Signals from the future: Emerging technologies in science journalism

Date: November 4th & 5th, 2020

Location: Online

Target regions: Europe

Target groups: Science communicators, journalists, artificial intelligence and FET researchers, policy stakeholders

Future technologies elicit great fascination among broad audiences. Artificial intelligence (AI) is but one example that captivates technologists and the lay person. But while journalists and science communicators have identified it as a current topic of interest to the general public, researchers are often unhappy with the way in which AI is presented in the media. Future and Emerging Technologies (FETs) can prove challenging for journalists in that their potential future impact may be massive, but their precise workings and the pathways to innovation are not very clear.

This event aims to shed light on this issue for science communication. We will take a close look at how emerging technologies have been presented to date, what new and promising ways to communicate them to broader audiences exist, and what the journalistic barriers are. We will be examining artificial intelligence as one example, but also include other FETs supported under the European Innovation Council Pathfinder and Accelerator actions and previous FET programme under Horizon 2020.

Experienced science communicators will investigate potential ways and test new tools for going beyond traditional storytelling - which can often slant towards the utopian or dystopian - with leading technology experts identified in high-risk high-gain research projects. The event will address both the simplifications often necessary for effective communication as well as the concerns of technologists that their research will be fundamentally mis-portrayed.

This two-day, online workshop will be divided into four sessions, which will include three expert panels as well as the demonstration of an exciting new research tool for journalists utilising AI currently under development by QUEST.

The workshop is organised by the **FETFX** project, in collaboration with the **QUEST** project. The FETFX project is a Coordination and Support Action funded under the H2020 FET programme. The project supports all FET projects in increasing their influence and impact among science, industry, policy makers and society. Acting as a communications hub across various media, FETFX fosters the communication, dissemination and exploitation of FET funded projects through easy-to-access tools and techniques and FET/ EIC Pathfinder dedicated events.

This event is associated with the Trieste European City of Science 2020 initiative.

Agenda: *(*changes reserved)*

Day 1 - Wednesday, November 4th, 2020

10:00- 10:05	Welcome and introduction to workshop (FETFX, QUEST & VIU)
10:05 - 11:05	***Panel #1: High Risk Research: Assessing FET science communication attitudes and paths to innovation*** Discussion plus audience Q&A (1 hour) Description: Representatives from policy and science communication will examine the common gaps, obstacles and constraints in high-risk, FET and Pathfinder research communication. This panel will also discuss the challenges identified in the communication regarding the transition of FET to the European Innovation Council (EIC) and its new Pathfinder model, highlighting why continued support for FET projects remains relevant and important. It will also address barriers on the pathway to innovation.
11:05 - 11:15	Intermission
11:15 - 12:15	***Panel #2: New Tools for Communicating: New approaches and mechanisms for communicating about Future and Emerging Technologies*** Discussion plus audience Q&A (1 hour) Description: An examination of new approaches and mechanisms for communicating about future and emerging technologies such as AI. As a second step, the development of KPIs and good practices to enhance outreach measures will then be discussed. Expert speakers will include representatives from FET projects, researchers and science communicators.

Day 2 - November 5th, 2020

10:00 - 10:05	Welcome and introduction to workshop (FETFX, QUEST& VIU)
10:05 - 11:05	***Panel #3: The Mis-portrayal of AI in the Media: What to do about it? Researchers & journalists weigh in*** Discussion plus audience Q&A (1 hour) Description: Well-known AI and FET AI researchers as well as science communicators/ journalists will discuss different, multi-disciplinary perspectives on how AI is presented in the media.
11:05 - 11:15	Intermission
11:15 - 12:00	***QUEST introduction and demonstration of new AI tool*** Demonstration plus audience Q&A (45 minutes) Description: Neil Maiden from CASS Business School (City University London) will demonstrate a new and innovative tool currently under development by QUEST: a non-commercial software which incorporates AI and will aid journalists researching complex scientific topics (for example future and emerging technologies and AI).