



SNI update July 2015

Universität
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Swiss Nanoscience Institute



The art of a good speech: SNI PhD school holds rhetoric and presentation workshop

Early May saw some SNI doctoral students leave their laboratories and experiments far behind as they gathered in the meeting rooms at Mariastein Abbey to learn more about public speaking and presentation techniques.

Dr. Ralf Stutzki of the NCCR MSE and actor Sasha Manzotti had put together a varied program that gave all the participants plenty of space for implementing what they heard and learned during the workshop. The students analyzed speeches by various high-profile figures, gave their own talks, critiqued each other, and trained their voices.



How do I get my message across? Facial expression, gesticulation and lots of other different factors play a role.

Working in small groups, the students tested out the best ways of introducing their respective fields of research, and learned how challenging it can be to simplify highly complex topics for a lay audience. A particularly helpful aspect of the workshop was that the two coaches provided each student with recommendations and tips tailored specifically to his or her individual style.

Everyone in the group worked hard at the exercises and had a lot of fun along the way. They occasionally had to get out of their comfort zone – for instance, by reading out a recipe in a different language with such relish that it made the listeners' mouths water even though they couldn't understand a word. At the end of the two days, everyone had learned that empathizing with the topic, creating images in the mind and connecting with the audience are all key factors in giving a really good talk.