

Statement on Science

Ecsite is the European network that links science centres and museums and other science communication institutions across Europe. Science centres and museums play a crucial role in presenting major issues of our times related to the technological and natural world, our position within it and our impact upon it. They are leading institutions for encouraging engagement and dialogue between the scientific community and society as a whole.

The world needs to enhance the scientific culture of its citizens. This is our new frontier for building a cultural dimension and for building a democratic society.

Ecsite members promote the advancement of knowledge and human endeavour based on scientific principles. We advocate that science is the most successful way of describing and understanding the phenomena of the world around us.

Science centres and museums rely on the objective use of scientific evidence to present science. They encourage an understanding of the world based on sound theory which is internally consistent and which has been tested and validated by the accumulation of empirical evidence from different sources. They recognize that science is based on a process of peer review where research findings are published and subjected to scientific debate, and where evidence must be repeated, corroborated or otherwise validated through a process which is vigorously maintained by the scientific community.

Statement on Evolution

In recent years, the theory of evolution has drawn criticism from sectors outside of science.

Ecsite asserts that the theory of evolution by natural selection has been thoroughly challenged and tested by vast amounts of accumulated independent empirical verifications in many disciplines and that none has been shown to refute it.

Ecsite's policy for public engagement is to present the theory of evolution as the best explanation for the ongoing generation of diversity of life on Earth.

Ecsite strongly endorses the teaching of the theory of evolution in European schools as a core part of the science curriculum and we urge that views such as creationism and intelligent design should not be taught as science.

Evolution is a scientific theory based on evidence. Religious beliefs fall outside the realm of science, since they are a matter of faith, not of proof. While we encourage freedom of speech and the need for a broad cultural debate in our societies, religious beliefs should not be brought into a scientific debate as scientific evidence. Science centres and museums may promote a cultural exchange between various stakeholders but they will always refer to science in their programmes and contents.