

IG Name:

Science and Risk Communication (SCIRIC)

Organization:

SCIRIC was just established in May 2015 by approval of the proposal at the SEC meeting in Barcelona. We are still in a creation phase, and activities mainly result from the initial steering committee, especially the chair Thomas-Benjamin Seiler. The first official meeting of SCIRIC will be held at the SETAC Europe AM 2016 in Nantes. So far no real decisions have been made. Thomas-Benjamin Seiler made suggestions or circulated draft documents via the mailing list, and any reply or feedback was considered and helped to shape the outcome. The operational document that provides details on the structure, operating principles, governance etc. is available in a first draft and was circulated among the SCIRIC members via the setac.org messaging system. Edits were already received from Jennifer Lynch, SETAC global publications manager, and the document is currently being revised. It is planned to submit the guidelines to the SEC prior to the SETAC Europe meeting in Nantes for final approval.

Summary of Activities:

- Initial informal meeting in Barcelona. After approval of the proposal by SEC we held a small initial meeting with the members available at the SETAC AM 2015 in Barcelona. Following communication happened via the mailing list managed by the chair.
- Session track on communication in Nantes. We helped to shaped the session track „Education and communication“ for the Nantes meeting and submitted 4 session proposals. Sessions were promoted via a a mailing list of roughly 200 recipients, selected based on „risk communication“ tags in the SETAC member profiles. Together with one additional session proposal from outside SCIRIC this resulted in 3 sessions on education and communication.
- SCIRIC website online. The content for the SCIRIC website at setac.org was produced and uploaded. Installation of the AG and availability of the website was announced to the above-mentioned mailing list. Since then 45 SETAC members joined the AG.
- SCIRIC poster at SETAC NA SLC. At the SETAC NA annual meeting 2015 in Salt Lake City we introduced SCIRIC with an AG poster in the SETAC AG poster area. While no SCIRIC member could represent the AG at the AG chairs summit we were included in all communication and will follow-up with contacting several AG chairs to build an initial network.
- SCIRIC introduction in the Globe. We wrote an article to introduce SCIRIC for the SETAC Globe 2016 February issue.
- Assistance in shaping a communication strategy of SETAC EU. As the chair of SCIRIC Thomas-Benjamin Seiler was invited to act as a member-at-large of the Long Range Planning committee of SETAC EU, and was asked for help in preparation of the September 2015 meeting. SETAC EU vice president Jose Julio Ortega Calvo focused the meeting on communication issues. We worked out a document consisting four questions to be tackled by LRP Com concerning inside and outside SETAC communication. The exercise resulted in a document on the conclusions and pathways for communication actions, which was developed with essential input by Thomas-Benjamin Seiler to a document stating 3 initial actions for increasing inside and outside communication, mainly based on fostering identification through easy involvement with the help of incentives. Thomas-Benjamin Seiler was invited to join the SEC meeting in Brussels, 19 January 2016, to discuss this document.
- SETAC Globe article about a SETAC EU communication strategy. The progress and intermediate outcomes of the discussion about a future SETAC EU communication strategy where communicated through an article in the April issue of SETAC Globe 2016, authored by Jose Julio Ortega Calvo and Thomas-Benjamin Seiler.

- Participation in a break-out group on a future SETAC public helpdesk. As an outcome of the discussion at the SEC meeting in January a break-out group was formed to review the different possible formats for a public helpdesk (advanced contact form, forum, ticket system) and analyse these options in terms of required resources as well as technological feasibility. Thomas-Benjamin Seiler participates in this group.
- Suggestions for special public outreach activities at 7th world congress in Orlando, 2016. Among others Henner Hollert and Thomas-Benjamin Seiler as Berlin 2012 LOC members were approached by member of the Orlando program committee Joke von Wensem about lessons learned from our work back then. She was especially interested in their opinion on what can make a world congress different from GU meetings. Thomas-Benjamin Seiler suggested to heavily reach out to the public, to let the world know we are meeting in Orlando. He proposed to open the congress to the public, through, e.g., discussion forums, collecting questions in advance, then work on them during the conference and provide answers thereafter, organise a short course "environmental sciences for beginners", public science slams, and of course contacting the media to report from the conference.
- Help in finding sponsoring for the communication short course at YES 2016. We were approached by Erica Brockmeier, Chair of the YES 2016 Scientific Committee, and asked for sponsoring or at least help in finding funding for the short course on „science improv“ to be held at the meeting. The request was distributed via the mailing list and the group mailing of the SCIRIC website.
- Assisted SETAC office in finding volunteers for the REDDIT AMA to take place in Nantes. We played an active role in finding volunteers for the Reddit AMA to be held at the Nantes meeting in 2016 and supported Delphine Delire of the Brussels office as well as possible.
- Session proposals for SETAC World Congress 2016 in Orlando. We were approached by Alan Samel and asked to submit session proposals to the emerging topics previously identified by the GSC and NASC. Sarah Bowman of the SCIRIC steering committee started a discussion on possible sessions for the topic „Linking Science and Social Issues“ in the SCIRIC forum. The session proposed by Thomas-Benjamin Seiler and Leonie K. Nüßer „Ideas and Concepts for Dissemination and Communication of Research Findings in Times of Open Science and Science 2.0“ was included in the call for abstracts.
- SCIRIC representation at the SETAC booth in Nantes. As asked for by SETAC Europe communications manager Delphine Delire SCIRIC prepared a slide for presentation of the AG in the SETAC booth. SCIRIC will also be present in the SETAC booth during the assigned slot on Wednesday of the Nantes meeting to introduce the AG and answer any questions. Thomas-Benjamin Seiler will furthermore participate in the Reddit AMA and the SETAC AG summit on Tuesday.

Recent publications:

Thomas-Benjamin Seiler, Henner Hollert, Agnieszka Hunka, Sarah Bowman, Pernille Thorbek, Gerd Maack (2016): SETAC Europe advisory group on science and risk communication. SETAC Globe February issue

Business and Planning Meetings:

SCIRIC members will meet during the next SETAC Europe conference in Nantes in May 2016.

Membership Communications:

The initial mailing list managed by Thomas-Benjamin Seiler was closed on 29th February. All members were asked well in advance to join the SCIRIC AG on setac.org. Since then all communication happens via the setac.org group mailing, messaging, forum, news feed, blog and calendar.

Issues/Problems:

Delay in preparation of the operational documents due to a serious lack of time of the members of the steering committee. The steering committee does not yet resemble the tripartite structure of SETAC. This will be taken care of as soon as the operational documents are adopted and the specific regulations for serving on the steering committee are clear. The setac.org group mailing does not provide an option to attach files. Hence, provision of any documents, etc. is unnecessary complicated. Same holds true for simply forwarding emails to the group.

Current Steering Committee:

Thomas-Benjamin Seiler, Chair – academia

Agnieszka Hunka – academia

Gerd Maack – government

Sarah Bowman – government

Henner Hollert – academia

Pernille Thorbek – business

Total membership: 45 joined the group

No. of active members: it is not yet possible to distinguish between active and inactive members, since there has not been much activity members could have been involved in. An update will be possible after the SCIRIC meeting in Nantes.

Report submitted on May 17th, 2016, by Thomas-Benjamin Seiler