

# Science: on stage and in action

In the year 2106, Earth is facing a crisis: it no longer rains. 22nd-century scientists Kara and Bering travel back to 2011 to carry out experiments on the nature of water. With help from the audience, can they save our planet?



Image courtesy of Wolfgang Gollub

**Andrew Brown** reviews the latest Science on Stage event in Spain: *Ciencia en Acción*.

**S**cience on Stage is a network of local, national and international events for teachers, initially launched in 1999 by EIROforum, the publisher of *Science in School* (see Hayes, 2009). Currently, twelve years later, teachers in 27 European countries are participating in national events, vying to earn their places in the eighth international science teaching festival<sup>w1</sup>, to be held in April 2013.

## SCIENCE ON STAGE EUROPE

### **Ciencia en Acción**

More than 1000 teachers and students took part in this year's Science on Stage event in Spain: *Ciencia en Acción*<sup>w2</sup>, which took place on 7-9 October in the Parc Tecnologic Cientific I Agroalimentari de Lleida. Participants came not only from Spain but also from Portugal and Spanish-speaking South American countries; there was even a guest delegation from Italy.

It was not only teachers and their students who were fascinated by the range of science on offer: on one day alone, more than 12 000 people flocked to *Ciencia en Acción*, and the event was widely reported on television and radio and in newspapers. The many visitors were able to try out hands-

on activities from 130 school science projects.

Some visitors test-drove an electric car that was designed and built by students and teachers from the secondary school IES Caparrella in Lleida. The car is perfect for some disabled people, as it requires only one foot to operate the pedals. In the 'Elements Market' – a huge periodic table – participants were challenged to classify materials according to their elemental composition.

But *Ciencia en Acción* does more than just organise the science festival: it also runs teacher-training courses, produces educational materials – available on the *Ciencia en Acción* website and on YouTube – and

Visitors enjoying a ride in an electric car made by teachers and students from school IES Caparrella in Lleida



Image courtesy of Wolfgang Collub

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Image courtesy of Ciencia en Acción



The Elements Market

co-ordinates a network of teachers that offer their expertise to schools, university fairs and other scientific events. To find out more, visit the website<sup>w2</sup>.

### Attending the international festival

At each national Science on Stage event, a delegation of teachers is selected to represent their country at the Science on Stage international teaching festival on 25-28 April 2013, in Stubice-Frankfurt (Oder) on the Polish-German border. During the festival, 350 teachers from 27 countries will share their most innovative teaching ideas in workshops, on-stage performances and the teaching fair.

Participation is free for the delegates. For other science teachers, there will be a limited number of places for which a registration fee will be charged. See the Science on Stage Europe website<sup>w1</sup> for details.

### Reference

Hayes E (2009) Science on Stage: heading for a country near you. *Science in School* 13: 2-3. [www.scienceinschool.org/2009/issue13/sons](http://www.scienceinschool.org/2009/issue13/sons)

### Web references

- w1 – To find out more about Science on Stage Europe and to contact your national organisers, see: [www.science-on-stage.eu](http://www.science-on-stage.eu)
- w2 – To learn more about Ciencia en Acción and view photos and videos of all past events, see: [www.cienciaenaccion.org](http://www.cienciaenaccion.org)

### Resources

After each of the previous international Science on Stage festivals (and the Physics on Stage festivals that preceded them), the Irish delegates produced a book describing how to carry out their favourite experiments in the festival. These books can be downloaded free of charge

from the Science on Stage Ireland website: [www.scienceonstage.ie/resources.html](http://www.scienceonstage.ie/resources.html)

They have also produced 50 videos of their favourite science teaching ideas and demonstrations from the previous international teaching festivals. See: [www.scienceonstage.ie](http://www.scienceonstage.ie)

The organisers of Science on Stage Germany have produced a publication describing some of their favourite projects from the 2011 Science on Stage international teaching festival. It can be downloaded here: <http://www.science-on-stage.de/?p=296&l=en>

To browse all other *Science in School* articles about Science on Stage, see: [www.scienceinschool.org/sons](http://www.scienceinschool.org/sons)



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