



Bringing meteorology to summer Science Camp in Finland

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Heureka Science Center (<https://www.heureka.fi/>) in Vantaa Finland has promoted “The Joy of Discovery” since 1989. In Finland, Heureka has an important role in bringing science closer to the general public, and especially to children and schools. Besides the daily exhibitions running throughout the year, Heureka arranges also every summer a Science Camp for children of ages 7 to 16 (i.e. grades 1 to 9 in the Finnish elementary school system). The Science Camps lasts eight weeks, from early June to early August, during which about a thousand children visit the camp.

In 2018, the Science Camp consists also of meteorology- and climate-related sessions, tailored together with the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI). The co-tailoring relates to an H2020 project iSCAPE, focusing on citizen interactions and science as well as urban air quality, climate and passive control systems. In the Science Camp, the sessions include, for example, the building of simple meteorological observation devices and making meteorological observations, but also building and simulating the local urban climate; into a pre-made cardboard template, representing the local urban neighborhood, the children will adjust and insert natural (i.e. trees, bushes) and non-natural (buildings) elements represented by toy building blocks. In the next phase, this modified neighborhood is transported into an urban climate modeling system (EnviMet) for showing the impact of especially natural elements for the local urban climate.

For the younger children, ages 7 to 12 there are two slightly different sessions. The youngest participants make experiments of water evaporation and the formation of clouds as well as the phenomenon of lightning in the laboratory setting. They also make their own humidity meter that they can take home. Children from ages 10 to 12 year will also be doing their own measurements in the Heureka outdoors area with various meteorological equipment.

This paper introduces the concept of the Heureka Science Camp and describes the importance and benefits of bringing the science closer to the general public and especially to children.