



PRBB INTERVALS PROGRAMME

Report of activities in 2021

In 2021 over 400 PRBB staff took part in online events offered by the *Intervals* programme – 40 courses covering 22 topics. Although everyone missed the chance to meet face-to-face, most people found online learning positive. Surprisingly, the enforced switch showed us that some courses work as well or even better via distance learning. Why? Because online delivery means shorter class duration, which can fit more easily into busy schedules. Another benefit is that online events are more accessible and have a lower carbon impact for trainers and participants who are not in Barcelona. But *Intervals* is at its heart about building relationships and community in the PRBB, so we will be very glad to go back to in-person events.

Increasing resilience

The pandemic has been a difficult time for everyone and unsurprisingly problems with mental and emotional wellbeing have escalated. Even before Covid-19 there were calls for emotional support for science professionals and *Intervals* has been developing a package of learning events to help people understand themselves better and develop resilience.

In 2021 stress management was added to the *Intervals* portfolio, with 3 editions of the workshop: [*Gestión del estrés para profesionales de investigación/Stress management for science professionals*](#). These workshops were run by psychologists Susana Diez and Eva Herber from [*BH Consulting*](#) and 32 people attended. Participants found that getting insights into how their own thoughts can exacerbate stress, were particularly useful. They were also appreciative of the range of tools offered to help them relax and reduce tension. The majority would recommend the course to their colleagues while suggestions for improvement included a need to tweak workshop timing and length.

Comments from participants from stress management:

"Un curso que da muchas herramientas para potenciar la salud de nuestra mente"

"Fundamental para entender las dinámicas de la mente en situaciones de estrés"

"I feel more capable of dealing with stressors of every kind"

"It helps you a lot to deal with daily and work stressors. It gives you tools to avoid it or to adapt"

Mindfulness has been shown in peer-reviewed studies to be a skill that can enhance mental wellbeing. Andres Martín from [*Instituto esMindfulness*](#) has been offering introductory courses for the *Intervals* programme for many years and these events continued to be popular online. Another element of the mental health package includes an edition of the Google course known as [*Search inside Yourself*](#). This event run by José Antonio Aguilar teaches people how to use mindfulness to enhance emotional intelligence and leadership skills. Lack of time is one of the most frequently cited stressors amongst PRBB staff. This year Louise Schubert from [*Schubert Consulting*](#) added value to her well-established time management course by including a focus on developing personal resilience: [*Navigating turbulent times: time management and resilience in science*](#).

Some people attending workshops focused on psychological issues remarked that they are not necessarily for everyone. But for those who are open to a little self-exploration there can be benefits from learning new skills as well as sharing experiences.

PRBB Career Week – showing career options in science

In 2021 the *Intervals* team participated in the PRBB Training Group which has members from all PRBB centres. This group organised two editions of the PRBB Career Week. The aim of these events was to prepare early and mid-career researchers for their next professional move by giving them ideas for different options once they have finished their PhD or postdoc, and an opportunity to practice some specific skills.

A series of informal conversations with professionals working in different science-related jobs gave attendees an opportunity to find out more about varied careers and positions. A wide range of sectors was represented across the two editions: patents, biotech, science communication, project management, governmental & international organisations and data science.

A roundtable was held in which scientists and HR professionals from both companies and research institutes explored the recruitment process and opportunities for researchers. And attendees also had the chance to participate in a "speed-dating" event with company representatives, where they learnt more about each company and potential positions for scientists.

During the [first edition](#) of the Career Week, the *Intervals* programme organised two workshops, with different perspectives and methodologies, but with the same aim: to help participants prepare for professional changes. During the practical course [LinkedIn workshop for researchers - make yourself more visible!](#), run by Pedro Rojas, an expert in digital strategy, attendees learnt useful tips to increase their professional network and make their profiles more visible in this social network. Whereas the workshop [So what's next? Managing change and challenges in your scientific career](#) was more introspective: career coach Marie Trussart guided attendees through a process of self-reflection about career interests and challenges, and helped them develop skills to navigate barriers to career advancement. The format of these workshops was adapted to the Career Week event, with bigger groups – around 30 places – and being shorter – one 2-hour session - than regular *Intervals* courses.

"Great opportunity to take a breath and reflect on your career and next challenges"

"An essential course that helps you being aware of the emotional challenges involving a change in your career and gives you nice tips to overcome them"

Comments from So what's next?

"It helped me to understand way better how LinkedIn works and how to make a better profile.

"Great workshop to know more about LinkedIn and all the opportunities of this network"

Comments from LinkedIn workshop

Due to COVID all the Career Week activities were online, with around 400 attendees. There was very good feedback overall.

Thanks

The *Intervals* team would like to thank our participants and especially our trainers and collaborators during this 2021:

José Antonio Aguilar, Michela Bertero, Arnau Busquets, Joaquim Calbó, Natalia Dave, Susanna Diez, Malte Engel, Jaume Fatjó, Reimund Fickert, Susan Frekko, Thomas Frick, Dana Galili, Eva Katharina Herber, Kai Hüwelmeyer, Anna Janic, Gavin Lucas, Alicia Marín Muniesa, Andrés Martín, Eric May, Pau Millet, Alexandros Nikolaou, Gabriele Picarella, Pedro Rojas, Roser Pinyol, Sonja Reiland, Louise Schubert, Anna Segarra, Marie Trussart, Kate Whitfield, Roni Wright and Ruben Ventura.

Elinor Thompson and Eroteida Jiménez
The *Intervals* Programme, PRBB February 2022

Selected comments

Congratulations for the organization of the PRBB Intervals 'online format'. The teaching quality has been 100% maintained despite not being possible to attend physically to the sessions.

I love it. I have spent a few years outside the PRBB, and the possibility of rejoining the Intervals programme's courses was a plus to accept my new position.

Congratulations to the amazing Intervals team for taking care of our community and offering us the continuous training opportunities for our personal growth and career development!

Soy muy fan del programa Intervals. Creo que es uno de los activos más importantes del PRBB.

Me parece una iniciativa magnífica exquisitamente organizada.

Interval courses are always high quality. Thanks for organizing them!

I have done several courses from PRBB Intervals programme and I found all very good, and very nicely prepared, so I can just say: thanks a lot for all the courses you organize!

I think there are lots of interesting courses, of course there could be even more, or longer ones in time. You are doing a great job and this is a unique opportunity for the PRBB residents to keep learning other things that are not specifically doing the PhD per se.

About availability of places / schedule of workshops:

Son geniales, pero no siempre tiene un horario compatible con la asistencia clínica del hospital.

I would like to take many courses but there are always a limited number of people for taking them that there are some that I would really like to take and I can't.

Sometimes it is too difficult to be accepted into a course that would be very useful because it is already full.

TABLE 1 Overview of the activity

Overview of activity	
Total number of courses/workshops	40
Number of places	498
Number of people registered	487
Number of attendees	476
Number of attendees registering but not attending	11
Number of individuals	337
Number of individuals attending more than one course	93

TABLE 2 Number of registrations, percentage of occupancy and number of attendees of each course

	# Registrations	% Take-up	# Attendees
SELF SKILLS			
Personal mastery and emotional intelligence			
Gestion del estés (3 Ed.)	32	WL/ 80%/WL	32
Mindfulness (2 Ed.)	32	Waiting list	32
Time management and resilience in science	12	Waiting list	9
Search inside yourself	12	Waiting list	12
Thinking creatively and critically			
Sharpen your reasoning skills (2 Ed.)	24	Waiting list	23
Visuals for scientists	12	Waiting list	12
TOTAL	124		120
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS			
Cross-cultural working	12	Waiting list	11
Leading for success in science*	6	Waiting list	6
Leadership programme for junior women in science**	14	Waiting list	14
Negotiating with confidence, inside or outside science	12	Waiting list	12
Project management for scientists	14	Waiting list	14
TOTAL	58		57
SYSTEMS SKILLS			
Writing			
Becoming a scientific writer (2 Ed.)	30	Waiting list	30
How to write a grant proposal	16	Waiting list	16
How to write a scientific article*** (4 Ed.)	64	Waiting list	63
Introduction to scientific publishing	16	Waiting list	14
Speaking			
Behind the scenes (9 Ed.)	36	Waiting list	36
Visual aids for scientific presentations	13	Waiting list	13
Careers			
Business opportunities in science and beyond	15	Waiting list	15
Interview and job opportunities skills	8	67%	7
Understanding career opportunities (2 Ed.)	24	Waiting list	23
PRBB Career Week: LinkedIn workshop	35	Waiting list	35
PRBB Career Week: Managing change and challenges in your career	40	Waiting list	39
Project zero	8	100%	8
TOTAL	305		299
TOTAL	487		476

* In collaboration with BIST & CRG

** In collaboration with DCEXS

*** In collaboration with CÍCLIKS programme

TABLE 3 Summary data of attendees' ratings of each aspect of *Intervals'* courses

Reaction sheet questions	% of maximum possible score weighted			
	2021	2020	2019	2008 - 2018
How would you rate this course overall?	87	86	88	85
How would you rate the relevance of this workshop to your professional development?	87	87	87	84
How well did the workshop meet your expectations?	83	83	85	82
What is your overall rating of the trainer(s)?	92	92	93	90
How would you rate the trainer's competence/experience in relation to the subject?	94	94	94	92
How would you rate the trainer's interpersonal and presentation skills?	91	93	93	89
How would you rate the relevance and usefulness of the training materials?	84	83	84	80
How would you rate the venue for this course?	--	76	79	78
How would you rate the overall organisation of the workshop?	92	90	89	86

FIGURE 1 Summary of scores for all courses – how would you rate the course overall?

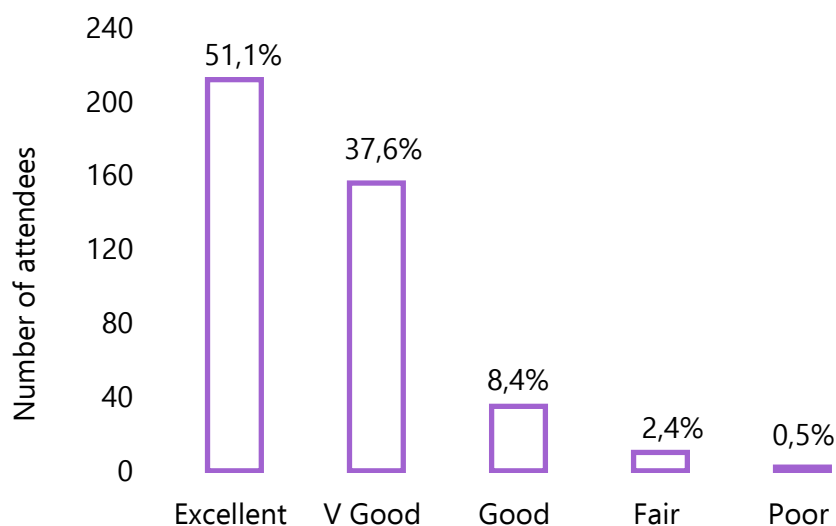


TABLE 4 Number and percentage of attendees by institution

Attendees' institutions	% PRBB residents	2021	2020	2019	2018
CRG + CNAG	28,6	123 (25,8%)	110 (27,8%)	121 (30%)	165 (30%)
DCEXS-UPF + IBE	26,8	167 (35,1%)	117 (29,5%)	125 (30,9%)	182 (33%)
IMIM	27,0	80 (16,8%)	82 (20,7%)	86 (21,3%)	86 (16%)
ISGLOBAL	12,4	97 (20,4%)	73 (18,4%)	56 (13,9%)	72 (13%)
EMBL-Barcelona	3,3	5 (1,1%)	5 (1,3%)	2 (0,5%)	19 (3%)
Consorti PRBB	1,8	4 (0,8%)	3 (0,8%)	6 (1,5%)	13 (2%)
Other	--	--	6 (1,5%)	8 (2%)	17 (3%)
TOTAL		476 (100%)	396 (100%)	404 (100%)	554 (100%)

TABLE 5 Number and percentage of attendees by post

Attendees' post	2021	2020	2019	2018
Predoc	239 (50%)	210 (53%)	195 (48,3%)	291 (53%)
Postdoc	114 (24%)	76 (19%)	115 (28,5%)	116 (21%)
Senior Invstgtr	27 (6%)	20 (5%)	18 (4,5%)	23 (4%)
Clinician	6 (1%)	10 (3%)	6 (1,5%)	1 (0%)
Tech & lab staff	47 (10%)	36 (9%)	29 (7,2%)	47 (8%)
Admin & support	13 (3%)	9 (2%)	16 (4%)	27 (5%)
Management	18 (4%)	14 (4%)	10 (2,5%)	39 (7%)
Not classified	12 (3%)	21 (5%)	15 (3,7%)	10 (2%)
TOTAL	476 (100%)	396 (100%)	404 (100%)	554 (100%)

TABLE 6 Percentage women/men 2021

	Women	Men	Prefer not to say
Attendees to Intervals	72%	26%	3%
Per position:			
Researchers	70%	26%	3%
Predocs	72%	23%	5%
Postdocs	70%	29%	1%
Senior researchers	52%	44%	4%
Clinicians	83%	17%	0%
Technicians	80%	20%	0%
Manag, Admin & Support staff	81%	19%	0%
Not classified	50%	50%	0%

	Women	Men
PRBB residents*	60%	40%
Per position:		
Researchers	53%	47%
Predocs	40%	33%
Postdocs	41%	36%
Pls	19%	31%
Technicians	67%	33%
Admin	70%	30%

* From 2020 PRBB demographic data

TABLE 7 Percentage women/men over the years

	2021		2020		2019	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Intervals' attendees	72	26	71	29	67	33
PRBB residents	60	40	59	41	59	41

TABLE 8 Source of trainers

Source of trainers	2021	2020	2019	2018
PRBB Institutions - Senior staff	11	10	15	9
External (Spain)	13	11	15	15
External (Europe)	6	2	4	2
TOTAL	30	23	34	26