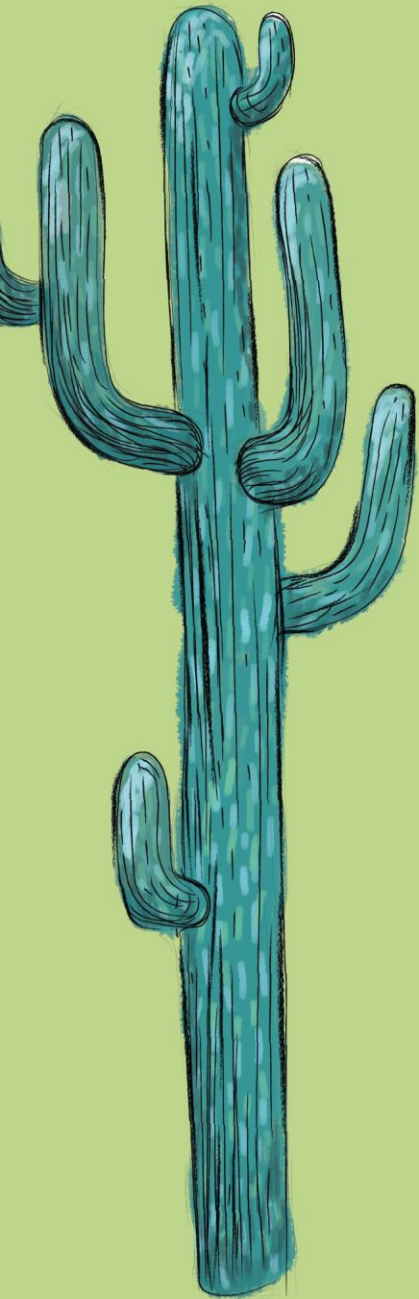




CONTROVERSY IN SCIENCE MUSEUMS

FIRST...



What does controversy
have to do
with Science Education?

Science Education = Sustainability

Sustainability = Social issues

Social issues = Controversy



Controversy in Museums

**Gender discrimination,
Poverty, Migration...**

All are part now of
museological culture,
but not necessarily
Science Center Culture.



And they are all part of the
Sustainability paradigm

We have done some good and successful efforts but is it enough?

Are we afraid of political and social repercussions?



*Photo: Emilio Sánchez

Are we afraid of funding withdrawall or audience alienation?

But why?



Controversial topics are:

- unpredictable
- involve conflict



*photo: Emilio Sánchez

Controversial topics represent: alternative views, beliefs, ideologies.

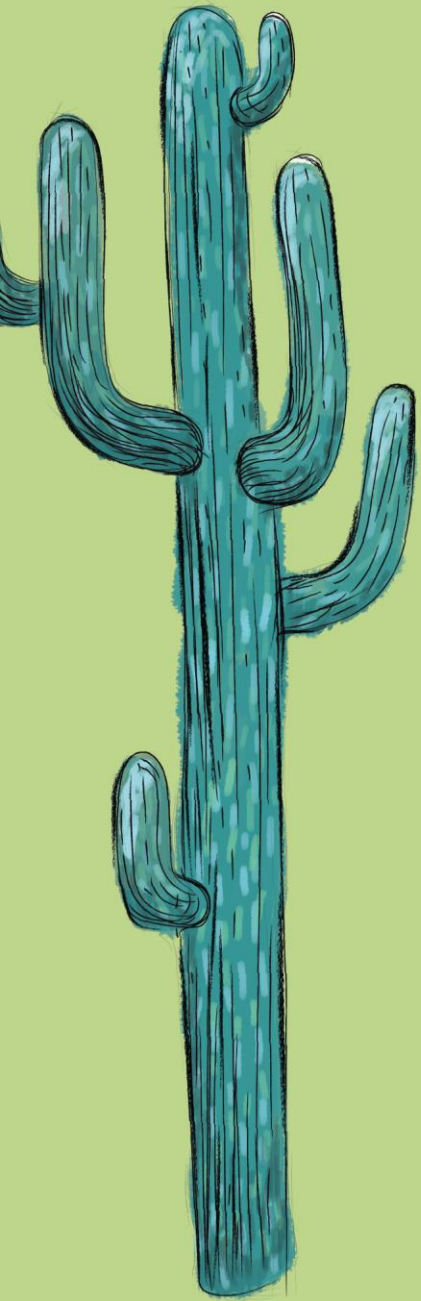
Besides this being maybe problematic, how do you create a narrative that considers all the **voices of the world.**

New museology considers complex political and social issues: a forum for debate and critical thinking.

But there is a reluctance in conversing deeply with these issues.



Could it be because of a limited understanding of the role our museums play in contemporary society?



What does this have to do
with Science Centres?



We have created a world of facts. Somewhat separated from human concerns, desires, conflicts.

Can we keep on going like this without losing our purpose? Or do we have to reevaluate our purpose, the role we have in our community?

We are **MIDE**, think we do



Controversy at MIDE

Re- think the long established practice of exhibiting “facts”.

Science as a **common language**, **technology** as a humane tool, **innovation** as an **attitude**



Science is political, technology is political. Why should science centers not be?

We need to take a stand.

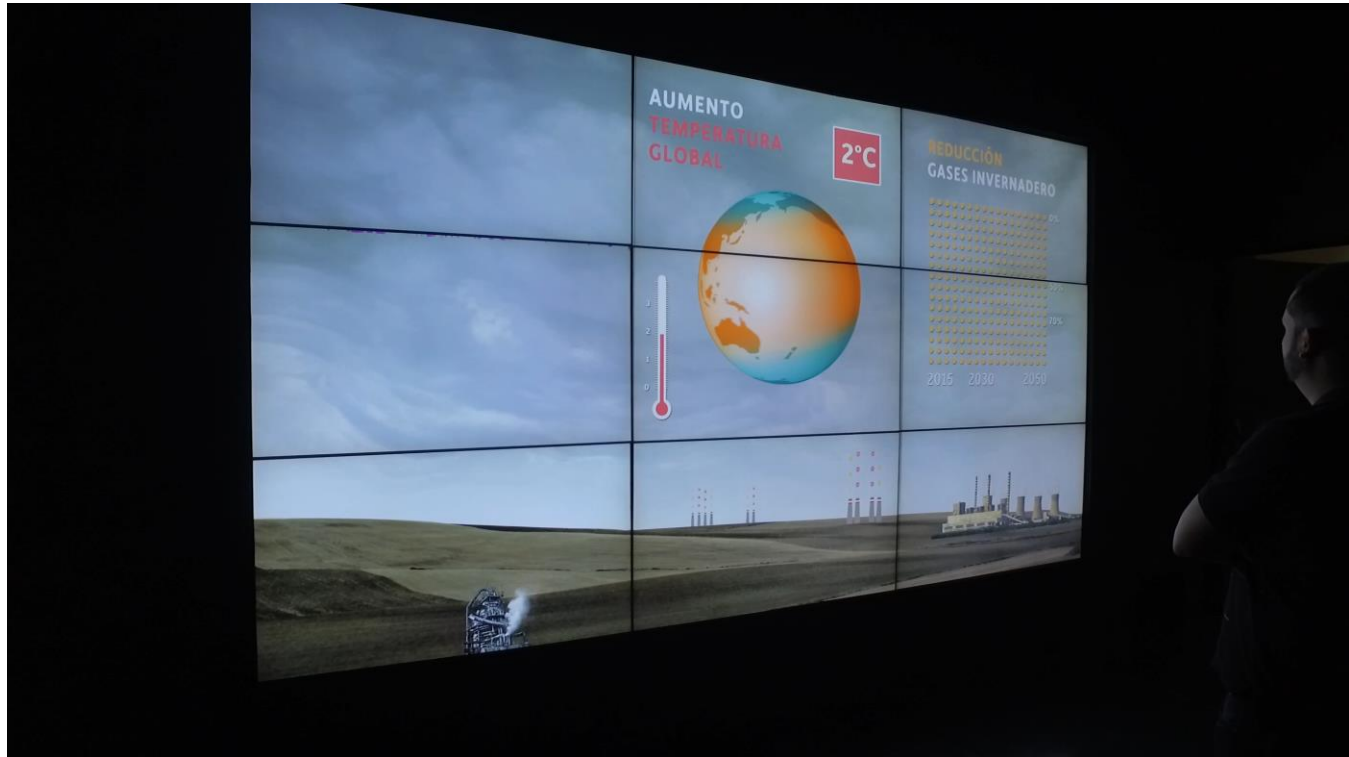
**So, what are we
doing at MIDE?**

We are trying,
slowly but trying.

**Our sustainability Hall-
Our Climate Change Forum**



Welcome to our International Climate Change Forum



You are now the leader of 1 of 8 countries.

You must consider your country's resources, needs and future.
Together we must reach an agreement for the planet.



The science about climate change=
migration, inequality, justice, poverty...
Sustainability

By creating a link between science linked to daily life, we create dialogue about controversial issues. This is how we talk about sustainability.

Success!!!



Space with
credibility

Space of trust

Space of
freedom



But also...



Taking a stand, sharing opinions, by expressing our own vulnerability.

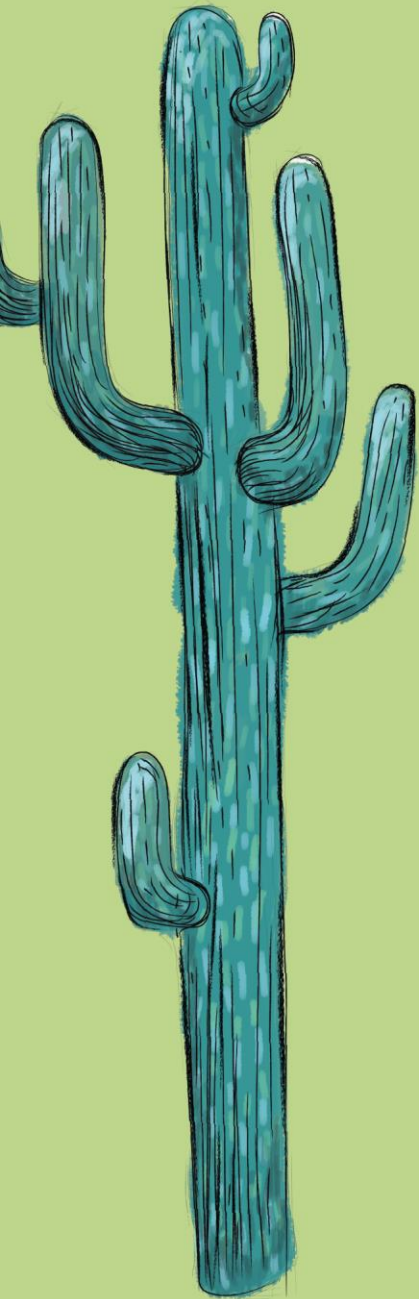
We are asking tough questions, and are open to eager answers.



Now, this experiment has led us to try it some more, on other halls, and other venues.

Our visitors asked us to bring the CCF outside the museum walls, so we did!

Isn't this part of what science museums/centres should do?



What does this have to do with science education right?

We must break the notion that we as museums cannot have opinions and be a valuable part of the dialogue.

We must integrate the social and political contexts of our visitors in the way we talk about science and the experiences we create.



*photo: Emilio Sánchez



Using **different perspectives** to talk about science, embracing **social issues**, and **controversy**, can encourage a more inclusive **science education**, one of the **highest quality**.

Controversy is a naturally occurring state in wider public culture, and therefore the ability to express and embrace ideological diversity is a requirement for relevance in **21st century museums**.



*Photo: Elis Monroy

Just like we started...



If we truly want science education to thrive, we have to talk about sustainability.

To truly talk about sustainability, we have to talk about social issues, economics, controversy that surround us.

Create spaces to **share** the complexity of our **identities**, and analyze **science** but also those concepts that have now become unclear.





ありがとう

THANK YOU!

¡GRACIAS!