PRBB Intervals Course Proposal

Course Title: Behind the scenes – a small group tutorial in oral presentation skills for scientists

Proposed date(s):
Edition 1: 19, 22 & 26 January 2027 – ONLINE
Edition 2: 16, 19 & 23 February 2027 – ONLINE
Edition 3: 9, 12 & 16 March 2027 – ONLINE
Edition 4: 13, 16 & 20 April 2027 - ONLINE

Course Language: English

Course Leader(s) and very brief summary of relevant qualifications and experience (no more than 2 lines for each trainer) Elinor Thompson is an educator and consultant, with a background in clinical medicine and public health. She is co-founder of and now consultant strategic advisor to the *PRBB Intervals* programme. She has been helping research scientists and healthcare professionals improve their oral presentation skills for two decades.

Rationale for course (why is this course of interest for the PRBB staff?)
The most engaging and memorable talks may look effortless but looks can deceive. The reality is that excellent talks require considerable time and effort spent in planning and preparation. In this tutorial style workshop, we will focus on the preparation of a scientific talk, revealing the commitment required to ensure your presentation is engaging and clear. This deep "behind the scenes" work is often ignored by scientists who believe the common myth that communication is easy and preparation is unnecessary.

You will come away from the workshop with tools and insights that will help you improve any kind of talk you give, for any audience, anywhere.

Course aim – general
To help participants focus on the two key aspects of preparation that make a scientific talk sink or succeed: i) clear communication of ideas and ii) audience engagement.
When these two skills are mastered, confidence grows and scientists can flourish as their speaking experience grows.

Specific learning outcomes (what new skills, knowledge &/or attitudes will participants to take away from the course?)
Participants will learn how to capture and keep the attention of their audience and the importance of emotional commitment. They will work on articulating and clarifying their scientific ideas into a robust and coherent talk that offers itself easily for polished and professional delivery. They will develop their feedback practice, learning how essential it is in the learning process when received and given constructively.

Course contents (outline of topics to be covered)

- Identifying your scientific story
- Surfacing key elements for winning audience engagement
- Knowing your purpose

- Clarifying your message
- Structuring your talk
- Key practice with feedback

Training methods
This 7.5 hour course has been designed specifically for the online setting, using the small group tutorial method to offer a focused and supportive atmosphere for maximum engagement. There will be solo, pair and group work as well as short talks from the trainer. Some homework between sessions is required – see below.

Participants will give a short pre-prepared presentation online (Zoom) and this presentation will be recorded for viewing in the group. *Please note that your consent to being recorded is a condition of attending the course.*

Target group in PRBB (Senior scientists, postdocs, predocs, management/admin staff, all residents)
Any scientist at any career stage who wishes to improve their oral presentation skills

Number of participants (maximum)
4

Total course hours (Please specify: direct training with instructor present and required self-study)
Note: only the direct training hours will be included in the post-course certificate.

Number of hours of class time: 7.5 hrs divided into 3 sessions
Number of hours of self-study: up to 4 hrs plus talk preparation time before the course.
Total number of course hours: approximately 11 hrs

Distribution of course (hours/days): The course consists of 3 online sessions (2.3 hrs, 3hrs, 2hrs).

Pre-course preparation and/or between sessions?
Preparation of a 5-minute scientific talk ready for delivery during the 1st sessions (detailed instructions will be sent). Revision of materials and some short homework tasks between sessions.

Material participants need to bring (laptops, etc…)
A4 paper and pens/ pencils. Approx. 10 “Post-its” (preferably 8 cm square size but any will do)

Relevant background reading/ audiovisual/websites or other materials
Participants will be sent some limited reading material once their registration is confirmed.