

DIGITAL RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY AND SCIENCE

Promoting public understanding of, and public influence over, science and society

Core Values

Mission

Digital Resources for Community and Science uses online science communication to promote public understanding of, and public influence over, science and society. We do that by making science-based websites and online tools, innovating science and health communication on social media, and working with scientists, health professionals, and health and science organizations to use best practices in these online communications.

Core Values of the Organization

Public understanding, and public influence over, science

We value public understanding of science, and we value democratization of science.

We believe that science and health literacy lead to:

- public use of evidence-based practices
- individual and population health, and improved quality of life, for people, communities, and families
- increased equity in technological advancements
- ability to adapt, as a society, to ongoing environmental change

Science learning, both formal and informal, also supports more effective and strategic public influence over science policy and practice. Democratization of science is fostered when a more science-informed public has more capacity to hear and learn from scientists and, in turn, have their diverse voices heard by scientists.

We value evidence-based approaches in science and health communication as well. We strive to ground our work in the science of science communication.

Cross-disciplinary understanding of science

The need to increase science and health literacy is not limited to the public. Science, as well as science and health communication, benefit from scientists across different fields better understanding science topics that are not their own specialty.

Cross-disciplinary understanding of science is especially important to science and health communication. Credentialed scientists enjoy power to speak on science broadly and can wield distinct influence over sciences that are not their areas of expertise.

Thus, we support science and health communication to professional scientists and health practitioners on disciplines and science topics that are not their area of formal training. Science and health communication to professionals better ensures that the expertise they have in one field is used to support and improve – rather than misused to undermine – evidence-based work and communication efforts of scientists and health practitioners in other fields.

The power, promise, and challenge of the internet for science and health communication

Science communication must encompass science and health professionals both sharing complex evidence-based information in understandable ways and deeply listening to patients, communities, and public opinion. And these two activities need to be done on the internet in new, ground-breaking ways.

At the same time, scientists, health professionals, and science and health organizations need to catch up in implementing established best practices in digital communications in their websites, blogs, and social media pages. Science professionals and organizations then need to go further – and innovate in informal online science learning.

We support new and creative approaches to active outreach in social media and online communities, in support of science- and evidence-based practices. And we believe in organizing for patient, supportive, productive, and strategic science and health communication online.

Science and science communication should lead the information superhighway. Thus, we focus on increasing public and cross-disciplinary understanding of science on the internet.

