

S-TEAM News & STEP-UP Special!

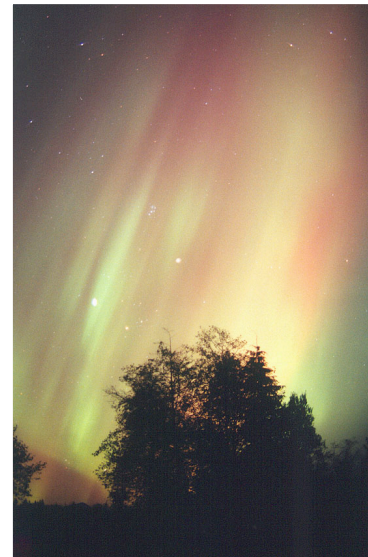
National workshops

Mid-project conference

SiS in Brussels

Nottingham news

...and more



The return of the newsletter

After a long absence over the summer, the S-TEAM newsletter is back! We have been concentrating on getting the Wiki up and running, and of course this will be the main source of news and information for the project. However, we need to share views on some current topics concerning the progress of S-TEAM.

National workshops

The national workshops in Lithuania, Turkey and Scotland were very successful. Thanks to Nijole, Gultekin, Fatih, Jim, Allan and colleagues for hosting these events, and to Doris, Matthias and Silke for all their travelling and presentation activities.

There are three desirable outcomes from the national workshops::

1. Policymakers and others should be alerted to the existence of S-TEAM
2. A report must be produced summarising the state of play in Inquiry-Based Science Teaching/ Education (IBST/E) in the host country.
3. A network of policymakers, researchers, teacher educators and teachers should be created using the workshop group as a starting point.

The message

The message from the workshops so far is that people will engage in debate over these issues in science education if given the opportunity. S-TEAM provides a way of getting people into the same room, but should of course be sensitive to the agendas of others. The project is about gathering ideas as well as about disseminating them.

Mid-Project Conference

As you know, the mid project conference must be held by the end of October 2010. We currently intend to hold the conference in Glasgow, hosted by the University of Strathclyde. We hope to announce the venue and dates by early October, but provisionally we are looking at the 14th and 15th of October 2010, with some internal meetings either side of these dates. The conference will also be the occasion for our next General Assembly, and will be an important milestone for the project generally.

At this stage, especially for the NLPs, it would be useful to think about who to invite to the conference, based on participation in the national workshops or on your own knowledge of potential contributors. IBST superstars, sympathetic politicians, Bono....all welcome!

Information gathering - whose responsibility?

At the moment, we have several information gathering activities proceeding simultaneously. WP2 is responsible for the coordination of policy information from the workshops. WP9 is developing indicators for the project, including 'state of the art' information on policy and practice. Finally, WP6 is conducting extensive literature reviews on teacher professional development and related areas. These are now appearing and are providing us with huge amounts of useful information.

There is, however a danger of overlap and duplicated effort here, which is counter-productive. We think that:

1. National Liaison Partners should be the source of information about policy and practice in specific national contexts, drawing on knowledge from other national partners as necessary.
2. The use of questionnaires with policymakers is not always possible or desirable, but such questionnaires are helpful when used as 'aide-memoires' in conjunction with workshops.
3. NLPs should forward their reports to Costas and Loucas in WP6, as a contribution to their literature reviews, as well as to Doris, Peter and Matthias.
4. NLPs should have access to other partners' national workshop draft reports as soon as possible after each event, in order to inform and improve the workshops on a continuous cycle.

The national workshop reports will be collated by WP2 and will contribute to an overall international policy report. The interim version of this will be our first substantive deliverable, in January 2010. This will be discussed in detail during the Nottingham meeting on Jan 10th. If you have not already responded to Peter regarding this meeting and your possible attendance, please do so as soon as possible. We will have the following provisional timetable:

1. ASE conference runs from 6-9 January, the S-TEAM workshop is on Friday 8th from 1130-1230. This is an opportunity for teachers to get to know what we are doing and give their views
2. We may have a WP8 workshop on Friday 8th, from 1700-1900, but this is to be confirmed
3. Management Board 3 will be on Saturday 9th from 0900-1300
4. WP6 workshop on Sat 9th from 1400-1800
5. Workshop dinner 2000....
6. The international workshop will be from 0900-1700 on Sunday 10th and it is very important that we finalise the interim report from WP2 on the national workshop programme. So all NLPs need to be represented.
7. We may have some informal meetings on the Monday morning (11th) but generally that is when you should book flights home.

The most convenient airport is East Midlands:

<http://www.eastmidlandsairport.com/emaweb.nsf/Content/ToAndFromAirport>

but if it is not possible for you to get a good connection we can arrange pick-ups from other airports such as Stansted (but not Heathrow!). More travel information later this week.

SiS Brokerage meeting in Brussels

Moving from competition to collaboration?

There were over 160 possible FP7 participants at the SiS2010 brokerage meeting in Brussels on Oct 2nd. The intention of this meeting was to enable potential partners and projects to connect with each other prior to the final stages of assembling proposals for the 2010 deadline on January 21st. Not all the possible players perhaps, but a high proportion, with especially good representation from countries such as Romania, Turkey and Italy. Our intention was to launch....

STEP-UP Science Teacher Education & Professional development - Unified Programme

Some of you will already have heard about this proposal at various meetings and conferences, but after the SiS meeting it seems to have acquired further momentum. We would very much like all the current S-TEAM partners to participate, as well as the additional INQUEST partners and potential new partners who we have met over the last few weeks.

What is STEP-UP?

STEP-UP is a development project intended to create a European Qualification for Inquiry in Practice (EQUIP), a professional development and qualification programme for science teachers across Europe and beyond. Initially this will not be a masters level qualification but the modular structure and credit points allocation will enable it to become a part of masters level courses in different national contexts.

It will be implemented by national partners using materials developed in S-TEAM and elsewhere, with an overall course structure developed by STEP-UP partners. The project will

lead to the creation of an International Centre for Inquiry in Science Education (INCISE) which will be a sustainable institution charged with running the qualification programme and updating course modules using the best of current research.

Rationale for STEP-UP

S-TEAM will produce some great ideas, materials and programmes, and it will disseminate these through a variety of routes, but at the end of the project we will be dependent on individuals and their institutions to keep spreading the word. The *European Central Information Provider* will be essentially a passive way of accessing materials, even if it promotes its activities extensively. Therefore, it would be good to have a structure which would maintain the momentum of S-TEAM and which would ultimately provide the kind of teacher networks mentioned in the current call (2.2.1.1). The EQUIP qualification provides four things:

1. A sense of shared purpose between teachers, teacher educators and researchers
2. A way of spreading the principles of inquiry without imposing fixed ideas, whilst complementing existing school curricula.
3. A collaborative space for science teachers across Europe
4. A gathering concept for research in science education

STEP-UP thus opens up the European Pedagogical Field to the collective experience and knowledge of all of its science educators and researchers, as opposed to the current situation where knowledge is locked within national and disciplinary boundaries. The intention is that it will also support a growing network of teacher educators and science educators who currently have common interests but no formal way of working together on a regular basis.

To help distribute the hard work of coordination across the consortium, we have had an offer from Gultekin and Fatih at Hacettepe and Gazi universities in Turkey. However, we would like to hear from all of you before we come to a final draft of the proposal. Over the next two weeks or so, a full proposal draft will be prepared and circulated based on our current discussions, but without the institutional details which will be the responsibility of individual partners. There will be about two weeks for consultation on this, after which we need to begin the formal processes such as signing MoU (memoranda of understanding) etc. We look forward to hearing from you.

ASTRAL project - another spin-off?

Geir Karlsen and Anna-Lena Østern from NTNU are developing the ASTRAL (Art & Science Teaching, Rethinking Aesthetics and Literacy) project as a response to another SiS 2010 call. Existing S-TEAM partners in Israel (Ran Peleg) and Scotland (watch this space) are likely to be part of this project which is going to propose some radical ideas about connecting artistic creativity to scientific concepts and understandings, using a wide range of media. If other partners are interested, please contact Geir, Anna-Lena or Peter.

Where are we at, how are we doing?

At this stage in the project, we are all re-aligning what we thought we would be doing with what we are actually doing. Some parts of the project are more complex than previously proposed, others have perhaps become simpler. The national workshops have produced unexpected results and also confirmation of what we thought before. The literature reviews in WP6 are producing major insights into where IBST sits within educational research. The conferences we have attended - ESERA and ECER - have given us insight into significant areas of both science education and teacher education, as well as the inspiration of great cities - Istanbul, Vienna - and the support of many old and new friends.

As in all adventures, there have been problems, differences and reconciliations. But we are a friendly project, and we can resolve the problems, live with the differences, keep on reconciling our paradoxes. Over the next few weeks, Alex Gröschner and I will be in touch with all the sub-packages, at the level of individual products, to make sure that everyone is:

1. Confident that they can meet the deadlines as reported to Bard Li and as given in STAN84.
2. Sure of what they will deliver, its overall shape and content.
3. Able to evaluate or otherwise measure the results.

Loucas and Costas in WP6 have shown the way for this process, and in doing so have drawn attention to some tensions between the original, and sometimes rather loose, descriptions and commitments of STAN and the understandings of individual partners. This is only to be expected at this stage. My job as project manager is to reconcile the commitments and descriptions with the reality. The materials, such as the literature reviews and the demonstration video from Alex et al, show that the reality is going to be better than the promises. Thanks to all of you for making that happen.

Peter

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Denmark	• University of Copenhagen *
	• Aarhus Universitet
Estonia	• University of Tallinn *
Finland	• Abo Akademi University
	• Helsinki University *
	• University of Jyväskylä
France	• Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
	• Université Pierre Mendès-France *
	• Université Rennes 2 – Haute Bretagne
Germany	• Friedrich Schiller University of Jena
	• Leibniz Institute for Science Education at the University of Kiel *
Israel	• Technion – Israel Institute of Technology *
Lithuania	• Kaunas University of Technology *
	• Vilnius Pedagogical University
Norway	• Norwegian University of Science and Technology (coordinator)
	• University of Oslo *
Spain	• Universidade de Santiago de Compostela *
Sweden	• Mälardalen University *
Turkey	• Hacettepe University *
	• Gazi University
UK	• University of Bristol *
	• University of Leeds
	• University of Strathclyde *

* National Liaison Partner

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