



Xplora: gateway to science education in Europe

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Xplora (www.xplora.org) is the European gateway to science education in Europe. Funded by the European Commission's Directorate General for Research, Xplora aims to increase interest in science and scientific careers among young people. Operated by European Schoolnet, a network of twenty-eight Ministries of Education, Xplora draws on the resources of the PENCIL project.

PENCIL is a network of more than 14 museums and science centres (including the Cité de l'Espace in Toulouse, France) and two universities working on informal and formal learning techniques for science. Beyond PENCIL, Xplora is also a member of the Nucleus network which comprises partners such as the European Space Agency, CERN and other research institutions.

Through Xplora, teachers and pupils can learn about the importance of geoscience and space research, particularly in science and environmental curricula, via awareness-raising and science investigation projects such as Earth & Space, Sunset, Skywatch, Green Week and others.

Starting with simple and easy awareness-raising activities for young children, Xplora provides a range of approaches and suggestions for teachers to use with their students as they progress through their school career. Meanwhile, in Skywatch students can submit research proposals for further study via a network of telescope, as an example of a higher level activity.