

SciChallenge Newsletter #1

June 2nd, 2016

SciChallenge, a new pan-European contest, will make scientific careers more attractive to young people through social media

SciChallenge, a new pan-European contest for youngsters on scientific topics in STEM, will be launched in September 2016. The highly innovative aspect of SciChallenge is that the contest will include social media throughout all relevant stages. This will bring science and technology closer to young people's daily routines. The contest targets pre-university students between the ages of 10 to 20 years. Participants are invited to express their research ideas, visions, concerns or any other thoughts relating to scientific research. This may be in the form of videos, slides or posters, which they upload on one of the pre-defined major social media sites. The final award ceremony will take place in Vienna in June 2017.

Making scientific careers attractive for young people

Science education is crucial for shaping the present and future of modern societies. It is particularly important that young people should be encouraged to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). However, the enrolment rates in STEM-degree programs are low, which will lead to a loss in competitiveness of the European Union and its member states.

In order to make science more attractive for young people, SciChallenge will launch a pan-European contest on different scientific topics in the STEM world. Its aim is to get young people excited about science, education and careers in STEM. The highly innovative aspect of SciChallenge is that young people are directly addressed in their everyday life. In consequence, the contest will include social media throughout all the relevant stages. This will bring science and technology even closer to young people's daily routines. At the same time, it will promote the scientific literacy of young people and make them aware of opportunities in the world of science, technology, engineering and maths.

The SciChallenge Contest

Participants in the SciChallenge contest can select a particular topic in one of the four major STEM disciplines: natural science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. As initial impetus, the consortium provides a total of 50 topic sheets, which are available on the SciChallenge web-platform and which cover a range of contemporary science topics across the four STEM disciplines. The topic



sheets are designed in a way that they are appealing for young people between 10 to 20 years, to motivate them to work towards a contribution for the competition.

The contest targets pre-university students between the ages of 10 to 20 years. Therefore, 25 topic sheets will be designed for the 10 to 14 year age group. These topic sheets will be available in 10 different EU-languages. The 25 topic sheets for the age group from 15 to 20 years will be available only in English, in order to trigger the additional learning to practice English (the 'language' of science).

Science engagement through social media – a unique approach

The participants are invited to express their research ideas, visions, concerns or any other thoughts relating to these emerging fields of scientific research. This may be in the form of videos, slides or posters, which they upload onto one of the pre-defined major social media sites. Afterwards, they register on the SciChallenge Platform and submit their contribution by placing a link.

Participation can be individually or as a group of up to three students. School class are very welcome to participate, they just need to split up into several smaller groups.

The finalists will be selected by a combination of an online community rating and an expert jury ranking. The finalists in each category and age group will be invited to participate at the final award ceremony, which will take place in Vienna in June 2017.

Channels, tools and resources

Until the launch of the contests in September 2015, further information can be found on the project website as well as on the SciChallenge Web Platform, which will go online shortly (www.scichallenge.eu). Among other modules, it will include the participation guidelines, the topic sheets and the submission system. Until then, news on the project will be posted on Facebook and Twitter. Please also take a look and share video on YouTube.

Project resources

http://project.scichallenge.eu https://www.facebook.com/scichallenge https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46g-NNGqFis https://twitter.com/hashtag/scichallenge

Please contact the SciChallenge coordinator for further questions or cooperation

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