



Umeå universitet

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Communication Researcher's Role(s) in Science and Environmental Communication

Pre-IECA conference: International workshop organised by the Science and Environment Communication Section, ECREA (<http://www.ecrea.eu/divisions/section/id/16> and <http://www.scienv-com.eu>) and **Department of Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, Sweden** (<http://www.kultmed.umu.se>).

Where: **Uppsala, Sweden** When: **6 June 2013**

The purpose of this workshop is to focus on the role of the communication researcher in science and environmental projects. This type of (self)reflection is a much needed, yet on the whole overlooked or at least not sufficiently acknowledged activity among our research community. And this even if the position(s) of communication researchers often are complex and contradictory. Many science-related projects for example suggest that the main problem (for instance regarding implementation of new technologies), is that the public is uninformed and needs education. The role of the communication researcher therefore becomes to tackle the 'deficit'. Such approach can, in turn, be problematic seen from a democratic perspective where everybody's view is equally valid or at least seen as legitimate. In environmentally related projects, on the other hand, communication researchers are themselves often motivated by a will to change or to improve actual situations (for people and the environment), if not to solve practical problems. Sometimes the work involves initiating communication campaigns to raise awareness about an urgent environmental issue or attempts to influence people's behaviour, for example. But how to decide what the best way forward is and how do you combine the analytical task with practical work to solve the very same problem? How can the identities of communication scholars as researchers and as advocates be reconciled? What kinds of ethical and

value-related questions do different roles raise? And lastly, to what extent can we expect potential transformative impacts from the specific perspectives, research questions and methods we start from in the framing of our research projects?

In this workshop we want to gather communication researchers with different experiences from the field of science and environmental communication and discuss their different role(s) in projects. We hope to create a space for dialogue, (self)reflection and learning among the participants and to offer an opportunity to deepen the understanding of these vital issues.

Please send a 200 word abstract to Annika Egan Sjölander (annika.egansjolander@kultmed.umu.se), Anabela Carvalho (carvalho@ics.uminho.pt) and Pieter Maesele (Pieter.Maesele@ua.ac.be) by 8 February 2013. Notification of acceptance will be made by February 14, 2013.