DWIH São Paulo

Science Communication in Transition

Strategies, Responsibilities and Emerging Challenges in Germany and Brazil

26–27 October 2026 | Auditorium, Goethe-Institut, Rua Lisboa 974, São Paulo

Science communication is undergoing profound change. Digital platforms, artificial intelligence, social polarisation and disinformation are reshaping how scientific knowledge is communicated, understood, debated and trusted. At the same time, expectations are growing for researchers and scientific institutions not only to make research accessible, but also to engage with different publics and contribute to informed public debate and decision-making.

Against this backdrop, and as part of the DWIH network's 2026 annual theme *Science for Society*, this German-Brazilian conference will bring together around **80 participants from Germany and Brazil**, including researchers and early-career researchers, science communication professionals, science journalists, representatives of universities and research institutions, funding organisations and policymakers. The event is also aimed at students and other professionals interested in the relationship between science, communication and society.

The conference will explore how science communication is organised and practised in both countries, examine the responsibilities of different actors and the challenges posed by changing information environments, and discuss how science communication can foster dialogue, participation and public trust. Through a combination of panels and interactive formats, it aims to promote mutual learning, share good practices and generate new impulses for science communication in Germany and Brazil.

The event will be held in **English, Portuguese and German.**

Day 1 – Monday, 26 October 2026

Time	Programme
09:30–09:45	**Welcome and introduction**
09:45–10:45	**Keynotes – How Does Science Reach Society? Germany and Brazil in Comparison** **Focus:** How does science enter the public sphere in Germany and Brazil – who communicates, through which channels, for which audiences, and under what institutional conditions? **Speakers:** Benedikt Fecher (Wissenschaft im Dialog - WiD / Science in Dialogue) Sarita Albagli (Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology - IBICT)
10:45–11:15	**Coffee break**
11:15–12:30	**Panel 1 – From Research Findings to Public Debate: Who Decides What Gets Seen?** **Focus:** How does scientific knowledge become publicly relevant – and who decides what becomes visible, understandable and credible?
12:30–13:30	**Lunch break**
13:30–14:30	**Panel 2 – Must Researchers Communicate? Researchers and Universities Between Public Engagement and Responsibility**

	Focus: What can we realistically expect from researchers – and what conditions must universities create so that good science communication does not depend solely on individual commitment?
14:30–15:15	**Workshop I – Science Meets Society: How Would We Communicate?** **Focus:** Mixed groups work on four fictional cases: (1) Health and uncertain evidence (2) Environmental research, local communities and local knowledge (3) AI between benefits and social risks (4) Research entering political controversy.
15:15–15:45	**Coffee break**
15:45–17:00	**Panel 3 – When Facts Are Contested: Who Can We Trust?** **Focus:** What makes scientific knowledge credible when political interests, social identities, platform dynamics and AI shape how science is perceived in public?
17:00–17:45	**Fishbowl – Should Science Take a Stand?** **Focus:** Where does communicating scientific evidence end – and where does social or political positioning begin?
17:45–18:00	**Key takeaways from Day 1**
from 18:30	**Networking dinner (venue tbc)**

Day 2 – Tuesday, 27 October 2026

Time	Programme
09:00–10:00	**Panel 4 – What Works? Quality and Impact in Science Communication** **Focus:** How can the success of science communication be assessed beyond reach, clicks and visibility – and what structural conditions are needed for high-quality science communication?
10:00–10:15	**Coffee break**
10:15–11:45	**Workshop II – Four Practice Labs** **Focus:** Four parallel working groups explore key areas of practice and develop concrete outputs.

Practice lab	Content / output
Lab 1 – Science Communication Is Not a One-Person Job	Structures, roles, training, resources, recognition and protection, including funding organisations. Output: recommendations for institutional support.
Lab 2 – Beyond the Usual Suspects	Reaching and involving different publics: access barriers, dialogue, citizen science, co-creation and local knowledge. Output: criteria for inclusive and participatory communication.
Lab 3 – When Science Becomes Controversial	Uncertainty, disinformation, political appropriation, attacks, crisis communication and AI-manipulated content. Output: a decision framework for difficult situations.
Lab 4 – From Idea to Impact	Goals, target groups, formats, indicators, reach versus impact and evaluation. Output: a concise planning and evaluation checklist.

Time	Programme
11:45–12:30	**Closing plenary – From Discussion to Action**
12:30–12:45	**Closing remarks**
12:45–13:45	**Light lunch and networking**