



DISC scicomm workshop Manchester

1. What are the Barriers to reaching BME groups

- Not knowing how to build trust
- Matching organisational needs with those of the community – not knowing how to do this
- Getting over the images of science that have been portrayed in the media/museums
- Perception of science is generally negative
- Restrictive funding options and opportunities
- Not knowing where to start
- Not knowing the target audience
 - having limited market intelligence
 - not knowing where to find this information
 - making assumptions about groups (e.g. assuming everyone has access to the internet)
- Language barriers
- Staff/organisational culture
 - do not have the right skills
 - profile of scicomm staff is generally white middle class
 - Not knowing who the right contacts are
 - Afraid of losing current audience
 - Not knowing why we are communicating to BME's
 - Not having the infrastructure to support enough outreach workers
- Moving on from 'fun experiences' to more meaningful activities, appropriate follow up work. There is too much segregation that does not tie in experiences with parents and schools
- Lack of planning
- Alienating adults
 - by only advertising traditional young peoples activities
 - venues
- Charging (some organisations have to do it)

2. How do we overcome these barriers

After prioritisation of the barriers listed above, four points were chosen to be examined further. Groups were asked to consider ways in which the science communication community could work to overcome these barriers and identify areas where DISC could play a role.

- a) Organisational structure
- b) Perception of science
- c) Target audience information
- d) Liking up activities and appropriate follow up

a) Organisational structure

Diversify staff through recruitment schemes

- Use a quota system
- Actively encourage BME into your organisation

- Develop the staff you have through ongoing professional development

RECOMMENDATION - DISC to produce a list of BME media to advertise jobs in

b) Perceptions of science

Influencing how science is reported in the media

- Raising the profile of BME scientists in the media
- Working with educational bodies such as Association for Science Education (ASE), Science and Engineering Ambassadors Scheme (SEAS), Nuffield Foundation to help make science more relevant for BME groups
- Reward and recognition for scientists who communicate well, particularly with BMEs
- Linking science into more relevant cultural activities e.g. film
- Museums often have poor representation of BME contribution to history of science, make sure new galleries do not make the same mistakes. No need to rewrite history, just put into a social context that highlights the work of all involved.

RECOMMENDATION – DISC to work with science education organisations to encourage change in representation of BMEs in educational material

RECOMMENDATION – DISC to work with Science Media Centre to identify BME scientists who can talk to the media and encourage the media to use them

RECOMMENDATION – DISC to produce document of achievements of BME in history of science

c) Target audience information

- Lack of core funding and relevant funding to collate this information. Chicken and egg syndrome, need the information to do the project, but need the project to get the information
- unaware of the audiences we are missing
- Need more outreach workers within our own organisation - possibility for joint funding to have one outreach worker who works with a few organisations in one region?
- We can learn from commercial organisation who are better at reaching diverse audiences

RECOMMENDATION – DISC to highlight this to policy makers

RECOMMENDATION – DISC to explore good practice of commercial organisations

d) Linking up activities

- Always plan an exit strategy for your attendees. Build on partnerships regionally and nationally, signpost attendees to these at the end of an event.
- Share good practice within and outside of scicomm, learn from the arts
- Show breadth of different careers that involve science
- Promote more sharing of evaluation

RECOMMENDATION – DISC to produce a list of 'exciting careers e.g. sports science

RECOMMENDATION – DISC to encourage other organisations to share their information