



Why Communicate

Samuel Illingworth

Manchester Metropolitan University, School of Research, Enterprise & Innovation, Faculty of Science & Engineering,
Manchester, United Kingdom (s.illingworth@mmu.ac.uk)

“Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can’t, and the other half who have nothing to say and keep on saying it.”

- Robert Frost

In this age of digital soap boxes and half-truths, the importance of geoscientists as communicators cannot be underestimated, nor has there been a more important time for researchers to stand up and demand to be heard. So why is there still such an overwhelming public perception that scientists are poor communicators, and what can we do to change this?

In this work I will present an overview of a number of successful initiatives that have been developed at Manchester Metropolitan University, and beyond, to ensure that science is communicated to a large variety of people, from policy makers to members of the local community.

I will also present an overview of the emerging field of Science Communication, how it has changed in the past few decades from a one-way diatribe to a two-way discussion, and how this represents a possible new direction and career path for geoscientists.

Anne Roe, the noted American psychologist, told us, “nothing in science has any value to society if it is not communicated.” As geoscientists, we have a professional and moral obligation to ensure that we not only research the facts, but that we also present them in an informative and engaging manner, so that the rest of humanity can benefit from the fruits of our labour.