

Participation to events as contributor

Participation to conferences, workshops, fairs and other events is one method of dissemination and communication. The activities in these events can account for oral presentations, posters, session chairs or presentation booths. In each case, active conversations during coffee breaks and social events is in key role. RI's participation to events and its main messages to disseminate there needs to be well thought beforehand. In different meetings different target audiences can be reached. Even without physical participation to an event, RI can be involved via social media (# in Twitter) and this way gain visibility for RI and its data/products/objectives.

Scientific conferences and other forums are important means to reach scientific user groups. Examples of suitable scientific conferences are the European Geosciences Union (EGU) general assembly and American Geophysical Union (AGU) meetings, where scientists with different backgrounds are typically present. Many RI considered these to be one of the best means to reach scientific user groups. Similarly to research communities, SMEs can be reached in scientific conferences. Often the SMEs participating scientific conferences have a clear interest in the collaboration and the instrument-maker – RI interaction is natural and easy to facilitate. This applies particularly to the larger events like EGU and AGU as commonly in these instrument manufacturers are present with their own stands. Thus, these can provide a useful mean to reach new SMEs and inform them about the activities of different RIs. This can particularly support the initiatives in producing new technical solutions related to e.g. environmental monitoring.

Fairs can provide potentially powerful tool to reach relevant SMEs as here several companies can be present. Examples of such a fairs include International Energy & Environment Fair & Conference and Environmental Connection. It would be possible for RI to buy a booth on such a fair and get visibility among the different SMEs. The downside is that these are typically expensive and as the results are not necessarily clear, participation needs to be carefully estimated.

It is important the RI representatives report on their activities/new findings, etc. during the event back to Communications Manager - these key messages/activities can be then communicated using different dissemination methods. A dedicated report template is a useful tool for this.

Advantages: If properly chosen venue and participation method, high chance of getting good audience and important two-way communication channels, including personal contacts. Several options for participation: oral/poster presentations in regular or special sessions, organizing splinter meetings, booths, side event, or special session. Participation to selection of key meetings can be effective communication channel to reach scientific communities and SMEs.

Challenges: Presentations (oral/poster/booth) are not automatic in larger and more effective meetings. Perhaps not always worth of the expenses as as participation to some events can be expensive.

Resources: The costs vary from few hundreds up to 10000 euros depending on the contribution and traveling expenses. The expenses cover conference registration fee (commonly around 300-500 euros), plane tickets (less than 400 euros within Europe, 700-1500 euros between continents), hotel (100-250 euros per night) and other running expenses. In some conferences, abstract submission can cost, which e.g. in the case of AGU is 70 dollars.

Recommendation: Participation can be expensive and careful planning needed in which events to participate. Evaluate the RI's best participation method and message to communicate. If not physically participating certain conference, social media appearance can be considered.

GEO week:

GEO Week 2018 gathered over 500 participants in Kyoto, Japan, to listen to success stories and explore opportunities for the use of Earth observations for the benefit of society. The week's events focused on GEO's three priority engagement areas: the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is a good event for RIs to have together a joint side-event or booth. Read example under side event section.

One method to reach SME's can be technology-based scientific workshops. As an example, workshop "Unmanned vehicles in research" organized in Italy in 12-14.10.2016. As a technology, unmanned vehicles relate to several different RIs and therefore this can be a good place to disseminate information about what kind of RIs might be using/benefiting from such technologies. The problem with this can be to get relevant SME to the meeting. Another example of technology could be mass spectrometers as they are used in several fields.

The COOP+ project was actively presented in several environmental conferences. For example, in EGU General Assembly 2017, COOP+ had a joint booth with ENVRIplus project including several environmental RIs. COOP+ participated e.g following conferences: AGU, EGU, ICRI, Marine Global Challenges, GEO week, ENVRI weeks, 2nd PEEEX Meeting, Open science meeting from International LTER Network, NEON Science WS, and International Energy & Environment Fair.