

The Spanish node of the ESO Outreach Network (ESON)

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Abstract

Spain is member, since 2006, of the European Southern Observatory (ESO). Besides, Spain participates in ESON, the ESO Science Outreach Network, developing several activities with the aim of promoting astronomy in Spain and in Spanish. This presentation wants to inform about all those activities and offer the opportunity to take advantage of this network to all the scientific community, the journalists and the general public.

1 Introduction

Spain joined the European Southern Observatory (ESO) in July 2006, its affiliation was ratified by the Spanish Parliament on February 2007. Since then, Spain is also member of ESON, the ESO Science Outreach Network.

Since the beginning, Spain has promoted the Spanish participation in this network and managed the contact with the mass media, the promotion of activities in Spain and the organization of several events (like de ESO 50 anniversary). Their aim has always been bringing the ESO news in Spanish to spread all the ESO discoveries to the general public. As members of ESO, Spain receives not only the scientific benefits, but also the public outreach input, working with the ESON network and communicating to the society with all the available tools.

2 ESON, the ESO Science Outreach Network

The ESO education and Public Outreach Department has established a network of persons in the ESO Member states and other countries who serve as local contacts for the media in connection with ESO developments, Press Releases, etc. At the same time, they may help to provide useful contacts between the media and the scientists in their area.

The ESON members, or their representatives, are typically full-time science communicators who know the national players (media, academia etc.) and regularly interact with them, are able to find a national angle, have a strong interest in promoting ESO and provide regular inputs and ideas for how to best reach the target groups in their area. More precisely, their mission is: “To act as ESO’s media and outreach representative in the member states and potential member states with the general aim of promoting ESO’s mission and demonstrating the many inspirational aspects of astronomy”.

Today, ESON has representation in 26 countries: the 15 member countries of ESO, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom, and 11 non member countries: Chile (host state), Albania, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and USA.

2.1 Mini-sites

Besides to be the ESO and astronomy ambassadors in their countries, ESON members maintain the web mini sites in their languages. They translate some important information about ESO and, like in the Spanish case, they also translate the press releases (to 18 different languages). Those mini sites have institutional information and are used for local announcements. ESO sends every week press releases related to the science done with the ESO telescopes, as well as the Picture of the week, also translated to all the ESON languages.

We encourage the scientific community, the journalists and the general public to interact with the ESON representatives in Spain. Our aim is to help with the public outreach promotion of Astronomy, not only done by ESO, but from a general point of view. Our contact information is: J. Miguel Mas-Hesse, mm@cab.inta-csic.es and Natalia Ruiz Zelmanovitch, nzelman@cab.inta-csic.es.

3 ESON activities and outreach products

The ESO Communication Department uses the web page as a platform to promote and spread their activities, as well as different products for different kinds of public, from formal education (text books, teachers formation, courses), to products for mass media:

- Educational material. ESO provides exercises in English, German, Spanish, French, Dutch, Italian and Swedish. The ESO Educational Office is part of the education and Public Outreach Department. The aim is to provide support of astronomy and astrophysics education, especially at the high-school level. This includes teaching materials, courses for teachers and specific educational projects, often in collaboration with partners such as the European Association for Astronomy Education, EAEE, the EIROforum, the European Commission and others. ESO also prepares materials for educators in science institutions, planetariums, museums, observatories, amateur astronomers associations, etc. They also have programs like Physics on Stage and Sci-



Figure 1: ESOs 50 anniversary Logo.

ence on Stage, specially designed for European science teachers. ESO publishes an international journal for schools called Science in School.

- ESO Outreach Partner Organisations: ESO Outreach Partner Organisations, EOPO, are members of an exclusive partnership initiated by the European Southern Observatory to recognise the efforts of selected planetariums, science centres and other informal educational institutions. These are organisations which collaborate regularly with ESOs education and Public Outreach Department (ePOD) on informal education and outreach projects, events or campaigns.
- ESO Outreach Ambassadors: ESO Outreach Ambassadors are members of a network of staff from the European Southern Observatory who are available to deliver talks to the public about astronomy, their work at ESO and their passions. The education and Public Outreach Department acts as an interface between organisations and event organisers who wish to have an ESO speaker present at their event. Any institution can apply for a talk to ESO.
- Newsletter: Distributed electronically every month, the Outreach Community Newsletter keeps you updated on the latest outreach products that you can get from ESO, special offers on the ESOshop, events happening locally, ESO competitions and campaigns and much more. Mass media can also receive information under embargo in their own language weekly: press releases, the image gallery, video libraries, mailing lists, media visits, and more.



Figure 2: ESOCast is a video podcast series dedicated to bringing to the public the latest news and research from “ESO – Astronomy made on planet Earth”.

- **Outreach Products:** The ESO education and Public Outreach Department, ePOD, supports science communicators, and especially those communicating astronomy with the public, through different products and activities. The CAPjournal is a free peer-reviewed journal for astronomy communicators, online and in print. There are also other products, useful for outreach professionals.
- **Promotion through Images.** ESO has a big offer of images for outreach: Cosmic Gems is the first example, a Project that offers high quality images. There are also exhibitions, like “Awesome Universe”, organised to celebrate the ESO 50 anniversary. The Top 100 images, is a collection of selected astonishing images, available also optimized for IPAD. Finally, the ESO photo ambassadors is a program where ePOD has proudly designated night-sky photographers with special ties to ESO, assisting them whenever possible and further promoting their photos, so as to bring astronomy closer to people.
- **Products.** A series of products are available from the Education and Public Outreach Department. They are all available for free download, and some are available in “physical form” for ordering via the ESOshop.
- **Audiovisuals.** ESO has developed a strong audiovisuals department, offering high quality animations to explain the science in the press releases. ESOCast is a video podcast series dedicated to bringing to the public the latest news and research from ESO Astronomy made on planet Earth.
- **Social Media.** ESO has a big presence on the social media and organises activities to promote the public participation, like contests, open questions, etc.



Figure 3: ESO sends every week press releases related to the science done with the ESO telescopes, as well as the Picture of the week, also translated to all the ESON languages. This is the link to the Spanish mini-site (<http://www.eso.org/public/spain/>).

4 Useful ESON links

We suggest the interested reader to consult the main page of the ESO Outreach Network, <http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/department.html>, from which links to the pages containing all the materials prepared by ESO are available. We summarize here the most interesting links:

- ESO education and Public Outreach Department (ePOD): <http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/department>
- ESO Spanish mini-site: <http://www.eso.org/public/spain/>
- ESO exercises: <http://www.eso.org/public/products/education/>
- European Association for Astronomy Education, EAEE: <http://www.eaae-astronomy.org/home/>
- EIROforum: <http://www.eiroforum.org/>
- Physics on Stage: <http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/eduoff/pos.html>
- Science on Stage: <http://www.science-on-stage.eu/>
- Science in School: <http://www.scienceinschool.org/>

- ESOcast: <http://www.eso.org/public/videos/archive/category/esocast/>
- ESO Outreach Partner Organisations, EOPO:
<http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/partnerships/organisations.html>
- Apply for a talk to ESO:
<http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/partnerships/eso-ambassadors.html>
- Outreach Community Newsletter:
<http://eso.us2.list-manage1.com/subscribe?u=c35dd77ef962de779092c970b&id=bd58d6ae8d>
- CAPjournal: <http://www.capjournal.org/index.php>
- Communication resources:
<http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/communication-resources.html>
- Cosmic Gems: <http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/gems.html>
- Exhibition Awesome Universe:
<http://www.eso.org/public/events/special-evt/awesome-universe.html>
- Top 100 images: <http://www.eso.org/public/images/archive/top100/>
- ESO photo ambassadors:
<http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/partnerships/photo-ambassadors.html>
- ESOshop: <http://www.eso.org/public/shop/>
- Products: <http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/products/>
- ESO in the social media: <http://www.eso.org/public/outreach/social.html>

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