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ANDRILL educational activities in Italy; progettosmilla.it, a case-study of an interactive project

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In January 2006, the Italian ANDRILL (Antartic Geological Drilling) team selected the project progettosmilla.it and its instructor Matteo Cattadori, a high school teacher to represent Italy in the ANDRILL-ARISE team.

The ARISE (Andrill Research Immersion for Science Educators) comprised a group of teachers from 4 nations (US, New Zealand, Germany and Italy) and is part of the initiative Public and Educational Outreach component of the ANDRILL project. The selected teachers are sent to Antarctica and are actively involved in all stages of the scientific investigation, with the main aim of establishing a bridge between research and the schools in the participating countries.

[Progettosmilla.it](http://progettosmilla.it) was selected to take part in the first edition of ANDRILL-ARISE held at the American Antarctic base of Mc Murdo during the 2006-2007 austral summer. The project makes use of different tools, techniques and forms of communication-education to stimulate the interest and motivation of students, teachers and organizers/trainers in ANDRILL research and polar sciences in general.

Activities are organized and scheduled according to a fixed timetable that cover 2/3 of an academic year and are centered on the site www.progettosmilla.it. This site feature daily reports, as well as online activities and various services for users in Italian schools. Among the online materials, more conventional ones are:

-Summaries of the ANDRILL research and the Antarctic environment; including mul-

timedia (1200 photos, 10 video and audio); resource folders for teachers on 10 different subjects of study; course work for the participating school students.

-ITC-oriented' materials such as: videoconferencing and chat sessions with Antarctica or between classes, blogs, web-quest, animations and interactive teaching.

-Many services are implemented in collaboration with other teachers and allow the ARISE team to perform distant collaborative work between classes of different nations.

The project also envisages at least one follow meeting at each participating school with Mr Cattadori and available ANDRILL researchers, in addition to daily support via e-mail to students and teachers to facilitate knowledge transfer or organise teaching activities, such as visits to research centers/museums, contact with other ANDRILL participants/researchers etc.

Progettosmilla.it involves 60 registered schools across 10 Italian provinces with a total of 1800 students, 70 meetings at schools and 6000 visits per month to the website.

The most important impacts on the local area have been: cooperation with local museums (2 refresher courses for teachers and exhibitions with polar themes), the granting by the Academic Superintendent of the Autonomous Province of Trento of an exemption from normal teaching duties, for the specific task of carrying out the project. Activities, contacts and collaboration with research and national institutions such as the prestigious National Antarctic Museum and the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology have allowed the project to evolve into a new role: as a hub facilitating interaction between researchers, teachers, museum operators etc. promoting a greater synergy between teaching and research conducted in polar geosciences.

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