

FIRST ITALIAN

CITIZEN SCIENCE

CONFERENCE

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**SETTING PATHS IN CITIZEN SCIENCE:
BIODIVERSITY, NETWORKS, OPEN SCIENCE AND PLATFORMS**

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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HEALTH INFORMATION LITERACY AND RESEARCH: NEW HORIZONS IN THE ITALIAN SCHOOL-WORK ALTERNATING SYSTEM

Scientific communication, training, research, science, society, schools

Disseminating science outside the boundaries of research is a new challenge for the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS, the Italian National Institute of Health). In particular communicating research data on health issues is the first step towards health information literacy to promote life skills and healthy life styles.

To reach this goal the ISS has been engaged in collaborating with schools offering seminars and workshops as well as handbooks and leaflets addressed to young people. Training our future citizens becomes strategic to fill in the gap between science and society increasing students' interest in health sciences and providing them tools to gain awareness on responsible healthy behaviours.

In Italy the Law 107/2015 introduced the school-work alternating system, which requires students from 16-18 years of age to spend a period of time at workplace, as a way to implement the training courses and promote student orientation. This has offered the researchers of the ISS the opportunity to host students in laboratories and to make them aware of the value of health research through practical activities. Using strategies, tools and languages that can be easily understood by lay people, the ISS experts have developed science communication skills to catch students' attention on both science and health as part of their research commitment. In 2016-2017, over 200 ISS experts designed 50 training modules with more than 13,500 hours of activity within four public health research areas: environment; biology; prevention; communication. Thirteen schools participated in the project and 260 students attended the modules.

A very positive feedback was given by both students and teachers, who appreciated the ISS high quality scientific contents and to the multidisciplinary approach to scientific research. Both these aspects allow integrating scientific and social-cultural knowledge to improve science literacy for a win-win agreement between science and society.

The chance of the school-work alternating system can help in looking at research in a new way towards reaching the goal of a citizen science.

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