

Press Office Report for EPSC2014 Conference (7-12 September 2014),

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1. EPSC2014 Press Office in numbers

In 2014, EPSC had 591 participants and among them, 14 were Press/Media representatives.

The Press Office counted a single full-time Officer (Livia Giacomini) and was organized with the help of Anita Heward (Europlanet), Pamela Gay (CosmoQuest) and Veronika Raszler (Europlanet).

Before, during and just after the Conference, the Press office:

- managed contacts with the media (via email and locally during the Congress), opening the Press Office to media representatives and answering their requests;
- published 4 EPSC press releases before and during the Congress (with direct email to media, in ALPHAGALILEO, in EPSC2014 website Press and Media Page http://www.epsc2014.eu/press_and_media.html and in EUROPLANET OUTREACH WEBSITE <http://www.europlanet-eu.org/epsc2014>) - See Attachment 1;
- published 10 web articles about scientific news presented at EPSC (in EPSC2014 website Press and Media Page http://www.epsc2014.eu/press_and_media.html and in EUROPLANET OUTREACH WEBSITE <http://www.europlanet-eu.org/epsc2014>) - See Attachment 2;
- collaborated with ESA to coordinate communication activities of the Rosetta Special Session - *For more information, read the second paragraph of this report and see Attachments 3 and 4;*
- organized and broadcasted 3 Hangouts with participating scientists from the Congress - *For more information, read the third paragraph of this report;*
- organized social media activities on Twitter and published images and videos of the Congress - *For more information, read the third paragraph of this report and see Attachment 5.*

2. Media Coverage for the Rosetta Special Session

During EPSC2014, a special session about Rosetta was organized and the scientific results of the mission were presented for the first time to the community. The Session captured the attention of the participating and non-participating media, who contacted the Press Office for information, images, press releases, the possibility to interview Rosetta's science team and finally whether there was an opportunity for a live-streaming of the session.

Due to a strict embargo related to a Nature article in preparation, the Press Office had to agree with ESA and with Rosetta's team not to organize press conferences nor to publish press releases directly from EPSC. Instead we agreed that ESA would present to the media a number of scientific topics discussed in the Rosetta special Session, publishing them in dedicated posts of the Rosetta Blog and afterward, in the official websites of the scientific institutions involved in Rosetta. EPSC was accredited in all official publications.

A list of all these articles and posts is in *Attachment 1 & 2*, and is published at <http://www.europlanet-eu.org/media-centre/86-epsc/epsc-2014/epsc-2014-press-releases/647-all-about-rosetta>

Some of the scientific content that was issued during the Congress was republished by the international press with a very high impact. The most republished topic was the selfie image of Rosetta taken by the CIVA instrument that was shown on the first day of the Congress and after a few days published in Rosetta Blog, from where it spread worldwide through many international media outlets.

3. Social media activities

Social media were used by the EPSC Press Office both directly, with EPSC official accounts (on Twitter https://twitter.com/EPSC_2014 and on Flickr <https://www.flickr.com/photos/101575961@N04/>) and indirectly, with the help of collaborators, volunteers and participating scientists.

On Twitter:

Before, during and after the Congress, the EPSC_2014 Twitter account was used to launch the Congress and the scientific topics presented. The traffic was generated with the Hashtag #EPSC2014 also with the support of collaborating Twitter Users from the Congress (Anita Heward @europlanetmedia, Pamela Gay @starstryder ecc). The traffic was also increased by Twitter Accounts who were not at EPSC but who were active in the Congress' Social media communication (Emily Lakdawalla of the Planetary Society @elakdawalla, Franck Marchis @AllPlanets and others).

Among the achievements (that are analyzed and explained in *Attachment 5*):

- Followers of @EPSC_2014: from 260 on the 20th of July 2014 to 321 (+ 23%)
- Number of mentions of #EPSC2014 with an increase of 20 points in the month of EPSC.

At the moment, the account is still active and #EPSC2014 is still used for citations.

On youtube and with Google Hangouts:

During the Congress, three Google Hangouts were organized, streamed online and issued on Youtube. The Hangouts were hosted by Pamela Gay of CosmoQuest and can be found at:

- "10 Years of Cassini" (Tuesday, 09 September at 13:00 GMT+1) Guests: Nicolas Altobelli (ESA), Linda Spilker (JPL), Ralph Lorenz (LPL) and Christophe Sotin (JPL)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfZC8Es2Bvk>
- "Inspiring the public through planets" (Thursday, 11 September at 13:00 GMT+1) Guests: Rosa Doran (Nuclio), Lina Canas (Nuclio), Jean-Pierre Lebreton (CNRS)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9Fr84bg7N0>
- "Minor Bodies: threat or opportunity?" (Thursday, 11 September at 17:00 GMT+1) Guests: Maria Cristina De Sanctis (INAF IAPS) VIR PI onboard Dawn mission, Paolo Tanga (Observatoire de la Côte d'Azur) of the GAIA project and Alberto Cellino (INAF Osservatorio Astronomico di Torino)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEzRBeEc0eU>

At the moment, these videos are included in Europlanet and CosmoQuest websites, with a growing number of viewers.

4. Conclusions and lessons learned

Reading the numbers, EPSC2014 Press Office fulfilled 100% of all the proposed objectives and the 2014 experience can be considered positive, in spite of some needed improvements that can be identified.

One of the main characteristics of the 2014 Press Office was the presence of the Rosetta Special Session. The session was the first public occasion of presenting Rosetta's results and therefore it was very attractive for the media and a great opportunity for the Congress and for the Scientific Community. The Session was organized in collaboration with ESA, who were concerned about the Nature embargo and made the choice not to allow EPSC to issue Press Releases

directly on these presentations. This decision, that EPSC Press Office had to abide by, resulted in an indirect and delayed communication with the media and the fact that EPSC was not always mentioned in the media outcomes.

A second characteristic of the 2014 Press Office was the low budget organization, that made it difficult to follow all press office activities on-site (press releases, photos and videos, social media). For this reason, Press Conferences could not be organized and some of the social-media activities were given over to congress participants who volunteered. On this aspect, the Press Office noticed a growing feedback on Press Office activities organized using social media and new technologies, (such as videos in Youtube and Hangouts) and a growing demand for streaming coming from the media who would like to participate remotely to the Congress.

The low-budget Press Office also limited the identification of stories that could have been of interest to the press in the scientific programme, a task that needs to be achieved in advance and could be assisted by some additional tools to make efforts more efficient.

For 2015, we propose the following improvements:

- More personnel to Press Office (at least 2 persons for 1 month in the run-up to and during EPSC)
- More activity on Social media: EPSC Social Media accounts should be active all year around and during the Congress young researchers who participate could be involved to actively collaborate with the Press Office on social media activities (maybe with a free registration or some other prize?)
- Streaming of key Sessions (maybe with a protected account for journalists?)
- Organization of Press Conferences, possibly with an informal style and with online streaming
- Optimization of the registration procedure in order to simplify the Press Office job in identifying in advance the abstracts that can be of interest for the media, e.g. through adding an abstract summary field.
- A more efficient collaboration with Space Agencies and the Press Offices of other Institution participating to the organization of the Congress, in order to optimize the efforts.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Press Releases Issued by EPSC2014 Press Office

Attachment 2 – Web Articles Published by EPSC2014 Press Office

Attachment 3 – Blog Posts Published in Rosetta Blog about Rosetta session at EPSC

Attachment 4 – Articles published about Rosetta session at EPSC

Attachment 5 – Twitter Analytics About EPSC2014 Activities