

PRESS RELEASE

SISSA Master's course in the Science Communication: over 90% find work

New figures reveal a profession in which women are well represented



Trieste, 16 April 2021

More than 94% of those who gained the “Franco Pratico” Master’s Degree in Science Communication (MCS) from SISSA – Scuola Internazionale Superiore di Studi Avanzati – in the decade 2009/2019 are currently employed. This is one of the most significant results of a survey by the independent Institute Ixè of the employment rate of Master’s graduates of the school, Europe’s first in this sector.

For nearly thirty years, MCS has run an innovative educational programme, increasingly focused on digital transition, for training professionals capable of adapting to different work environments. It is doing this with great success, according to recent research. Three out of four respondents are employed in science communication, particularly the women, at 80% compared to 59% of the men. For around half of the total it is a full time job, a part time or occasional occupation for the rest.

The activity in science communication is concentrated mainly in the growing area of institutional communication, scientific journalism (often referred to as a secondary activity) and publishing. Employment in education and multimedia is also rising slightly while social media communication is seeing strong growth.

"Obviously we are very pleased with these results", says MCS director Nico Pitrelli. "Not just because of the numbers, but also because they confirm the value of our teaching model, which is not aimed at training technicians specialised in a specific sector, but rather 'explorers' of the interface between science and society, equipped with multidisciplinary cultural skills, critical thinking powers and an ability to innovate. This model enables our students to work at a high level in the communication production chain and clearly is also successful in professional terms."

MCS strengths

The main strengths of the training course include the cultural enrichment, the creation of a vast network of contacts and the quality of training. It is clear that the Master's course represents a professional and personal turning point, with students forming intense relationships among themselves and with the School's teachers and staff. "What the course gave me and left me with is beyond words" was the verdict of one of those who completed it.

Such a comment is consistent with the general view of MCS, which receives a favourable rating from almost all (96%) of its students, averaging a grade of 8.3 out of 10, higher than in the two previous surveys. According to ex-students, the Masters degree was a decisive factor in securing employment - more than in the in the past - and the acquired skills were relevant to their current jobs.

The survey

The research carried out by the independent agency Ixè included a quantitative phase, with a semi-structured questionnaire directed at 11 classes, and a qualitative phase involving telephone interviews with a number of former students

and employers. The results were compared with those obtained in 2017 and 2015.

MCS and its students

The MCS course includes about 500 hours of lessons delivered over a single year, in which frontal teaching is combined with individual exercises, workshops, group work, role-playing, brain-storming, case studies and real problem solving. Applications for the next academic year will be invited shortly. More information will soon be available at <https://mcs.sissa.it>.

Most students enrolled on the Master's course have a scientific background, mainly in physics, biology and biotechnology. Roughly one in three has a humanities education. Over 60% are women. In general, students take the Master's course after a five-year degree or, in 20% of cases, after a doctorate. Recent years have seen an increase in the number of students with a 3-year degree.

USEFUL LINK

Report on quantitative survey (in Italian): <https://bit.ly/2RAP3cF>
Report qualitative survey (in Italian): <https://bit.ly/3slxc6o>

IMAGE

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