Dissemination of virology through blogs and other social media

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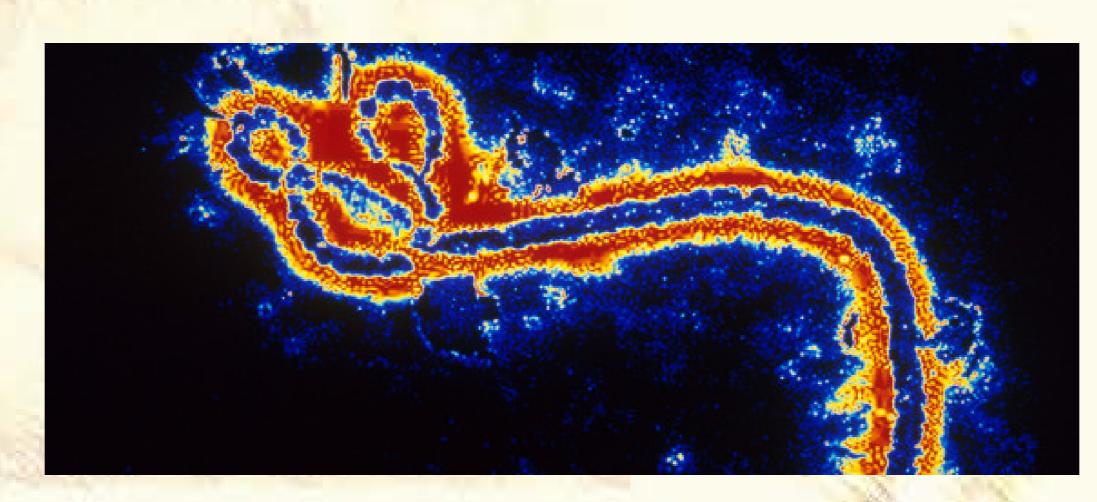


Science is an important part of our culture, and as such its dissemination must be considered among the top priorities in the agenda of R&D activities in any advanced society. For that, the involvement of institutions and civil society in general is badly needed, but a special effort from researchers is particularly required, because nobody like them has a deep knowledge on the scientific disciplines they cultivate and its latest developments.



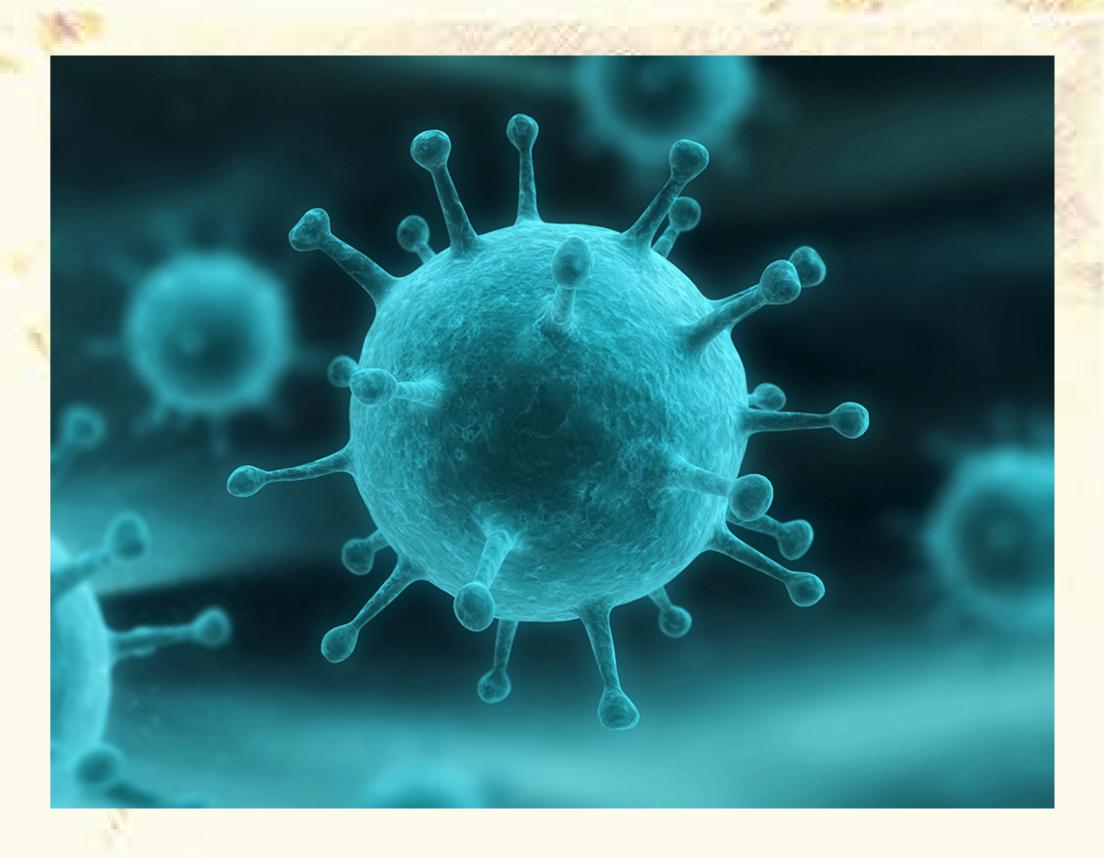
New technologies, especially the Internet and social media (blogs, twitter, facebook and other social networking platforms) make available to scientists new tools that facilitate the dissemination of knowledge from the laboratory directly to the citizens. These new tools should be considered as complementary to the more traditional popular science media (books, magazines, specialized sections in the press and mass media, documentaries, lectures, etc) and all should occupy their own place in the knowledge society, constituting an ecosystem in which contributing active scientists coexist and interact with journalists and communication experts with specialized knowledge in the different scientific disciplines.

In the case of virology, dissemination of knowledge based on scientific evidence deserves special significance due to the wide public impact of epidemics caused by viruses, notably those producing high mortality, such as the recent Ebola virus disease epidemic.

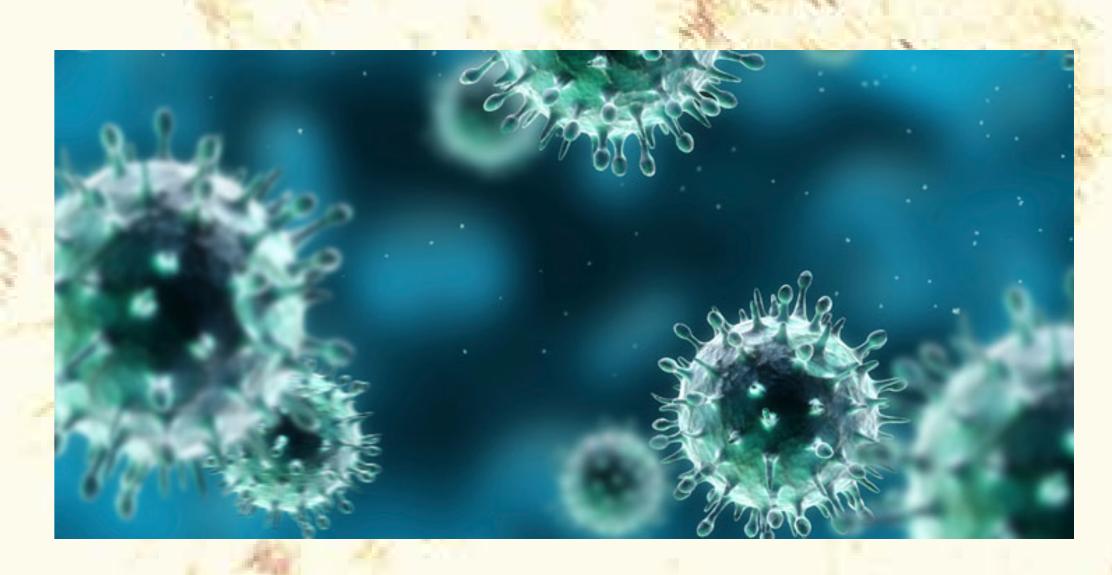


Very often, news on biological alerts concerning virus epidemics raise fear and insecurity among the population in a most irrational way. This pitfall clearly indicates that special efforts are certainly needed to give reliable, scientifically based information to provide the citizens with the knowledge necessary to "metabolize" the flood of information that occur from time to time associated with virus emergencies.





Though, an important problem arising with social media is that not all the information published through these networks is reliable, so in order to make these new communication tools useful, it is increasingly necessary to establish quality systems that allow the public to identify trustworthy information through the Internet.



With the aim to contribute to disseminate relevant topics in the virology area, targeting a broad Spanish-speaking blog "Emerging Viruses and Global Change" hosted public, (http://www.madrimasd.org/blogs/virusemergentes/) reports since 2012 on current issues around emerging viruses and the diseases they produce, in a context of global change. With 70 posts published up to now and around 100,000 visits received, it has been <u>awarded</u> in the last two editions of the madri+d Awards for Science Communication.



http://www.madrimasd.org/blogs/virusemergentes



@virusemergentes

Un lugar para la ciencia Virus emergentes y cambio global y la tecnología

Blog de divulgación sobre virus emergentes y las enfermedades que producen, en un contexto de cambio global





