

Web watch

SCIENCE SANS FRONTIERS

- <http://scientistswithoutborders.nyas.org>

Even though the research community already actively promotes global health, agricultural progress and environmental well-being, current communication gaps limit its power. Imagine a world in which scientists and institutions in key research areas connected with health, energy and the environment could share everything — from expertise and equipment to specimens and transportation.

A new initiative called Scientists Without Borders has just been launched by the New York Academy of Sciences in partnership with a number of scientific and global health organizations. This initiative intends to build a virtual community that will connect and coordinate science-based activities worldwide and that aims to accomplish this task through an interactive website, with a database as its cornerstone. This database aims to foster partnerships among scientists in developed and developing countries and to coordinate science-based activities to help solve some of the big challenges that the developing world faces.

The database allows users to register and fill out a profile with information such as a biography, publications, practical skills and experience. In addition, members can list resources: those that they need and those that they are offering. Users can explore the online community and browse through the most needed as well as the most available resources. Community members who want to find a match can use the search function to identify profiles based on geographic location, area of expertise and whether resources are needed or available. The database also has features to give members a visual representation of the community.

This database provides a way for organizations, projects and individuals with complementary needs and resources to find one another and join forces.

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