“Kids that tell science” is a novel ongoing Uruguayan educational project that aims to promote science education at early stages (10-11 years old), facilitating current scientific information of limited access to public schools, in a format suitable for children (FB_Los niños que cuentan ciencia). Our project is in cooperation with the National Council for Elementary School (CEIP-ANEP) and it is a long-term three-pillar program based on direct experiences, the creation of educational resources, and its popularization. We mainly work on reverting children’s fear and disgust perceptions towards different organisms, as well as demystifying biology misconceptions, by conveying scientific information and generating experiences. Hopefully this can transform common negative images of certain unpopular organisms, making an important contribution to environmental education.

We work on enhancing children scientific knowledge in different areas: microbiology (bacteria), ecology and evolution (spiders), genetic conservation (mammals) and neuroscience (brain). Along the year, we share information with lectures, games, storytelling performances, and scientific experiments. Generally, we approach the topics using peculiar and attractive behaviors that different organisms exhibit. We relate them to evolutionary adaptations and ecological functions giving ground to emphasize the important role each organism has in nature. In this sense, we transmit a new form of understanding and perceiving natural environmental balance and raise awareness of our important role in ecosystems’ conservation. Afterwards, the acquired knowledge is transmitted to other children by creating educational short-films in which the children are the protagonists. They work with an audiovisual agency to develop this part of the project, which includes writing the script, designing costumes and scenography, acting and filming. The resulting short-films are freely available www.youtube.com/NQCC
The Outreach Grant for the Education Committee of the Animal Behavior Society will allow us to democratize our program through workshops with teachers from different schools throughout Uruguay. We will develop a two-day workshop at the Clemente Estable Biological Research Institute, in the capital city Montevideo. During the visit, they will experience the daily life of a scientist and their work. We will give them guidance in the usage of our previous short-films to approach different scientific subjects, as well as in the development of different activities that could be replicated in their schools, such as: experiments, animal observations, non-invasive field techniques and games. We will generate a practical compilation of all the activities for teachers to use and continue to work with along the year through video conferences in order to help them to enrich their lessons.

This Grant will help in one of our main goals of spreading positive information about unpopular organisms and promoting scientific direct experiences, providing teachers with a new easygoing way of conveying scientific information, and transforming them into mayor promoters.

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