

VIU
PhD
academy
science
communication
in museums,
EXHIBITIONS
and science
centres

**Science Communication in Museums,
Exhibitions and Science Centres**

April 12-16, 2027

**Venice International University
Isola di San Servolo, Venice**

VIU International PhD
Academy

Science communication in Museums, Exhibitions and Science Centres

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Venice International
University

Scientific Coordinator:

Francesca Di Rosa,
National Research Council
of Italy CNR

Global Challenges
Initiative

The idea behind this proposal is that knowledge about science and humanities, strong communication skills, independent thinking and design creativity are all necessary to realize meaningful scientific displays, that attract visitors with diverse interests in a non-intimidating manner and encourage them to be pro-active. The course program will alternate lectures about fundamental concepts of public communication of science and technology, discussion of inspiring case studies in different continents, examples of public debates on timely science topics, and practical sessions that will fuel participants' creative and collaborative skills. Introductory webinars, organized 1-2 months in advance, will illustrate the idea and program of the course.

The course aims to: i) introduce the basics of science communication; ii) emphasize the distinct role of science museums, exhibitions, and science centers; iii) discuss critical perspectives on a global scale; iv) offer tools for planning engaging displays and activities; v) facilitate interdisciplinary networking.

This PhD Academy is led by:

- National Research Council of Italy (CNR)
- Italian National Institute of Astrophysics (INAF)
- University of Padua
- University of Exeter
- Tsinghua University
- Venice International University

Faculty

Francesca Di Rosa, National Research Council of Italy

Caterina Boccato, Italian National Institute of Astrophysics

Elena Canadelli, University of Padua

Angela Cassidy, University of Exeter

Zheran Wang, Tsinghua University

Alessandra Fornetti, Venice International University

Ilda Mannino, Venice International University

Invited speakers

Tinne Claes, KU Leuven

Fabrizio Lepore, architect

Massimiliano Bucchi, University of Trento

Topics

The topics will include:

- scientific archives, collections and museums;
- innovative approaches to present cutting-edge science and scientific methods;
- ethical issues related to the display of scientific and medical objects, including human specimens;
- how to combine science with art and history in exhibitions and museums;
- how to co-create scientific displays with communities;
- how to keep contact and constant dialogue with the public(s) (e.g., physical and virtual forums, podcasts, etc.)

Furthermore, public programs currently offered to visitors of scientific museums will be compared to other types of scientific event, and to public programs of other cultural initiatives (e.g., art exhibitions).

Learning outcomes for participants

Participants will acquire Transversal Skills in Science Communication with particular focus on scientific museums, exhibitions, and science centers, within the framework of basic knowledge in Science & Society. This PhD Academy proposal can be considered for the most part, if not 100%, on Transversal Skills, considering the following: i) the focus on Science Communication; ii) the Multidisciplinary team; iii) the call for students from humanities, STEM, art, architecture; iv) the promotion of collaboration and exchanges during practical sessions.

Learning outcomes include:

- creating a meaningful scientific exhibition concept;
- identifying strategies to design attractive displays for museums and exhibitions;
- creating a welcoming environment for discussing contemporary science;
- planning of inspiring and engaging activities and experiences;
- developing techniques for interacting with diverse audiences.

Who can apply?

This international PhD Academy is offered to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics); Social sciences; Humanities; Architecture; Art and Design.

The course is addressed to students who have already completed at least one year of their PhD, post-docs, junior researchers and junior professionals.

Open to candidates from all the VIU Member Institutions; applications from excellent candidates from non-member institutions will be also considered and evaluated.

Fees & Grant Support

Full fee waiver scholarships are available for students from VIU member institutions. In addition, grant support is available to support partially or fully the costs of international travel. Accommodation is provided free of charge. The participation fee for students of non-member institutions is Euro 1250 incl. VAT). The fee is inclusive of tuition, course materials, accommodation, lunches, social events, and taxes. Students from non-member institutions are not eligible for VIU grant support. VIU Alumni are eligible for a reduced fee.

Call for applications

September 15- December 1, 2026
via the VIU website

Applicants must submit the (1) application form, (2) a letter of motivation – which should include a short bio and a brief description of the candidate's research project, (3) a curriculum vitae and (4) a photo.

For further information: phdacademy@univiu.org

VIU International PhD Academies

Venice International University is a consortium of 23 institutions, representing 14 countries throughout the world.

The mission of VIU is to foster cooperation among VIU member institutions while facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas, by developing, promoting, and organizing joint academic, research and training/capacity-building program. Students from non-member universities may participate in selected academic programs.

The academic programs at VIU are distinguished by a markedly interdisciplinary approach to the topics, and by the international perspectives that the participants contribute to the discussions. The VIU campus is on the island of San Servolo in Venice, Italy.

Venice International University holds two/three International PhD Academies each year. They are intensive training opportunities open to PhD candidates from the member universities of VIU.

A PhD is the highest diploma awarded by universities in the world, and PhDs are naturally expected to take on major responsibilities in their professional life. Apart from the disciplinary scientific skills acquired during doctoral study and research, it is the ability to respond to the requirements of creativity, innovation, and project management, that produce the significant added value of a doctoral degree.

Whether they will work within or outside academia, PhDs must be able to develop a forward-looking vision of the challenges they have to face. The interdisciplinary approach of all VIU activities is adopted also in the PhD Academy, where the participants have the opportunity to meet their peers from all over the world, and to tackle transversal topics.

www.univiu.org/study/phd-academy

Location



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Image from the Natural History Museum in Venice