



RESEARCH & INNOVATION HORIZON 2020

European Researchers'Night

FINAL REPORT of the ACTION

Mono & multi-beneficiaries / MSC / SMEs
Excluding ERC/ERANET/PCP

Grant Agreement number: 633310

Action acronym: VOLCANOES' NIGHT III

Action title: Volcanoes Night III – Researchers' Night of the Canary Islands

Type of the action: Support action

Sub-action (if applicable): N.A.

Period covered: 1st May 2014 - 1st January 2016

Start date of the action: 1st May 2014

Duration of the action: 20 months

Date of submission:

Version: 1

Action website¹ address: www.nochedevolcanes.es

The report is elaborated on the basis of the:

- **Original Grant agreement**

Final technical report

¹ The home page of the website should contain the European flag which are available in electronic format at the Europa website (European flag: http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/emblem/index_en.htm) and the Horizon 2020 programme name.

I. Overview of the results of the action as well as their exploitation and dissemination

Quantitative data

- Over 20.000 visitors during the 2 events;
- The awareness campaign estimated to have reached virtually the entire population of the Canary archipelago (2 million people) and, in 2015, around 150.000 people in Ciudad Real province and Olot;
- About. 200 different activities offered during the two events;
- 91 researchers directly involved in the activities, out of which:
 - 3 researchers having benefitted from Marie Curie scheme;
 - 5 researchers having benefitted from support under FP 7/HORIZON 2020;
- Altogether 4 European corners organised with about. 2.700 visitors.

Qualitative data

- General impact of the action:
 - On public image of researchers and their job:
 - In 2015, more than two-third (78,51 %) of the survey responders (and 75,92% of those who attended RN for the first time) declared that their initial belief about the work of scientists had improved;
 - This consists of a significant improvement compared to 2014, when "only" 61,85 % of the responders stated the same;
 - A very similar proportion, 6,59 % (in 2014: 6,15%) of the repliers stated that their opinion had changed after participating in the event;
 - Such modification is stated as resulting from:
 - A better information about the scientists' work thanks through the events;
 - A "less serious" perception of scientists than this they sued to have prior to their participation;
 - A conviction that more should be invested in science in general;
 - Their "fear for science" diminished after their participation;
 - Most of the responders whose opinion remained the same (in 2015: 14,9%) stated that they had known and or had had a positive opinion about the work scientists already before the event;

- On public image of science (geosciences in particular) and its potential impact on citizens' daily lives:
 - In 2015, around two-third of the survey responders (70,72 %) in 2014, and 61,47% of the in-situ survey responders stated that their participation in Volcanoes Night III had developed their interest in geosciences and volcanology much (4) or very much (5) on a 1-5 scale.

II. Conclusions of the action

The main objectives of the action consisted of enhancing public recognition of researchers and their work, of its impact on citizens' daily lives and well-being, as well as of showcasing the researchers as ordinary people whose work is fascinating and fun, in such a way to stimulate young people's interest for science and science careers. In this context, the project relied on the fascination and respect that volcanoes always exerted towards the public.

Beyond the objectives referred to above, the project consequently also aimed at addressing this issue and bridging the gap between science and the general public of different ages, and also intended to provide first-hand information about volcanoes and geo-scientific topics to improve the understanding of the volcanoes' world surrounding the inhabitants of the islands.

Amongst the numerous activities offered to the attendees, after several excursions allowing the participants to "live" the life of a volcanologist, presentations, hands-on experiments, shows, science cafés, movie theatre, live connections with scientists from all over the world, kids' programme, poster session, contest rewarding ceremonies, live music, European Corner and similar actions were organised, addressing the public at large with a strong focus on kids and young people.

Achievement of the objectives pursued

The action has reached the objectives pursued.

Improvements and/or modifications with a view to future similar events

- Activities:
- More hands-on experiments: these activities should be designed for direct engagement with the public so that participants can touch the equipments, and can participate in the experiments themselves (as opposed to being simple observers);
- This could be managed by launching an in-house "Call for Experiments" within the participating academic departments and research institutes to select research teams, whose experiments are worthy to be presented to a greater audience;

- Young researchers and PhDs (including former and present Marie Curie fellows) could be especially interested in this opportunity of public outreach;
- Edutaining aspects:
 - It would be desirable to engage with the public early on and select the most attractive entertainment options together with them;
 - This proves to be especially important in case of young people (teenagers) and kids;
 - The creation of an edutainment portfolio with a good potential for creating a good turnout could be created with the help of community voting tools;
- Scientific talks and presentations:
 - Scientific talks (“charlas”) should be kept to a minimum, with the exception of "My Day" presentations which raise interest when combining science with personal dimension of the scientist doing the work;
 - Scientific talks should only be allowed when implying interaction with the public (e.g. combined with experiments, quiz, real-time survey, etc);
- Scope of activities:
 - Increasing the scope of activities: focusing only on geosciences and volcanology can become restrictive after organising the Night in four consecutive years;
 - Expanding the scope with other popular scientific areas, such as astronomy or robotics would allow mobilising a broader public community, who may not be interested in volcanology;
 - Focusing on additional scientific disciplines would also allow to attract new researchers with fresh ideas and perspectives, and having access to more research facilities that could be of public interest;
- Integrating sports & outdoors activities and competitions:
 - Science in sports (physics, biochemistry, etc) can be explained in a fun way;
 - Also, many scientists chase sports themselves, which can be another interface between researchers and the public;
 - Outdoor activities, such as excursions should be organised on a more extensive level, primarily as a family programme.

III. Socio-economic impact of the action

During its four years of existence Volcanoes Night mobilised a wide range of actors including scientific organisations, regional and governmental authorities and of course the public. Volcanoes Night III, which was organised in two consecutive years (2014, 2015) had the broadest geographical coverage since the start of the project. Over 2 million people are estimated to have been reached during the 2014/2015 awareness campaign and about 21.000 visitors took part in the activities offered.

In the final two years links were established with 8 professional organisations from Spain, 20 professional organisations internationally, 15 Spanish municipalities and governmental institutions, 30 associations and non-profit agencies as well as 25 companies and enterprises. The high-level of media attention achieved allows expectations that the project could generate further synergies and a long-lasting positive impact on the recognition of the work of geoscientists in citizens' everyday life.

On several occasions companies, including small and medium ones (SMEs) were involved in the project activities. The involvement of SMEs is important, because they can act as a bridge between academic research (main scope of Volcanoes' Night) and the market, taking up innovations, developing new products and services around geoscience, which can eventually support economic growth and employment on the Canary islands.

Altogether Marie Curie funding for Volcanoes Night III and its predecessors have provided substantial visibility for this initiative and created the much needed links between the (geo)scientific community, the public and decision-makers, which could be a good basis for the exploitation of results after the EU-funded period.

Some actions could allow a more permanent impact of the project, such as:

- Keeping the website operational for at least a 5 years-period as a genuine source of information on using geosciences to raise interest for science and technology;
- Maintaining a basic level of project service (project Help-desk, inquiries, press corner, etc);
- Converting some of the results into electronic training materials for public-access use;
- Informing professional bodies internationally about the success and best practices established under Volcanoes' Night;
- Publishing "Anniversary Publications" i.e. in every September (for a 5 years-period) to commemorate the success of Volcanoes' Night;
- Publishing the outcomes of Volcanoes' Night in national/international scientific journals and magazines;

Altogether a small investment into keeping the „heritage" of Volcanoes' Night alive after project closure could have very high returns on the impact of future dissemination, especially in reaching an even broader audience that may not have been reached so far.

Expanding the scope with popular scientific areas, such as astronomy or robotics would allow mobilising a broader public community, who may not be interested only in volcanology. Focusing on additional scientific disciplines would also allow bringing in new researchers with fresh ideas and allowing access to more research facilities, which altogether, would make the Night even more fascinating.

Worth noting that the official project website at <http://www.nochedevolcanes.es/> will be maintained for a period of at least 5 years after project closure.