

**S-TEAM-  
INQUEST-  
NEWS No. 5**

February 12th, 2009

**S-TEAM: Lighting  
up science  
education!**



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New family support group!

**Welcome to Trondheim!**

The venue for the start up meeting has now been confirmed as Trondheim in Norway, and it is appropriate that NTNU as the project leader should be the host for our first meeting with “steam up”.

As per the last newsletter, the dates for the formal meeting are 7th and 8th May. Some of you may wish to stay on in Trondheim on the Saturday & Sunday (9/10 May) in order to have informal discussions with colleagues, and we will provide facilities for this purpose.

We would also like to offer participants the chance to experience some of the scenery and outdoor opportunities presented by this beautiful part of Norway. A possible programme for Saturday and Sunday (9th/10th May) could include use of NTNU's own research ship, staying at NTNU's "field-station" for marine biology, and visiting a Light-house nearby (including serving drinks in the light-house-tower - see photo opposite).

We invite you to tell us whether or not you would like to participate in this informal weekend. Family members are welcome but you would need to cover travel and hotel costs for anyone other than project participants.

The main business, however, is to get the project off to a good start. This is an occasion for discussion, decisions and direction-finding. We expect this to be a productive and enjoyable event!  
Geir Karlsen

## Accommodation

A block booking has been made at a Trondheim hotel and Beata Eggan, who is handling arrangements for the meeting will circulate an email next week which will give hotel details and which will ask you for arrival and departure times. The financial arrangements are set out in a separate section below. If you have travel or accommodation questions:

[Beata.Eggan@svt.ntnu.no](mailto:Beata.Eggan@svt.ntnu.no)

## Venue



*The science building at NTNU*

## Costs

Meeting travel and accommodation costs will be payable by the project although there will be a short delay after the start date before funds are released from the EC. This will probably happen before the end of June. There is a slight problem over the eligibility of travel claims based on tickets purchased before 1st May. Our current advice is that you should purchase tickets as soon as possible to minimise the cost, but make the claim to your own university after May 1st. The hotel will be booked in advance by NTNU but again participants should pay their own bills and claim back from their home universities. There is unfortunately a technical reason for this, in that Value Added Tax is not an eligible cost, and it is therefore necessary to disperse it across the consortium as much as possible.

## Format

The main purposes of the start up meeting are to:

- introduce ourselves to each other
- establish contacts between partners
- set up the work packages
- agree on terminology, procedures etc
- Resolve any outstanding issues - specific agenda items are welcome.
- As regards Work packages, we suggest that we should have three plenary sessions arranged around groups of WPs, as follows:
  - Functional WPs - 1, 2, 9.10
  - Teacher education WPs - 4, 5, 6
  - Specialised WPs - 7 & 8

There will be more on this as we get closer to the date, and probably some papers to circulate.

## Next stages

STAN the technical annex is gradually coming together. Rather like renovating an old house, sometimes it is easier to knock it down and start from the beginning...so this will be a completely new document, but somewhat shorter than the proposal. This is the time to make any changes to your contributions and to make the details clear, such as the length of training packages etc.

The draft will be circulated early on Monday 23rd and we need comments back by Wednesday 25th. The main thing to focus on is your own contribution, and whether it is what you intended to do before I messed around with it...

## **A two-part drama, in 109 deliverables..**

One of the issues raised at the Brussels meeting was how S-TEAM fits with the overall Science-in-Society and science education policies within FP7. The DG proposes a project review after 18 months, which is a natural break point within our milestones table. To fit with this review timetable it will be desirable that we have as many deliverables as possible complete and ready for dissemination by M18 (around November 2010).

## **Getting on with it....part 3**

The detailed preparation of work package descriptions (worpads) is proceeding well. The main requirement here is to have specifications for training packages, and to clarify some of the deliverables where there has been duplication of effort.

This process should result in a streamlined deliverables list, with more staff effort available for dissemination activities. The precise nature of these will be sorted out in the WP10 descriptions.

We will also be circulating the budget in order for partners to check that their costs are in line with their expectations. We have reworked the distribution of person months in line with evaluators' comments, which has resulted in a more even distribution and slightly more PM for some partners.

## **Video**

One issue which is emerging is the question of formatting of any video material generated within work packages. Currently we have 5 DVDs listed, although we have perhaps used DVD as a convenient shorthand for "video-based materials"

It is likely that our cooperation with ECIP would require such materials to be available in formats such as Quicktime<sup>1</sup>,

rather than as a hardcopy on a DVD, although there is nothing to stop us producing a few hard copies so that there is something to file under S-TEAM deliverables in Brussels. So there will be slight changes to the wording of these deliverables to reflect this.

## **Cooperation with the European Central Information Provider (ECIP)**

Another issue relates to the proposed ECIP for science education, which is currently out to tender. The idea here is to centralise the online provision of resources for science teaching with the aim of reducing confusion and duplication. We have agreed that we will cooperate closely with the chosen provider, probably commencing in January 2010. This will mean that we can concentrate on the content of deliverables and on relations with key players, rather than on the mechanics of distribution. "Dissemination" therefore has a more active aspect as far as we are concerned. If you are interested in applying or just reading the (surprisingly interesting) tender document, it's at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/research/tenders/rtd-2009\\_s1-000197\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/research/tenders/rtd-2009_s1-000197_en.cfm)

## **ECER/ESERA**

Geir, Doris and Peter have submitted a paper proposal for ESERA 2009 in Istanbul. We would be interested to know if any of you have also submitted proposals so that we can think about how we can best use the opportunity of ESERA within the project.

We have also submitted a proposal for a symposium at ECER 2009, on the topic of indicators and instruments and their role within the project, which fits well with the conference theme of "Theory and evidence in educational research". So far, Geir Karlsen, Jim McNally & Allan Blake

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<sup>1</sup> You can tell I don't like Windows Media...there are of course plenty of other formats

and Michel Grangeat will be taking part, with more contributors in the pipeline.

## **Science - combined, integrated or compartmentalised?**

An apology: I left out the 'f' from Fearghal Kelly's email last time:

[fkelly@ross.elcschool.org.uk](mailto:fkelly@ross.elcschool.org.uk)

The S-Team coordinators

Contact:

Peter Gray

[graypb@gmail.com](mailto:graypb@gmail.com)

## **Featured Article**

### **Other ways of looking at meetings...**

Since academics are not well-known for being reflexive about their own practices, here is an article to remind us of the family members who enable all this to happen. Please pass this article on to your own significant others...we will be evaluating the results...

### **Oh no! How long will you be away for this time...?**

By Jane Riddell, long-suffering partner to the long-suffering Peter Gray

Does this sound familiar?

The S-Team has done brilliantly to have its research proposal chosen out of 42 applications. The energy and commitment to it can't be questioned. And the benefits

to science teaching in schools may be enormous.

But what about the spouses/partners bracing themselves for their loved ones being away from home even more as they attend meetings and conferences over the next three years? What sort of impact does frequent or even infrequent travel have on the rest of the family? Is the announcement of yet another away meeting greeted with a resigned acceptance or is it a trigger for war?

There is agreement that such meetings are kept to a minimum. But will that be minimal enough for those left at home, keeping everything going in their absence? The work ethos and pressure to achieve even more in the same time or less, may be greater than ever. But at what cost? For both the worker and the worker's family this may be huge. It's been said that when people are on their deathbed, they seldom say 'I wish I'd worked more' but they often say 'I wish I'd spent more time with my family'.

What about setting up a support group for the S-Team "widows"/"widowers"? We could communicate by email and use this as a venue to give vent to our frustration about our partners going away. We might be able to pass on advice about how we cope. And our very existence might provide the following ongoing message to the project:

"Please think creatively about ways to communicate effectively that don't involve travel. We want to be with our partners as much as possible".

Let me have your views. Please email me at: [Riddell.Jane@gmail.com](mailto:Riddell.Jane@gmail.com)

## **S-TEAM members as at 19/01/09**

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