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What We Mean When We Talk About Science Communication

Carol Lynn Alpert

Co-PI, Center for Integrated Quantum Materials, Harvard
Director, Strategic Projects, Museum of Science



Abstract: For some, “science communication” is about helping non-scientists understand what scientists are doing and what they are finding out. For others, it is about fostering dialogue between scientists and non-scientists in resolving policy questions that benefit from the application of scientific method and the careful vetting of evidence alongside discussion of community values and preferences. But, how often do we think of science communication as the sharing of ideas and the fostering of discussion among scientists themselves, as we do in meetings such as this one? Many of us in the room are here because we have a talent for working across disciplinary boundaries and communicating innovative ideas. What can we do to foster even more productive communication among ourselves, among our students, with industry partners, within our communities, and across the ever-widening diversity of prospective participants in the nation’s science and engineering enterprise?

Brief Biography: Carol Lynn Alpert is director of the Strategic Projects Group at the Museum of Science, Boston (MOS). She co-founded the national Nanoscale Informal Science Education Network, and currently serves as a co-PI of the NSF Science-Technology Center for Integrated Quantum Materials headquartered at Harvard. Alpert is a public engagement practitioner and researcher, writer, and award-winning filmmaker, and has an abiding interest in improving trans-disciplinary science communication. She provided a Research Communication Laboratory at MIT from 2012-2018, and in 2018 launched the first national Quantum Matters™ Science Communication Competition. She is a AAAS Fellow and president-elect of AAAS’s largest section (Y). <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4364-3324>