

EUSJA News

Newsletter of the European Union of Science Journalists' Associations Autumn 1998

EUSJA on-line

Don't lose your accent

E-mail is a wonderful thing – most of the time. It's one of those rare technologies that let me get on with what I'm paid to do, instead of acting as a copy-typist or a postman. Yet when I see French text looking like this:

Tout cela me semble trs clair ... la dcision est donc prise

or:

D=E9cid=E9ment, les anglais veulent tout nous prendre m=EAmes nos = rares prix Nobel

the feeling of technological empowerment does begin to wane.

My answer to unwanted line breaks and missing accents is to send text as word processor files attached to e-mail messages. This is fighting talk, but to my mind life would be simpler if we all stuck to Microsoft Word, especially now that MIME is almost universal for encoding attachments (even CompuServe now supports MIME). *turn to page 2*

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Editorial

EUSJA and ESF: working together

Is EUSJA really functioning as a "European Union" and working successfully to promote responsible science journalism and the public understanding of science in Europe? And what activities should EUSJA undertake to further its objectives? These questions, first raised when EUSJA was founded in 1971, became even more important when science journalists' associations from eastern Europe joined EUSJA. For some years, we didn't know the answer.

We live in amazing times. Developments in science and technology raise many important moral, ethical and scientific questions that must be debated.

One of EUSJA's fundamental purposes is to inform the public and to promote an understanding of the advantages and risks and issues associated with the evolution of science and technology. In light of these aims, EUSJA's current "home" at the European Science Foundation (ESF), a non-profit and independent body based in Strasbourg, is a particularly fortunate and appropriate one. The two organisations have a common interest and goal in finding ways to best promote the public understanding of science.

ESF's new secretary general, the geophysicist Enric Banda, an experienced scientist as well as science policymaker, is actively encouraging ESF to consider how the media can best support and encourage the public understanding of science. This is an area where EUSJA can really make an impact.

At its general assembly, held in Strasbourg in November, ESF gave careful consideration to the debate on Europe's future needs. Questions such as the place of youth in society, education and unemployment, clinical research, how advances in computing can help scientists to develop models of our world, and environmental issues were all under discussion. And so was the role of the science media.

To be effective, the 22 national associations that make up EUSJA must play their part by developing efficient ways of evaluating suggestions, proposals and, when necessary, criticism, in order to stimulate common activities. The national associations must also co-operate to encourage the professional development of their science journalist members.

Our links with ESF, and the stimulation and support they can offer, are a valuable tool to help all EUSJA journalists in this important job. Let's work together with ESF to improve the quality of life for all us. To find out more about ESF programmes and opportunities, contact Andrew Smith, head of the ESF Communications Unit, tel: +33-3-88-76-71-25; fax: +33-3-88-37-05-32; e-mail: asmith@esf.org

Paola de Paoli, President EUSJA

Keep in touch!

News, views, stories, announcements, ideas or even cautionary tales – they could all be of interest for the next *EUSJA News*, due out in early May 1999. Send me yours by 9 April 1999. Get in touch by phone or fax (the number is the same for both) on +44-1608-676530; e-mail: ninamorgan@compuserve.com; or by old-fashioned post at: Rose Cottage, East End, Chadlington, Oxon OX7 3LX, UK.

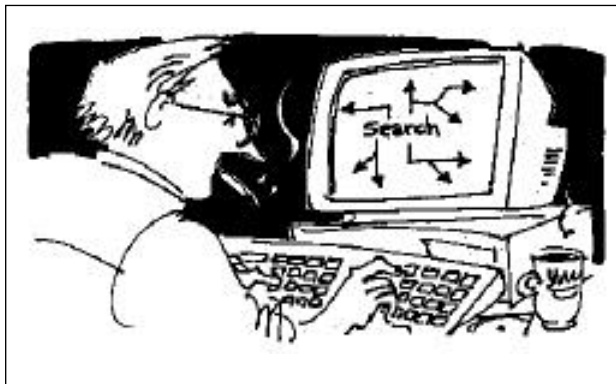
Nina Morgan, Editor, EUSJA News

Make contact!

“Hello, I am calling from Dutch television and I'm working on a story about stem cells and their potential in growing body parts. Do you know anybody in Europe working on this?”

This is typical of the types of requests we receive daily from journalists by telephone, fax or e-mail. And at the Media Resource Service (MRS) we are always happy to respond.

Since 1985, when the Novartis (then Ciba) Foundation set up the referral service, we have logged nearly 20 000 queries seeking expertise. Our information source is a constantly updated database of over 5000 European scientists who have agreed to assist the media.



Jean de Lemos

The experts on the register are selected for their expertise and individually invited to join the MRS. To date we are able to locate expertise in 13 European countries. The service is part of the Novartis Foundation's commitment to promote science communication through the media.

Callers include the French science magazine *La Recherche*, Germany's *Focus* magazine and the BBC Science and Features Department. Whether you are a freelance science writer or a general journalist at a local radio station, we are happy to hear from you. If time is limited and deadlines are tight, contacting the MRS will help you locate an expert who is able to comment or put the story in an appropriate perspective.

Over the years we have dealt with crises, pollution, emergencies, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. We have located experts in a matter of minutes. The MRS response team is ready to help you in English, French, German and Dutch.

And if you'd like to receive our twice-yearly newsletter, drop us a line. We operate from 09:00 to 18:00 (UK time) from Monday to Friday. Our service is fast, efficient – and free.

Jan Pieter Emans

Media Resource Service

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WWW: <http://www.novartisfound.demon.co.uk>

In the pipeline

With US\$10 000 already pledged from UNESCO, the Second World Conference of Science Journalists in Budapest, Hungary, planned for July 1999, looks like becoming a reality. EUSJA is playing an important role in the conference organisation. Congratulations are due to Istvan Palugyai for getting the ball rolling and to Paola de Paoli for her work to support the initiative. To find out the latest, contact Istvan Palugyai by e-mail: h9792pal@ella.hu

...Don't lose your accent from page 1

I'm not a big Microsoft fan, but Word 6 and Word 97 have become *de facto* standards. Misguided people will continue to send me Word files containing huge and unnecessary graphics, but at least I can be confident that all the “funny characters” are in the right places.

For people who really hate file attachments, what are the options? First, don't forget your e-mail software. Programs such as Eudora have handy tools for “unwrapping” lines of text which have broken in the wrong places. Second, try a programmer's-type text editor (often available for free) – these generally have better text-processing tools than mainstream word processors provide. Third come stand-alone text processors such as the Mac shareware package Add/Strip – lightning-fast, and a real boon if you have to process many files at once. Fourth, word processor macros can usually do the job, if slowly.

One neat solution to the accent problem is known as MIME quoted-printable (QP) encoding. If your e-mail program supports QP it will recognise an accented character in an outgoing message, say *é*, and replace it with *=E9*. The recipient's software does the reverse translation. Since QP leaves the rest of the text untouched, it's handy for messages which contain only a few accents or other special characters.

The trouble is that not all e-mail programs support QP, and those that do cannot always recognise incoming QP after it has been mangled on its journey across the Internet. Mailing list digests are especially prone to this problem, which is why they are often full of “=” signs.

Luckily, QP is a simple code which is easy to translate using a word-processor macro, or even by eye. Mac users who have Applescript installed have a better option: the “Decode QP” scripting extension. Although you can write stand-alone scripts to use this extension, Eudora and other mail programs can take advantage of it automatically, with no need for programming. Choose the “Decode QP” item in Eudora and “D=E9cid=E9ment, les anglais veulent ... m=EAmé ...” becomes “Décidément, les anglais veulent ... même ...” before your eyes. Even so, don't rely on QP unless you are certain your recipient uses it too.

A better solution might be something called Unicode, a universal character set that bridges the gap between different types of computer. But that's another story.

Charles Butcher, ABSW

e-mail: charles@writer.demon.co.uk

Swiss trip goes like clockwork

In October, 25 EUSJA members from 14 countries met in Zürich for a visit hosted and organised with legendary Swiss precision by Beat Gerber and Werner Hadorn of the Swiss Association of Science Journalism. For five days we were treated to presentations on aspects of Swiss science and technology, and delighted in the company of new contacts from other countries.

For many of us it was our first visit to Switzerland. Our hosts made sure that, apart from the working aspects of the trip, we were shown a full selection of the delights which the country has to offer. These ranged from the excellent city hotels, with their impressive food, to the rural lakesides and mountains of the Bernese Oberland.

It seemed a pity to have to work, but first-class presentations given by eminent scientists surveying a variety of topics gave us all lots to think about and plenty to follow up. The high point – literally – of the visit was a journey up the Eiger to the research station on the Jungfrauoch to investigate some aspects of atmospheric research. It was more than worth the 05:00 morning call from our picturesque hotel in the Rosenlauri Gorge.

From energy sustainability to BSE, from the repair of damaged nervous systems to the science(?) of tourism and developments in pharmaceuticals and microtechnology, we were given lots to work with. All in all, an excellent trip. And not a cuckoo clock to be seen!

James King-Holmes, ABSW

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An Italian idyll

In May, 21 journalists from 16 countries indulged in four days full of enjoyment and science – basking in the delights of a subtle blend of gastronomy and warm human contacts. The occasion? A study visit for EUSJA members organised by UGIS, the Union Giornalisti Italiani Scientifici.

The visit began in Milan, and the programme covered a diverse range of subjects. Highlights included discussions with researchers from the EU Joint Research Centre at Ispra; a visit to Italy's central telecom research lab, the Centro Studi e Laboratori Telecomunicazioni in Turin; briefings from a biomedical company that makes heart prostheses; and discussions with Zeneca that revealed some of the details involved in developing a new anaesthetic. On the final day the group revelled in rubbish and examined the latest innovations – including a newly-patented process – developed by Ecodeco, a company located near Pavia that specialises in waste disposal, recycling of urban waste, and new environmental processes.

We all agreed that this well-organised visit was a superb experiment in international journalism – and

one that we are very anxious to repeat.

Jacques Poncin, French Science Journalists Association
and Alan Burns, ABSW

Lektüre-Tip... A good read

SF-Klassiker neu

The German Jules Verne: a rediscovery

Die Werke von Hans Dominik, 1929 Gründervater der TELI, werden im Münchener Heyne-Verlag neu aufgelegt. Bisher sind drei Bände erschienen: *Die Macht der Drei*, *Atlantis* und *Der Brand der Cheops-Pyramide*. Insgesamt sind 20 Bände geplant, darunter auch *Atomgewicht 500*.

Manche Kritiker vergleichen die Romane Dominiks mit denen von Jules Verne. Dominik war in seiner Zeit der bekannteste und meistgelesene Verfasser utopischer Zukunftsromane. Er hat sich schon 1921 in *Die Macht der Drei* mit Chancen und Gefahren der Kernenergie auseinandergesetzt. Im *Brand der Cheopspyramide* (1925) geht es u. a. um den Kampf islamischer Fundamentalisten und eines arabischen Diktators gegen die westliche Welt.

Hans Dominik, 1872 in Zwickau geboren, hatte Maschinenbau und Elektrotechnik studiert. Er starb 1945 in Berlin. Von seinen Büchern wurden zu seinen Lebzeiten 2,3 Millionen Exemplare verkauft.

Walter Baier, TELI

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Denmark is science well served?

Danes are very interested in reading and learning about science and research. Most of all, they are keen to find out more about science-related health and lifestyle issues. So how well are they served by the Danish media? Not very, according to two new reports from the Analyseinstitutet for Forskning (Institute for Research Analysis) at the University of Aarhus. The reports conclude that the Danish media often responds to this public thirst for science reporting by offering programmes and articles featuring middle-aged male professors talking about society and politics.

These conclusions are based on an analysis, carried out by the Institute, of 3000 newspaper stories about research in the five large national newspapers in Denmark. The studies showed that the research most often reported in the Danish media concerns society and politics. Health, humanities and science tend to take second place.

The reports were presented at a meeting of the Danish Science Journalists' Association by Karen Siune, head of the Institute. She noted that a large majority of Danes frequently read about science and research in the newspapers or get to know about it through TV and radio. Weekly magazines are a good source as well, and nearly 70 percent of the population regularly discuss sci-

ence and research with colleagues, friends and family.

However, in Denmark, the coverage of science stories does seem to present a distorted view of the nature and extent of scientific research that is taking place. For example, although many Danish research projects involve collaboration with partners in other countries – thanks to Denmark’s EU membership – most of the newspaper stories report on projects where all participants are Danish. There is also a bias towards reporting about state-funded research, even though in Denmark more research projects are carried out by private companies than at state-funded universities and research centres.

Sexual stereotyping also seems to come into play. More male than female researchers appear in the media, especially if the discussion revolves around research related to society and health. In contrast, more female researchers appear in coverage of farming and veterinary stories – a reflection, perhaps, of the fact that female journalists often cover stories related to farming and nutrition. Science and technology reporting, it seems, is a male preserve.

Lars Wang, Danish Science Journalists’ Association
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Environmentally aware?

ENDS Environment Daily, Europe’s first daily environment service based in London, is looking for freelance environmental journalists based in Europe, particularly in Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Greece and Ireland. **ENDS Environment Daily** is published five days per week and distributed to subscribers in government, business, universities and campaign groups by e-mail and on the Web.

Journalists must be able to understand the professional environmental policy agenda, be experienced in writing about environmental policy issues, speak and write good English and have immediate Internet access. If you are interested, contact editor Nick Rowcliffe, tel: +44-171-814-5321; fax: +44-171-415-0106; e-mail: nrowcliffe@ends.co.uk, WWW: <http://www.ends.co.uk/>

¿Hablas español?

Muchos de los textos científicos y médicos están publicados en inglés – un idioma que más de un periodista de habla hispana puede leer fácilmente. Sin embargo, las traducciones de esos textos al español pueden posibilitar que una audiencia hispanoparlante más amplia tenga acceso a las fuentes originales.

¿Puedo ayudarte? Soy un traductor de textos científicos y médicos del inglés al español. Para más información, contáctame en cualquiera de las siguientes direcciones de correo electrónico.

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Godt lesestoff... A good read

Debuterer i Norge

New in Norwegian

Den nye 14-daglige norske nyhetssavisen **Dagens Medisin** henvender seg til ansatte i helsevesenet og kom med sitt første nummer i slutten av oktober. Den skal dekke medisin, politikk, organisasjon, økonomi og personalia.

Hvilke problemer har helsesektoren? Hva kan gjøres uavhengig av profesjonenes, legemiddelindustriens og myndighetenes serintresser? Avisen skal baade informere, provosere, kommentere og underholde.

Dagens Medisin har allerede eksistert fire aar i Sverige, ett aar i Danmark og kommer i aar ogsaa ut i Finland. Alle fire satser paa hoy troverdighet og god fagkunnskap.

For more information contact:
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In the news

Stories that hit the press in Belgium and Russia

In Belgium renewable energy and the BSE scare were just two of the science stories that filled the column centimetres in the French and Flemish press. On the renewable energy front, the town of Philippeville, in French-speaking Wallonia, hopes to pioneer the development of a renewable energy source based on the cultivation of willow coppices grown in a short rotation system. The idea is to harvest the willows at three-yearly intervals, and to then transform the wood into a combustible gas which, in turn, can be used to generate electricity in a micro power station. The wood-based electricity could then be used to supplement supplies at times of peak demand.

Although Belgian agriculture has so far been little affected by the BSE scare — only five confirmed cases in cattle have so far been reported — the Belgian authorities are taking steps to guard against the possibility of the disease spreading to humans. A new national surveillance network is being set up to monitor all the spongiform encephalopathies transmissible in humans, including Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD). The surveillance network will draw in neurologists, neuropathologists and general practitioners. The objective is to ensure rapid detection of any disease cases and hopefully to limit the transmission of these diseases amongst the human population.

Meanwhile, the Russian press — spurred on by the funeral ceremony held in St Petersburg to mark the reburial of the Tsar's remains — has become fascinated with DNA fingerprinting. The technique, which was used to identify the Tsar's bones, has also been used to identify soldiers killed in Chechnya during the 1994-96 war. Later in the summer, the newspapers highlighted the scandal associated with the theft of transgenic potatoes from an experimental fields in southern Russia. The theft raised worries about the possibility that untested genetically-modified food could enter the human food chain.

In September, Russian papers reported the spectacle of professors blocking highways during a strike of academic staff. There was also discussion about the Nobel prizes, with some papers expressing their distaste for what they see as the influence of a pro-American lobby on the Nobel Committee.

The papers also commented on the fate of the Mir space station. To terminate or not to terminate? That was the question. The recent appointment of Mikhail Kirpitchenkov as the new Russian minister for science also hit the headlines — as did questions about the effect of Boris Yeltsin's poor health on the running of the government.

*Reporting by Clifford Adams in Belgium
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and Sergei Petukhov in Russia
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Any answers?

The last EUSJA visit to Norway took place in 1993. Do you think it's time for another? And how soon? Send me your comments, proposals, tips and ideas. Where would you like to go? Who would you like to meet? Hjartelg helsing — and hope to hear from you soon.

*Kjell-Gunnar Heimark
e-mail: kjell-gunnar.heimark@dnmi.no*

...and any suggestions?

TELI, the German Technical Literary Association for technical and scientific journalism, is organising an international conference on the theme of Communication, co-operation or confrontation? How the media forms a bridge between science and technology and society. The conference will take place from 30 September to 2 October 1999 in Berlin, and the official languages will be English and German. We need your help to decide on the specific topics to be discussed and to help us recruit a range of outstanding speakers. Get in touch!

*Dietmar Schmidt
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Know your sources

As journalists we are all aware of attempts to manipulate the press — and we all condemn it. But, if we are honest, we should also look carefully at the way we present information to our public. It is very easy to let your own prejudices get in the way when deciding how to present a story and what information to emphasise. And it is also very easy to take the lazy way out, and neglect to verify the information we are given or to consider who may be trying to manipulate us, so that we, in turn, will manipulate our audience.

It should be our job to assess the information we are offered in order to present our audience with as objective a view as possible. It is a fact that the information science journalists are after is in the hands of science institutions and industry. Science journalists depend on these organisations.

People at the source can choose, according to their convenience, when and what to release, even to whom. In this sense all science journalists are inescapably manipulated.

You can either choose to make the best of it or to quit the profession. So rather than complaining about your sources, why not accept the situation? Recognise that industry journalists have to be loyal to their employers, and work with them to get the information you need.

Science journalists should have at least a basic knowl-

edge of the subjects they write about to enable them to check information they are given. They should also be aware of where their sources are coming from, and where their sources' loyalties might lie. This is why TELI's list of members clearly identifies industry journalists and provides information about their employers.

There is no better weapon against manipulators than to listen (or read) carefully in order to separate facts from interpretations and to recognise the holes in their arguments.

Ask sources to clarify these fuzzy areas. The answers they give are usually telling. Don't believe experts without checking. By working this way you will get better-quality information. Your sources will also take you more seriously, and the flow of information will become much easier. And everyone – sources, journalists and the public we seek to inform – will win.

Walter Baier, TELI
e-mail: drbaier@compuserve.com

Cross-border co-operation

“Why don't the Dutch close their curtains?” That's the first question Germans ask me, a Dutch journalist living and working in Germany, when they hear my strong *hollandisches* accent – something which sounds close to their *Plattdeutsch*. My German neighbours joke that the Dutch prefer to remain on view because closing their curtains would cost them more in taxes. In one local newspaper a German correspondent based in The Hague even described how one evening he had seen his neighbour in the apartment across the way in his underwear!

You won't see such scenes in Germany, where all windows are carefully protected by curtains and roll-down shutters at night, even though the people behind them may be watching the erotic TV programme *Peep*. Anyway, I never realised the Dutch didn't close their curtains in the evening. In fact, most of us do, because we tend to feel it's more *gezellig* (cosy) to close curtains when it's getting dark outside. And we really don't have to pay taxes for this special privilege.

Germans also joke about the many Dutch cars, with their caravans and yellow number plates, which flood onto the German Autobahns in the summer. Our NL stickers are laughingly said to indicate “*nur links*” – “drive in the left-hand lane”. But joking aside, relations are good. The Germans recognise that Holland is a very small country and that the Dutch can speak German if they want to. In fact, Holland could almost be a German *Bundesland*.

Having now spent one year living in Germany as a Dutch journalist I can report that it has been a unique experience. It gave me the chance to build a new network with many German chemical firms and associations that still prefer to communicate in their own language within their own country. Though it proved rather difficult to make German friends in the small village picturesque village of Heppenheim (between Darmstadt and Heidelberg), where I live, I very much enjoyed the beautiful surroundings of this “German Riviera” with its

many wine hills (and parties!), ancient castles and the Odenwald Natural Park. For international newspapers, magazines, expatriate clubs or movies I found I could turn to Frankfurt or Heidelberg.

And now I have to start all over again. I will soon be moving to Naples. I'm looking forward to the challenge of adapting to a new culture – and to working with my Italian colleagues. I hope they'll help me to adjust to the science journalists' scene in Italy. Instead of feeling like a stranger in a strange land, I want to feel like a real EUSJA member working in the new Europe – and able to rely on a little help from my EUSJA friends.

Annemarie ten Wolde,
Dutch Science Journalists' Association
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Science communication theory and practice

Over 200 analysts and practitioners of science communication gathered in Berlin last September for the fifth international conference of the Public Communication of Science and Technology (PCST) network. The network brings together science publicists, typically working with larger research agencies or sponsors, and analysts and theorists who study the processes and problems of communicating scientific information to wider publics.

Among the theorists, Professor Bernard Schiele, of the University of Quebec, Montréal, presented a brief but challenging view of the shift taking place in the field of public communication, or public understanding, of science and technology. Where previously governments and their agencies took the lead role, major corporations are now stepping in with comprehensive programmes for promoting science to school students and to the wider public.

Many of the science publicists and science communication analysts associated with the PCST network have a background in science journalism. But there were relatively few currently practising science journalists among the attendance in Berlin. German journalist Wolfgang Goede from the popular science magazine *PM* was one of the rare examples of a science journalist who sought to explain the motives and methods of his work.

There were also presentations on the training of science writers in California (by John Wilkes) and of science journalists in Hungary (by Istvan Palugyai, EUSJA vice-president). But there was considerably more academic analysis of science news than there was public reflection by journalists on the challenges of reporting science.

That may indicate a failure on the part of the PCST network, a reticence on the part of science journalists, or something else. But there are certainly many questions raised by current science journalism which deserve closer examination by practitioners, away from the heat of the newsroom. One such question surfaced last May, towards the end of the conference hosted in Vienna by the Austrian Science and Education

Journalists' Association: Are science journalists too inclined to see themselves as science promoters? Do they tend to see their function primarily as that of relaying science's products to the public?

The common criticism of science reporting from within the scientific community is that journalism distorts science through simplification, dramatisation, sensationalism, or worse. My own analytical work seeks to demonstrate that such criticism is invalidated by the poor awareness of media processes on which it is based. But I have also demonstrated that a similar perspective informs much would-be objective analysis of science reporting, carried out in the name of science communication studies.

By adopting a comparative approach, looking at the reporting of the same scientific material in the news media of several countries, I am trying to draw attention to the many and varied ways of covering science, addressing many and varied publics. The notion that there is one true path is not helpful – in either analytical or practical terms.

Brian Trench
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Science sources in cyberspace

EurekAlert (<http://www.eurekalert.org/>), run by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, is an obvious place to start if you are looking for a reliable collection of science press releases on the Web – and are happy with the American accent. But if you are looking for a European slant, AlphaGalileo (<http://alphagalileo.org/>) could well be the site for you. AlphaGalileo is an internet press service for European science, engineering and technology – a virtual one-stop shop for the scientific media, providing on-line access to press notices, events and scientific resources.

The project is managed by the British Association for the Advancement of Science and funded by UK research councils and the UK government's Office of Science and Technology. Its aim is to facilitate the flow of information from the European scientific community. The service is free to information providers and the media. Since its launch in September 1998 around 500 people have registered with the site and over 400 press releases have been posted.

Although much of the site is open to anyone, only registered contributors may submit material and embargoed releases are restricted to registered journalists. Over the next year AlphaGalileo will develop into a full multilingual service, with e-mail notification for journalists (coming soon), a comprehensive database of briefing material and an image library. AlphaGalileo is designed as an information source for journalists – and does not offer to pay for stories. But other commercial "information dissemination" sites do. If you're looking to sell science stories on the net, read on below.

Alun Roberts, ABSW
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Desperately seeking science writers...

Discovery Channel Online, based in Bethesda, Maryland, US, is seeking freelance writers to contribute short articles for its News Brief area, a relatively new section of its Internet website that publishes breaking science news.

In the six months since Discovery News Brief was introduced, the four-person news team has built a strong network of science writers, most of them in the United States. Now the team is looking overseas to expand that network, with the goal of further broadening the scope of its news from the domestic to the international.

Discovery News Brief is updated once daily with five fresh news stories. The scope of the news is broad; the team tries to present a balanced lineup of developments in all mainstream scientific disciplines, such as archaeology, palaeontology, physics, astronomy, chemistry, genetics and technology.

Discovery Channel Online (<http://www.discovery.com/>) is the Internet division of Discovery Communications Inc. Discovery also owns a flock of international science-based cable television networks, including The Discovery Channel, Animal Planet and The Learning Channel.

Discovery Channel Online, the online magazine, was launched three years ago with the mandate to produce fascinating, fun-to-read stories that present science, history, exploration and news through the lens of Discovery's motto: Discover Your World. The site receives up to 2.5 million hits per day.

Journalists interested in writing for Discovery News Brief should send an introductory letter, CV and writing samples to David_Moran@discovery.com and Lori_Cuthbert@discovery.com.

A word in edgeways...

English litl bi litl

Everyone – even the English – agrees that English spelling is unnecessarily difficult. This step-by-step programme will soon iron out the anomalies. Start by replacing the soft *c* with *s*, and the hard *c* with *k*. Certainly it would klear up konfursion for people in sities all over Europe. Better yet, keyboards could be made with one less letter.

Then get rid of those difikult double letters and silent *e*'s. We kould drop them and kontinu to read and writ as though nothing had hapend. Next replas *th* with *z*, *w* with *v*, and just hav *o* instead of *ou*. Kontinuung zis proses yer after yer, we vud eventuli hav a reli sensibl riten styl.

If ve do zis, soon evrivun vud find it ezi to understand each ozer – and English speling vud improv.

Nina Morgan, ABSW
(viz apologies to Ze Oxford Magazin)

EUSJA Board Members

Planning a journey? Your colleagues in Europe can help

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