

## **InterRidge Education and Outreach for SCOR Meeting**

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By: Kristen M. Kusek, IR E&O Coordinator

### **INTERRIDGE E&O UPDATE**

Since InterRidge established its first E&O coordinator position in 2003, it has made great strides in reaching out to an international suite of media, science and informal learning groups. At center stage is a new program called Science Writer-at-Sea, a hands-on outreach and training program that targets the world's future-storytellers (graduate level science journalists) and marine scientists. Since its successful pilot test in the summer of 2005, this program has attracted the interest of a diverse group of international partners, and is now in the process of seeking long-term funding and other interested partners.

Please see the summary below, which covers all of IR's outreach efforts, including Science Writer-at-Sea, and contact Kristen Kusek, IR's E&O coordinator, for more information ([kristenkusek@aol.com](mailto:kristenkusek@aol.com)).

#### ***Science Writer-at-Sea***

Science Writer-at-Sea is a unique training and outreach program that targets two significant links in the science communication pipeline: the world's future storytellers – graduate-level journalism students – and marine scientists. The basic goals are three-fold: (1) Provide a practical, yet inspiring science journalism 'boot camp' for student writers placed at sea, in labs and in the field, (2) Accomplish education outreach objectives for scientists in a cost-effective way encouraging open dialogue between scientists and journalists; and (3) Boost public understanding of the ocean via the main product: compelling multimedia 'story packages' generated by the immersive experience and featured in a number of national and international museums, magazines, and other websites. With our new partners, the stories generated through Science Writer-at-Sea have the potential to literally reach millions of viewers.

Since our successful pilot test of the Science Writer-at-Sea program (<http://www.interridge.org/sciencewriteratsea/Norway2005/index.html>) last summer, we have formed key partnerships with ASTC (Association of Science-Technology Centers; comprised of 540 museums from 40 countries), *Natural History* magazine (US), *PM* magazine (Germany), and five US-based science journalism graduate programs. We are in the process of attracting more and expanding the international appeal of the program.

We recently submitted a grant to the NOAA Ocean Exploration program, and are actively pursuing other funding opportunities so that the program continues to grow. Should the funding come through, we will offer three immersive training internships in 2007, including a cruise slated for March-April 2007 under the leadership of Roger Searle (University of Durham, UK). Searle's cruise will be the first for the new British research vessel, the RMS James Cook, and will journey to the Mid-Atlantic Ridge (14-16°N). In addition to the Writer-at-Sea experiences, we will host a 2-day workshop at the end of

'07 involving our major partners to more specifically plan the way forward. We are actively looking for other funding and internship possibilities (lab site visits, cruises, expeditions, etc.), and welcome any suggestions.

Since our pilot test, Kusek has presented the program at AGU (2005), and published two relevant articles: one in the UK publication *Teaching Earth Sciences*, the other in *Current: The Journal of Marine Education*. She will present the program at the upcoming GSA meeting in Phila, PA as well (October 23, 2006). If you would like more information about the details of the NOAA proposal – or the plans for the future of the program in general – please contact Kristen.



Science Writer-at-Sea home page.

### ***Oceanography magazine***

InterRidge is sponsoring an entire ridge-focused issue of *Oceanography* magazine that will be published in March 2007 ([www.tos.org](http://www.tos.org)). Sponsors include IR, NSF, NOAA, ChEss, and DeRidge. The issue will feature a spate of ridge-related research topics led by IR's international suite of researchers, including: Mid ocean ridge ecosystems, Biogeography, Mineralization and fluid chemistry, Deep Earth sampling, Mantle flow and magma production, Slow and ultraslow spreading ridges, Hot spot interactions, Back-arc spreading systems, Monitoring and observatories, Vent research technology, Policy issues, Education outreach, Origin of Life and a special feature in honor of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of vent discovery.

### ***AAAS and ESOF***

IR participated in two major international press outreach events in 2006: the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in St. Louis, MO, USA (February), and the EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF) in Munich, Germany (July).

The speakers for the 90-minute scientific session for AAAS were: Edward Baker, Chuck Fisher, Steve Scott and Colin Devey. AAAS attracted at least 5,000 scientists, 1,500 on family science day, and roughly 1,000 journalists.

ESOF included a press conference, 2.5-hour scientific session, showing of the IMAX film "Volcanoes of the Deep Sea" (followed by Q&A session), and a week-long

education outreach exhibit held in conjunction with Germany's national science week. ESOF speakers included: Edward Baker, Chuck Fisher, Antje Boetius, Chris German, Steve Scott and Colin Devey. Outreach leaders included: Kusek, Gretchen Fruh-Green, Monika Bright and Liz Goehring (Ridge 2000). Thanks to all for your active participation in making the event a huge success. ESOF involved more than 2,100 participants from 58 countries, including 485 journalists.

Each of these media outreach events was a success that resulted in a spate of interviews for the panelists and news articles featuring ridge research. While it is challenging to keep track of all of the stories generated by press events as large as AAAS and ESOF, our panelists were interviewed by reporters from media as diverse as Science News, Der Spiegel (Germany), Chemistry World (UK), Marine Technology Reporter, San Diego Union Tribune, Ottawa Citizen, Hannoversche Allgemeine, Natural History magazine, Discovery Channel, a Swedish magazine for children, and many more. An example of a key article that can come of such events is one by Janet Raloff in Science News called "Venting Concerns" (Oct. 7, 2006; Vol. 170, No. 15, p. 232). Please see <http://www.sciencenews.org/articles/20061007/bob7.asp>.



Thanks for Gretchen Fruh-Green, our InterRidge outreach booth at ESOF included remote-controlled submarines – a big hit with kids of all ages. Also pictured are IR scientists and panel speakers, Steve Scott (University of Toronto, Canada), Christopher German (WHOI, IR co-chair for 2007-09, USA), Edward Baker (NOAA, USA) and Gretchen Fruh-Green (ETH, Switzerland).



ESOF Outreach Team (missing from photo: Monika Bright)  
(G. Fruh-Green, K. Kusek, L. Goehring)



The IR booth was popular all week long, sometimes attracting more than 1,000 per day!



InterRidge Press Conference (S. Scott, C. German, E. Baker, C. Fisher)

### *Other*

InterRidge has been invited by ChEss (Census of Marine Life) to participate in a meeting to be held in the Galapagos (June 2007), part of which will honor the 30th anniversary of vent discovery (vents were discovered in 1977). IR will assist in media outreach and general design of the public outreach part of the program.