



## **NUCLIO science communication: an ongoing effort to spread the word**

**Jose Saraiva**, Teresa Direitinho, and Rosa Doran

NUCLIO, Lisbon, Portugal ([jose.saraiva@nuclio.net](mailto:jose.saraiva@nuclio.net))

In the early 2000's, a group of astronomers working in Portugal, aware of the deficit in science literacy in the country, decided to create an organization devoted to science communication and outreach. And so, NUCLIO was born. Naturally, the early efforts of this group were focused in the field of astronomy, but soon other fields were included in the endeavour. Through the years, NUCLIO grew and became an important player in the field of education, joining many international projects and creating links with educational institutions all over the world.

Early in its history, NUCLIO created Portal do Astrónomo, a portal with many diverse sections, trying to spread information by translating news, giving space to scientists to talk about their research and fields of interest, answering questions from the public, and using the available technological means to reach its audience. Given the scarcity of Portuguese-language sites disseminating science, the Portal collected large numbers of readers, namely in Brazil.

In recent years, with the advent of PLOAD (Portuguese Language Office of Astronomy for Development), a new need was felt: reaching out to the Portuguese-speaking communities in Africa and elsewhere. Tightening collaboration with other communicators in Brazil and African countries has become a goal for NUCLIO and the Portal. Another goal is becoming more involved in the efforts to make people all over the world aware of the need to protect the planet and its global environment, and of the fact that we all belong to one and the same species, facing a common future.

The current Portal features Space Scoop and other astronomical news translations, but also original contributions in columns such as the Theme of the Month and others, where different science themes are tackled; the target audience is now mainly teachers and students, given the closer ties with this field, and the fact that new groups directed at the general public have come into existence.

We are striving to become ever more inclusive and global (recently we started including English versions of some texts in the Portal), and to take advantage of new tools for communication, like producing webinars and online courses. A new section was recently created where simple astronomical challenges are proposed, demanding some interaction and commitment from the readers.

In the meantime, NUCLIO has also invested in social media, creating connections between the Portal and Facebook, for instance. Thus, the publications in Portal can reach new audiences and in fact help in weaving a close network between the many projects in which NUCLIO is involved and the public.

We feel that in this globalized but increasingly selfish world it is still important to spread information about science, and at the same time consolidate and educate the audience, so that a more informed public can become aware of the role of science and education in reaching a sustainable and solidary society and an environmentally sound planet.