
NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK 2017

THEME:

“Advancing Science Tourism”

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT:

- To advance **Science Tourism** during the 2017 edition of the National Science Week (NSW).
- To provide a framework and examples of types of activities that could be hosted, organised and facilitated during the focus week.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) established a national campaign to promote public awareness of and engagement with science, technology and innovation (STI). The primary goal of this campaign is to promote science and technology literacy, as well as their pivotal role in addressing issues affecting people. Initiatives that are part of the DST’s campaign include the flagship mass participation event called the National Science Week (NSW) that takes place in August. NSW is an annual countrywide celebration of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and innovation (STEMI), where various stakeholders, role players and interested groups conduct activities that promote general awareness of the value of STEMI to people’s daily lives.

DST as the custodian of the NSW, annually selects a theme. The theme for a particular year is communicated to the stakeholders and the society in the build-up and during the focus week. For 2017, the NSW theme is “*Advancing Science Tourism.*”

SCIENCE TOURISM

Science Tourism is a travel topic grouping scientific attractions. It covers interests in visiting and exploring scientific landmarks, including museums, research facilities (and laboratories), observatories, nature reserves, science centres and institutions of higher learning among others. *Science or scientific tourism* has been conceptualized by some as travel by researchers, academics and higher degree students, in order to

conduct research [1]. This narrow definition has been broadened to encompass tourism offerings involving participation by the lay person (general public) in expeditions, excavations and other scientific activities [2]. It has also been termed “*knowledge-oriented tourism*” [3], as the tourist makes a contribution to academic scholarship/research, as well as potentially becoming more informed about scientific issues and principles, and a potential support base for future work. Young people should learn about this world the way they learn about the culture of the place where they go on tour. They also should know that the world of science is a part of the whole.

Science Tours - should be viewed as more than just the sightseeing, but educational filled with activities that include lectures, workshops, experiments, archive or field research. It is very important that the knowledge that the visitors obtain during the Science Tour is transmitted by those who create this knowledge immediately [4].

POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION

Towards the development of activities for NSW 2017, potential service providers could align their plans to the following SUB-THEMES:

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| TOURISM: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">aligned to 2017 as UNESCO’s International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (#IY2017) |
| AWARENESS: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">to raise awareness of the existence of science within the South African tourism mixto attracting interest in research facilities |
| SCIENTIFIC CULTURE: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">rebranding science as fashionable and enjoyableto ensure that the society appreciates and supports science and scientific literacy.to explore new horizons in science |
| PROFILE: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">to profile South African science and science achievements domestically and internationally, demonstrating its contribution to national development and global science, thereby enhancing its public standing [5] |
| PARTNERSHIP: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">to catalyse global/local solidarity for science tourism. |
| PROSPERITY: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">to grow a strong, inclusive & transformative economy. |

INVOLVEMENT OF TARGET PARTICIPANTS

In order to accommodate more public participation in the NSW activities, service providers are encouraged to be creative and develop other ways of celebrating the NSW. Among other participants, are the following [6]:

Theme: NSW 2017 – Advancing Science Tourism

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| Higher education institutions: | Scientists in academia are encouraged to organize seminars, workshops and public lectures focusing on topics of their choice that are related to the theme or sub-themes of the NSW 2017. The institutions can invite local school learners to tour their facilities (laboratories, library and lecture halls). |
| National science councils | Science councils should create public awareness about their role in STI and a platform for science communication to the society. It is believed that many South Africans are less informed about the relevance of these institutions to their daily lives. |
| National Research Facilities | The facilities will make use of their existing structure that coordinates overall advancement of science and technology within the National Research Foundation. |
| Science centres | Science centres should organise activities that promote the STI to the people as part of their annual plan. |
| Natural history museums | The objectives of the NSW will be enhanced by using existing education, public and outreach programmes at the museums. |
| Interpretation centres | World heritage sites will use their fun approaches to relate stories of the evolution of life and other related topics which they have geographic advantage on. |
| Libraries | Libraries can set up exhibitions at their foyers and distribute the NSW material to their visitors. Public lectures, movies and related activities can be organised for the public. |
| Industries | Technology and innovation-based industries could discuss how they intend to contribute to green growth and green innovation through seminars and demonstrations. |
| Media | Media houses could come up with shows that are dedicated to the NSW to offer the public and professionals an opportunity to share their views on STI matters through talk shows. |

Furthermore, service providers are encouraged to profile career opportunities in general as well as those which address the NSW 2017 theme.

REFERENCES:

- [1] Laarman, J. G. and Perdue, R. R. (1989) *ibid*.
- [2] Cousins, J. A.. (2007) *ibid*.; Ilyina, L. and Mieczkowski, Z. (1992) *ibid*.; Jun, L., Yuansheng, C., Shengkui, C., Yiyi, J. and Deli, Q. (2008) *ibid*.
- [3] Ilyina, L. and Mieczkowski, Z. (1992) *ibid*
- [4] http://www.milset.org/en/activities/science_tourism.html
- [5] DST's Science Engagement Strategy
- [6] National Science Week Implementation Strategy (2013 – 2017)