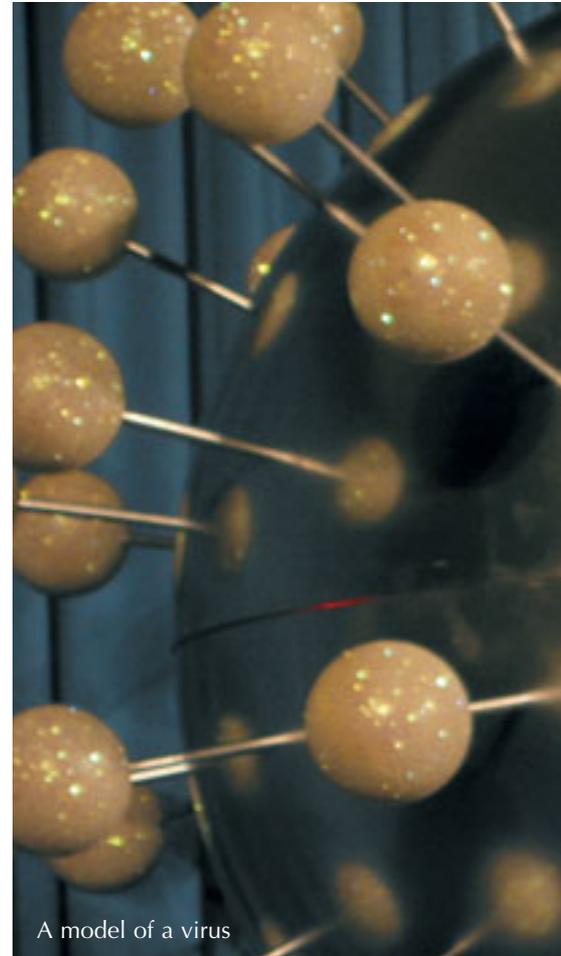


Science teachers take centre stage

Would you know how to turn a bucket into a seismograph, how to make a scale model of a DNA double helix from cans and bottles, or how to simulate a human eye with the help of a shampoo bottle?

Barbara Warmbein from the European Space Agency in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, finds out.



A model of a virus

More than 500 science teachers from 29 European countries left with hundreds of new ideas for their classroom after a week of experiments, shows and workshops at Science on Stage at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, in Geneva, Switzerland. They are probably trying them out in the classroom right now.

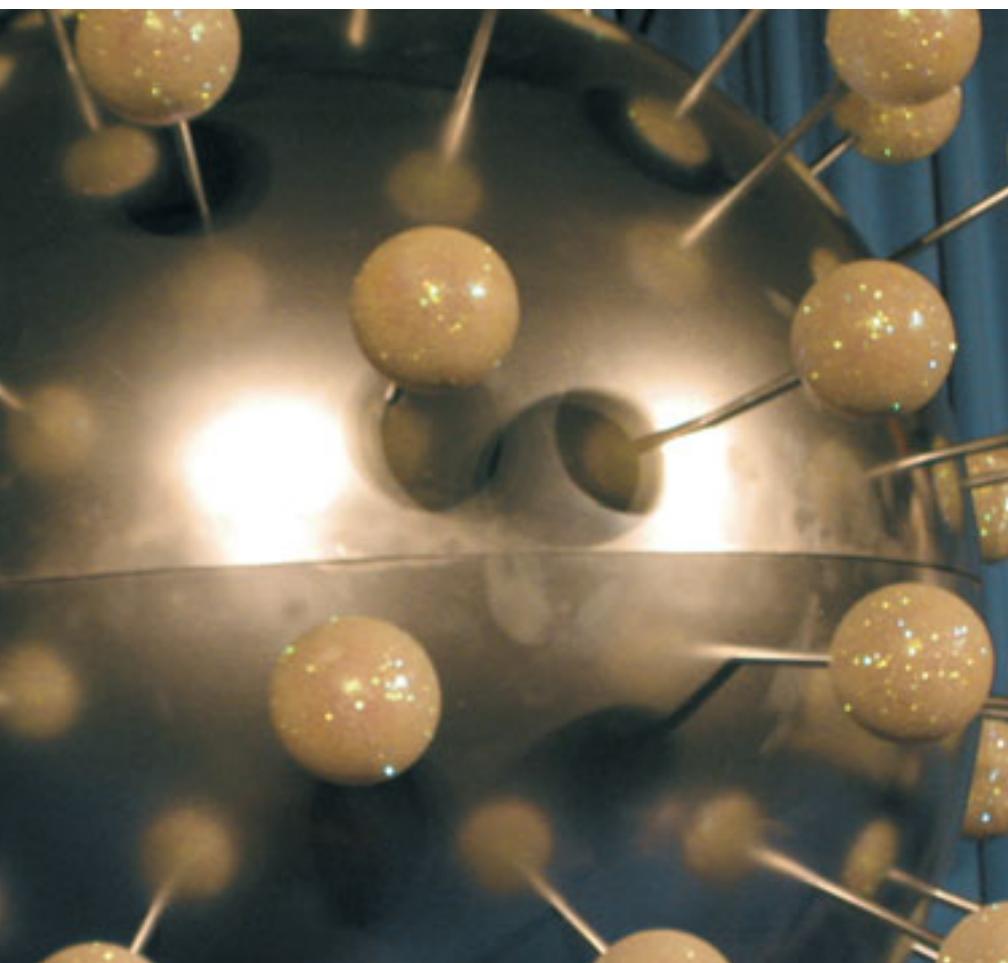


Author,
Barbara Warmbein

Science on Stage is the follow-up project to Physics on Stage, a science teaching festival organised by the seven research organisations of the EIROforum and supported by the European Commission. Whereas the first three events concentrated on making physics teaching more attractive, the festival now includes biology,

chemistry and mathematics. Its formula hasn't changed, however. The heart and soul of the five-day festival is the science teaching fair, a big marketplace where every country has a booth and teachers can spend all day showing their experiments and projects and being inspired by their colleagues. They also meet in workshops to discuss trends in science teaching, to learn more about current research topics or to exchange ideas for school projects, and every day there are performances and presentations that approach science from a theatrical, artistic point of view.

"This is wonderful," says Melanie Sondershaus, a teacher from Germany who came to Geneva to present her interdisciplinary project on Einstein. "Five days are not enough to see



Above: German presentation: SOS the giants are coming!

Below: The Italian performance 'Elements: a magic chemical show'

everything!" A Romanian colleague agrees: "It's a great opportunity to meet other teachers and be inspired." Science on Stage had themed days ranging from Space and Astronomy Day, Einstein Day and Life Sciences Day, to Sustainability Day and Technology and Science Day. Many countries organised their booths accordingly, and at the end of each day science journalist Myc Riggulsford featured the most inspiring projects on a demonstration stage to wrap up the day's theme in an hour-long show.

An international jury selected the most inspiring projects for the European Science Teaching Awards. Seven teachers received prizes donated by one of the seven EIROforum organisations, consisting of site visits, equipment or book tokens. Additionally,

there were four cash prizes – money that will go into developing the project further and making it more widely known. See 'Space balloons, mouse-traps and earthquakes: it's Science on Stage!' on page 8 for details of the award-winning projects.

The next Science on Stage international festival will take place in Grenoble, France, from 2-6 April 2007: www.scienceonstage.net

