

## Scienza Under 18 Isontina: a new approach to science communication in schools, for schools, with schools

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Scienza Under 18 Isontina is a cultural association established in 2010 in Friuli Venezia Giulia to implement a participatory and innovative way of doing and communicating science inside and outside the schools and to provide schools with opportunities for visibility, exchange and cultural growth.

Every year SU 18 Isontina organises various initiatives aimed at schools of all grades, the main one being the Festival "Science under 18 - the scientific knowledge of the school", now in its 13th edition: a context in which students, from kindergarten to secondary school, exhibit their scientific activities in an interactive way (proposing exhibits, videos, posters, theatre performances, lectures, etc.). In this way they test their ability to communicate with visitors: students, teachers, families and general public (Bertini et al. 2011). The Festival is flanked by a student photography contest entitled "Science Shots - The Beauty of an Image", an opportunity to look closely, through a lens, at the world around us.

In addition to the annual Festival, SU18 Isontina organises public meetings and themed days on national and international events with a scientific and environmental theme (Pi Greco Day, M'illumino di Meno, World Ocean Day) scientific training courses for teachers recognised by the Ministry of Education, educational workshops in schools and fieldwork activities on the nearby coastline.

Science Under 18 Isontina is part of the National Network Science Under 18, which counts nine territorial centres in various Italian regions, each of which organises an annual festival and other science communication initiatives for schools.

Participation in these initiatives contributes to improving students' preparation, to approaching science with critical thinking, to tackling concrete problems with a correct methodological approach (Cigada et al. 2007), to enhancing the ability to apply the knowledge acquired at school to different fields and to developing interest in pursuing scientific studies, also with a view to future employment.

References:

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