Description

The World Federation of Science Journalists hosted the World Conference of Science Journalists (WCSJ) in San Francisco, USA from October 26-30 2017. The federation has 9,000 members with a diverse group of journalists specializing in science, health, and technology.

Organized first time in the U.S., the WCSJ 2017 was the result of a collaboration among the World Federation of Science Journalists, the National Association of Science Writer (NASW), and the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing (CASW). In addition, University of California, San Francisco and UC Berkeley were host universities.

The Impact and Importance of WCSJ

The theme of the WCSJ 2017 was “Bridging Science and Societies.” The theme reflected the important role of science communication, bringing to light the fact that science journalists interpret scientific findings for different communities and societies. A special focus of this year’s conference was to encourage, support, and develop science journalism in Latin America.

The WCSJ 2017 was aimed at providing professional development, training, networking, and exposure to world-class science and technology to ensure that scientific news is properly communicated to audiences, regardless of cultural or language barriers. Eight plenary speakers including Thierry Zomuhoun, CEO of the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences addressed the audience. In addition, President Obama’s former science advisor, John P. Holdren, talked about the need for investments and cost-effective interventions against climate change. Susan Desmond-Hellman the current CEO of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was also a plenary speaker. Moreover, the breakout sessions were focused on seven themes, such as *Technology and Innovation*, *Climate and Environment*, and *Issues in Science and Journalism*.

What Comes Next?

The next WCSJ will be organized in 2019. Lausanne has been chosen to host the conference from July 1-5. The conference will be held at the SwissTech Convention Center, on the Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (EPFL) and the University of Lausanne campus. 1000-1200 participants are expected to attend the WCSJ 2019. The motif chosen for the conference is “Reaching new heights in

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science journalism.” The program is expected to allow participants to share best practices in terms of science journalism. It will also allow them to discover and implement new tools. In addition, the program will be built around traditional forms of presenting data, such as mobile databases, creative workshops, tutorials, and brainstorming discussions. WCSJ is held every two years, attracts over a thousand journalists and science communicators, representing over 60 nationalities. Launched by the Swiss Association of Science Journalism (ASJS), it will soon be joined by its sister organizations in Italy and France.

The WCSJ is an important conference highlighting the vital role of science journalism and viable portal for understanding the role of science journalism today. This year’s conference was able to reach more than a thousand journalists with its key message. The 2019 conference is expected to be influential in terms of spreading its key theme.

Category

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daveishan

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