

N E W S L E T T E R

August 2012

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Dear NSCF members.

Our yearly conference is again at hand. Estonia will host it now for the first time and for me it will be my first trip to that beautiful country.

I have great expectations of the excellent staff of AHHA Science Centre – the conference will be a success.

We have also planned to have an extra NSCF general meeting in Tartu: the subject is a change of NSCF charters. The Board proposes that the Baltic states will be full members of NSCF from now on.

The closing date for registration is 31st August, so hurry up and sign in now!

You can register at:

http://www.ahhaa.ee/en/nscf_annual_conference

And last: I have to apologize you for not having been able to give my full 100 % attention to NSCF work this year. Life tends to put challenges on one's path sometimes.

Last minute info: Eric Jacquemyn has had to cancel his participation in yearly conference due to contemporaneous happening in Technopolis.

Sampo Puoskari
Tietomaa Science Centre
Oulu, Finland

„The Science Centre Survival Kit“ NSCF Annual Conference in Tartu 2012

by Pilvi Kolk, Board member, Science Centre AHHA



AHHA Science Centre is happy to welcome everyone for this year's Annual conference in Tartu. AHHA Science Centre has opened its new building in May 2011. Since then, more than 170 000 visitors have found their way to us. AHHA has been chosen to be the best Estonian Tourist Attraction of the year 2011, the best tourist attraction in Southern - Estonia 2011, our tin plate roof has been chosen the "World's best" and also the unique building is "Tartu's best building of year 2010".

During the conference everyone can experience a magic science show in our building, see the only full-sphere planetarium in the whole world, visit historical castle in Alatskivi and see the world-class science made in Tartu in the past - in Tartu Old Observatory and also the most high-tech science made here now - in Tartu Genome Centre.

Conference theme this year will concentrate on the very core-issues – how can we survive? Economic crises and old buildings, many of us need renovation and larger exhibition-areas, growing part of elderly people in community, rapid development of entertainment and telecommunication-business...

It all comes down to basics - what interests people, what makes them to come to visit a science centre and how to manage with limited sources? Come and discuss your ideas and experiences with international colleagues in beautiful Tartu city in 19-21. September!



The Science Show



AHHA building



The way we are

Estonia – Europe’s best-kept secret

by Annika Vesselov, Project assistant, Science Centre AHHA

There is no place like Paris or Rome, but Europe has many untouched and exciting corners that are comparable with two of those aforementioned big hitters, both in terms of beauty and charm offering something new, different and authentic. One of these Europe’s “best-kept secrets” is Estonia – the smallest of the Baltic countries (only 1,2 mln inhabitants!) that makes its presence with its lovely seaside towns, uncanny country villages along with forests and marshlands, all of which set the scene for discovering many cultural and natural treasures.

Estonians have lived here for almost 6000 years, making the country one of Europe's oldest continuous settlements. Due to the conquest, crusades and occupations, where each country has left their marks on Estonia’s landscape and culture, Estonia nowadays has a little bit of everything. Bringing together the Scandinavian and Slavic influences, with quite a large amount of Germany in it, Estonia can be rightfully called the place where east and west meet. Estonia regained its independence in 1991 during “singing revolution” and since then, a rapid economic and cultural development has not stopped.

Different festivals can be considered as distinctive features of Estonian culture – varying from the National festival of song and dance, which brings together tens of thousands of performers from all over the country, to film festivals such as International Black Nights Film Festival (PÕFF), which has gained recognition from all over Europe, in terms of quality.

It is a country of contrasts – endless tracts of bogs and just as many ancient forests where you can wander around for days without meeting another soul, but at the same time, the country is on the forefront of technological development.

Often called an e-country, the Internet in Estonia is accessible nearly everywhere, even in remote areas far on the countryside. Estonians park their cars or buy bus tickets by mobile phone. Also voting for parliament or local government elections via Internet is not a new thing in Estonia.

Estonia is an attractive and pleasant place to spend your holidays, pass your free time or get down to business.

TARTU –The city of good thoughts!

by Kai Kaljumäe, Executive assistant, AHHA Science Centre

Estonia's scientific and intellectual hub –Tartu lies 200 kilometres southward from the capital, founded in 1030, it is the second largest city of Estonia. Tartu is a home to one of the oldest universities in Northern Europe. Some of its most notable accomplishments originate from medical and natural sciences (e.g. the Estonian Genome Project), or computer sciences (we pride ourselves for being the birthplace of Skype). The recognition of science in Tartu goes well beyond the academic circles - in 2011, the newly opened Science Centre AHHA was named „The (Good) Deed of the Year“ by the inhabitants of the town.

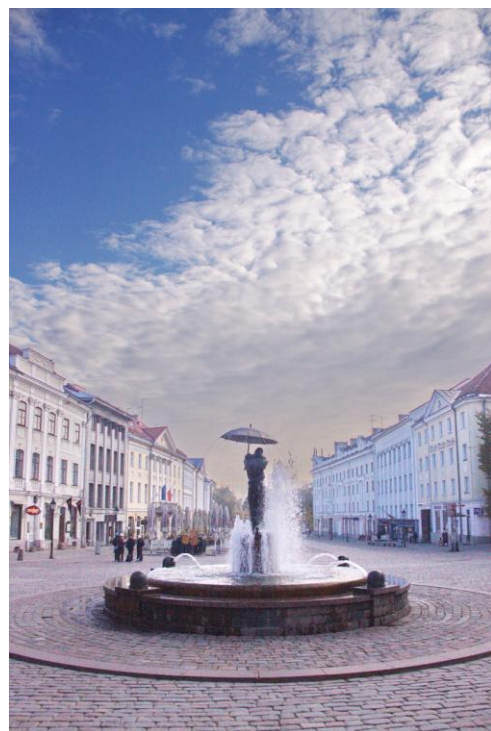
Students contribute to the youthful spirit of the city. Tartu is vibrant and bustling with life, packed with small cafes and concert venues that will offer a little something for everyone. If you have heard of a stereotypical Estonian and prepared to meet a silent and brooding stranger, you will definitely be in for a surprise.

In many ways, Tartu is a town of opposites. Despite being a home to almost 100 000 people, it has a warm and welcoming feel to it. The annual love movies festival Tartuff (taking place in early August on the Town Hall Square and its surroundings) might just be the best example of this notion: while it is bringing together thousands of people, it is happening in a friendly and laid back atmosphere.

It takes literally minutes to get from one place to another and everything is at hand. This pattern of diversity can also be felt when travelling to the surrounding Tartu County.

Even though its regional centre is a rapidly developing, future-oriented city, the countryside offers a unique view to the past of Estonia, and is a reminder of the cultural and historical diversity that Estonia embodies. And all of this takes less than 50 kilometres to happen. You will get a glimpse of an aristocratic touch of Baltic Germans and the unique way of life of the Russian Old Believers, whose ancestors fled from the other side of Lake Peipsi hundreds of years ago.

You will also have a chance to see some of the most picturesque examples of Estonian nature. The Emajõe-Suursoo nature reserve covers a large area of untouched forests and swamps, with a variety of wildlife. And all of this is basically at the doorstep of Tartu.



Tartu city by Jaak Kikas

Programme draft:

(Due some last minute cancellations the programme is not final)

19. September, Wednesday

18.00 Welcome drink in AHHAA
18.30 *Board meeting*
19.00, 19.30, 20.00 Visit to Planetarium

20. September, Thursday

9.00 Registration in AHHAA
9.30 Welcome from NSCF Chairman
Sampo Puoskari and
AHHAA science centre director
10.00 Management „How to run a science centre“
11.00 Exhibitions „How to choose the right subject“
12.00 Lunch in cafeteria „Newton“
13.00 Keynote speech
14.00 Workshops: marketing/management/exhibits
15.00 Coffee break
15.15 Keynote speech 2 Hannes Astok, AHHAA board, city council (confirmed)
16.00-17.00 Extra ordinary general meeting/visit to AHHAA 4D cinema at Lõunakeskus

18.00 Bus leaves to Alatskivi castle
21.00 Dinner in Alatskivi castle restaurant

21. September, Friday

9.00 Visits to Tartu Old Observatory
10.30 Visits to Estonian Genome Center
12.00 Lunch at cafeteria „Newton“
12.45 Marketing “How to be attractive?”
13.30 Closing session, NSCF Award announcement
14.00 End of conference

Registration is open in http://www.ahhaa.ee/en/nscf_annual_conference. The last day of registration is 31st of August.

Registration fee is 100 Euro/participant and Ahhaa will send you the invoice later.

About the programme: there will be one session about some big projects that will take place in some of our member institutions in the near future or are currently taking place.

We will also have a session, where you can tell what new you have in your science centre, so please prepare a 5 minute presentation and send the title of your presentation and the name of the presenter to sampo.puoskari@ouka.fi.

Hotel info:

1. The name is "Dorpat" (www.dorpat.ee and it is 100m from us) and the password is "AHHAA" and telling this, the price for single room is 51,75EUR and double is 66.75EUR

2. Another two hotels, we recommend are (password is the same "AHHAA"): Hotell London. Rütli 9, 51007 Tartu. www.londonhotel.ee
<http://www.londonhotel.ee/>
Single room price is 42EUR /double is 55EUR
It is in the city centre and very beautiful. Aprox 0,8km from us.

3. Hotell Pallas . Riia 4 , 51004 Tartu . www.pallas.ee
<http://www.pallas.ee/>
is closer (200 m) to us and single room is 63EUR and double is 85EUR



See you all in AHHAA!