



Researchers' nights 2007

INFODAY

Some

« tips for success »

Brussels,

15 January 2007

European Commission DG-RTD
T-T2-CR



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The audience

▶ Main target: the **public at large**

▶▶ covers **various groups**:

- ✓ children (likely to involve also parents and teachers)
- ✓ students (secondary schools, university)
- ✓ adults (whether parents or not)
- ✓ Media
- ✓ enterprises
- ✓ public authorities
- ✓ decision makers
- ✓ associations... etc.

⇒ OFFER A **SET OF ACTIVITIES** LIKELY TO **SUIT EACH** OR A **MAJOR PART** OF THESE GROUPS AND SUFFICIENTLY **ATTRACTIVE** TO MOBILISE A **MASS AUDIENCE** ☆

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The messages

- ▶ **Researchers are among us** (researchers are “normal people”, accessible, have hobbies, families, help the citizen’s daily life, have a fascinating job...)
- ▶ **Europe cares for them:** ⊕
 - ✓ witnesses of beneficiaries of EU support (Marie Curie schemes, Marie Curie awards...)
 - ✓ European stand
 - ✓ Drawing competition “please draw a researcher!” awarded at European level



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The promotion

Broad, simple and surprising

- ▶ addressed to **large public**
- ▶ **user-friendly terms**: avoid “technical” and “institutional” language
- ▶ focus on “**fun**”
- ▶ use appealing **logos** and **graphics**
- ▶ use communication means likely to reach a mass audience (TV, radio, Internet, important newspapers) 🌟



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The activities

On a Friday night, you will have to “compete” with “normal” week-end entertainment

- ⇒ Foresee **festive** activities
- ⇒ Focus on the “**user-friendly**” and **fun** character
- ⇒ Allow a « **get-in-touch** » to research and researchers (active involvement of the public)
- ⇒ Compulsory: **drawing competition** involving schools of the area, national awards to be attributed during the Night 🌟
- ⇒ Chose an **attractive location** (fashion place, labs usually not open to the public, top museums...)



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Involvement of researchers

- ▶ try to involve them from the **very start** (conception)
- ▶ explain their **own interest** in the action (motivation)
- ▶ chose researchers with **good communication skills**
- ▶ try to "exploit" their **unexpected skills** (music, dance, art...)
- ▶ listen to their **own ideas**, keeping in mind the general target of the actions
- ▶ **give** them **recognition** for their participation
- ▶ involve researchers who have **benefited from EU support**



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Enhancement of the European dimension ☆

- ☆ Active involvement of researchers having benefited from EU support
- ☆ European stand integrated from the very start in all the activities and corresponding to the "specific requirements"
- ☆ Drawing competition among schools (different levels), selection and national awarding during the Researchers' night (European Award in Autumn)



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Some ideas (I)

- ▶ relatively simple and attractive for everyone: **night visits** of planet observatories, of labs, demonstrations conducted by researchers explaining the phenomenon in user-friendly terms (give the audience the impression to be a "VIP")
- ▶ also simple, and pro-active: **hands-on experiments**: people must "do" something, helped by researchers
- ▶ put people in "**researchers' shoes**": challenge them to solve a problem (crime, enigma...) setting at their disposal the set of instruments a researcher daily uses



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Some ideas (II)

- ▶ put researchers in “**normal people's shoes**” : put them in situations in which they behave like anybody else (concert by researchers, night market with handicraft made by researchers...)
- ▶ highlight the **researchers' work** in an **unexpected way**: exhibition of scientific photographs with aesthetic value, exhibition of experiments and their daily applications
- ▶ don't forget **humour**: display cartoons on mad scientists, showing that the real ones are very different



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Some ideas (III)

- ▶ use the **bridges** between research and other topics: music, painting, sculpture, theatre (you can in such a way also reach the captive audience of these fields)
- ▶ let researchers tell **real stories**: funny happenings, missed experiments, surprises...
- ▶ play on the **competition sense** of most people: organise quizzes, awards, tests, pro-active competitions



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A delicate balance

- ▶ don't forget that you have to **ATTRACT** mass of people of all ages groups on a Friday night (appealing promotion and presentation before the event, otherwise they won't come)
- ▶ don't forget you also have to **ENTERTAIN** them (amusing and interesting activities, otherwise they won't stay)
- ▶ don't forget your purpose is to deliver an important **MESSAGE** (in some way you have to talk about researchers, otherwise you completely missed your objective...)



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And most of all,
don't hesitate to **contact us**:

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Thank you for your attention,



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