WP2 – Training, Communication and Outreach for Accelerator Science for ARIES.

The group of sixteen representatives from the accelerator communication community had a specific task: to fill nine flipcharts with communication challenges, specific actions the community might take to answer them and the necessary resources to implement such an action plan for accelerators.

Challenges, best practices and actions during the two working days

After a brief welcome from Phil Burrows, Sarah Davies, from PCST – Public Communication of Science and Technology, was the Keynote Speaker, providing a short talk about science communication and communication networks. "From my experience, networks and associated events are one way for science communicators to avoid constantly reinventing the wheel," said Sarah on the topic of knowledge-sharing.

James Gillies, Advisor for Strategic Planning and Evaluation at CERN, continued with a talk about communication strategy, thus setting the context and guidelines for the following discussion. In the end, participants shared, during the two hourly sessions, a recent communication challenge or solution, in the form 5-minute presentations.

From the importance of keeping good relations with your neighbours and engaging policy-makers, to having someone actively coordinate an organization or network’s activities full-time, to initiatives like [Accelerate!](#) and [Misión ALBA](#), and the importance of matching the right platform to the right audience, the ARIES team and the participants had the opportunity to listen to the learnings and challenges of the several sides of a good communications strategy.

For the second day, participants reflected on the challenges and solutions from the previous day. Do accelerator infrastructures share common goals? Would a network be useful, in parallel to others like [lightsources.org](#) and [interactions.org](#)? How to engage different audiences of research infrastructures – politicians, the public, funding agencies, industry – with a limited amount of resources?

“The ARIES ACO workshop highlighted the common challenges our community faces when communicating about accelerators and science,” said Anais Rassat, who acted as facilitator for the challenge and brainstorm sessions of the workshop.

By the end of the second day of activities, in answering these questions, participants had agreed on specific steps the community should undertake to promote accelerator

communication and outreach, considering limitations such as resources and different short-term agendas.

One of the activities for the next year is create a channel to share best practices.

The ARIES consortium thus invites researchers and science communicators in the accelerator community to share their initiatives and other communication resources in [Accelerating News](#). The editors are looking to share initiatives, methods in evaluation and monitoring, and impact surveys and studies.

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