



# PRBB INTERVALS PROGRAMME

Report of activities in 2016

January 2017

## **PRBB Intervals programme**

### **Looking back on 2016 and forward to 2017**

*Come gather around people  
Wherever you roam  
And admit that the waters  
Around you have grown.  
**The Times They Are A-Changin. Bob Dylan.***

The PRBB *Intervals* programme or simply *Intervals* as the programme is popularly known, has now been running for eight years and is a familiar part of life in the PRBB. The purpose of the annual report is to present to the PRBB community the overall strategy of our programme, activity and developments during the year, feedback from participants, and an outline of our plans for the coming year.

#### **1.0 Strategy**

The strategic aims of the *Intervals* programme are:

1. *to provide high quality, innovative, interdisciplinary education*
2. *to facilitate community building by providing networking opportunities*

In view of increasing concerns throughout the global scientific community about increasing threats to integrity in science, in 2016 we added a further aim:

3. *to contribute to promoting a culture of good scientific practice throughout the PRBB*

To meet this added aim, the third theme of the programme was renamed *Good science, honest science* and courses on critical thinking and on mindfulness (promoting attention skills, self-awareness and emotional intelligence) were added to it. Also under this theme was included the *Record keeping and data management campaign*, an initiative led by the PRBB Good Scientific Practice working group and supported organisationally by the *Intervals* team. The UPF-CEXS graduate student course in research integrity, *Science in Action*, also falls under this theme.

The three themes of the programme are now:

- A. Leadership and career development
- B. Communication
- C. Good science, honest science.

#### **2.0 Activity**

##### *2.1 Places and uptake*

In 2016 we provided 484 places on courses, the largest number ever, and a record 292 individuals took up those places (Table 1). Demand for places was also the highest ever, and some courses had waiting lists of 40 people before they were closed to further registrations (Table 2). Courses with highest demand were science communication (scientific writing and oral presentation skills)

and mindfulness for improved self-mastery (see below 5.0 *Challenges*). Attendance was good with just 14 people failing to attend after confirming their registration (3% of total registrations).

## *2.2 Satisfaction*

Participants' post-course feedback remained at the same high levels as in previous years with an overall average course satisfaction of 86%, trainer assessment of 91% and satisfaction with organisation of 89% (Table 3).

## *2.3 Centre representation*

There were some small changes in uptake to courses from PRBB Centres. Registrations are initially accepted on a proportionate basis according to each Centre's population size in the community, if however these places are not taken within a certain time of course opening, they are offered to other Centres so that the places are not wasted. CEXS-UPF and IMIM took up less than their allocated share of places and consequently participants from ISGLOBAL and to a lesser extent IBE, were able to take up more than their allocated share (Table 4).

## *2.4 Balance by job and level*

An unexpected change was the relative balance of pre-docs to postdocs on courses (Table 5). Until this year, PhD students have always occupied the highest proportion of places on courses, in some years making up over 50% of total attendees. In 2016 the relative number of post-doctoral scientists taking up places increased by 8% on the previous year, a total of 46 extra post-doc places and 9 more senior staff participated than in the previous year. At the same time pre-docs relative uptake went down by 8%, 22 fewer places. *Intervals* courses are broadly targeted at the following groups: a) early career scientists, b) mid-career staff c) senior staff, and d) all staff – there are no strict classification criteria for these groups so individuals can self-classify. Of 38 courses, 23 are open to all staff, 3 are for early career scientists only, 5 are for early and mid-career staff, 5 for mid-career and senior and 2 for either mid-career or senior staff. In terms of places offered to each group there was no difference from 2015, so the relative reduction in junior scientists is not explained by the availability of places. Possible explanations may be increased career uncertainty amongst mid-level scientists together with a heightened awareness of the importance of broadening skill portfolios to seek opportunities beyond academia and as a result post-docs have increased demand in courses open to both pre-docs and post-docs.

## *2.5 Gender balance*

As in all previous years of the programme, the gender balance on courses remained skewed towards women, with 64% of places being taken up by women, while they only make up 50% of the researcher population in the PRBB (57% amongst all staff) (Table 6). While places were almost always offered on a first come basis, very occasionally and only when registrations were very heavily female dominated, men were accepted preferentially to redress the balance.

## *2.6 Source of trainers*

Our trainers are our most highly valued resource, and as in previous years we relied not only on external trainers but also on the generosity of PRBB senior staff who contribute to courses not only as sole trainers but also as reviewers and interviewers on courses such as fellowship writing

and interview skills. As in previous years the majority of external trainers came from within Spain (almost all Barcelona area) with just 5 from elsewhere in Europe (Table 7).

### 3.0 New courses

Our activity, as planned at the outset of the year has been one of consolidation following some major changes in 2015. We repeated and increased editions of our high demand courses, made marginal increases in other courses in response to participant suggestions and introduced two new options under the leadership track: *Search Inside Yourself* and *Negotiation Skills*.

#### 3.1 Search Inside Yourself (SIY)

This course, designed originally in Silicon Valley for employees of Google, has a number of aims that centre on using mindfulness practices to enhance skills in emotional intelligence, self-awareness, listening and communication. The overall intended benefit of the training is to develop individuals' personal resilience and their capacity to lead and relate to others with integrity and responsiveness, irrespective of their actual position in a work environment. The course, run by SIY certified trainer José Antonio Aguilar, consisted of four half-day workshops and was run over four weeks and offered this year to twenty PRBB senior staff (Principal Investigators and senior managers).

Our experience with running courses on mindfulness at the PRBB is that, in common with the global trend, mindfulness is in increasingly high demand. Almost everyone today suffers from heavy time pressures which when mixed with a competitive work environment and a seemingly infinite barrage of distraction from social media, creates a stressful cocktail of experience. Mindfulness techniques have been demonstrated by peer-reviewed studies and meta-analyses to be helpful in promoting resilience and wellbeing in healthy, albeit stressed, people<sup>1</sup>. While there remains controversy over its effectiveness, the balance of evidence currently weighs in favour of its benefits, provided that it is well-taught and that practice is sustained over time.

In the PRBB we have offered introductory courses to mindfulness for some years, and these courses are now amongst the most heavily oversubscribed in the *Intervals* programme. *Search Inside Yourself* is an addition to this portfolio, which at the same time as providing introductory training to mindfulness practice also shows how these skills can be applied in the work environment, in particular with respect to connecting and relating to people in teams and beyond. In common with the *Intervals* introductory mindfulness courses, participant feedback of the first edition of SIY showed a very particular distribution: the majority of people loved it and even found it life changing, while a small minority found it unproductive. This polarity of opinion is reflected in the following comments from participants on SIY at the PRBB this year:

*"I think it will have a long-lasting impact on my life"*

*"A must for anyone in a stressful leadership position"*

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<sup>1</sup> Gotink RA et al. Standardised mindfulness-based interventions in healthcare: an overview of systematic reviews and meta-analyses of RCTs. [PLOS One](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0124001). 2015 Apr 16;10(4).

*“A totally new horizon of experiences and feelings to explore and improve your personal and professional capabilities”*

*“A bit disappointed. Maybe I had other expectations, but I have the feeling I did not learn too much.”*

In spite of a few sceptics, the overall balance of feedback was very favourable, attendance was excellent and almost everyone completed the whole course.

### **3.2 Negotiation Skills**

Though sometimes considered a purely business skill, the ability to negotiate with confidence is a key asset for any professional. Whether negotiating for change in work conditions or responsibilities, or for one's position in the authorship list of a publication, scientists need to be able to express and defend their interests if they are to be successful. Veteran *Intervals* trainer Eric May brings a wealth of experience from television broadcasting and business consulting to his educational work and creates unique training workshops as a result. This year Eric developed a new, custom-designed workshop for the *Intervals* programme on negotiation skills. Specifically the course aimed to give participants practical techniques to build their sense of professional self-worth inside and outside science, identify key characteristics of building trust and methods for effective communication in different mediums, and to get techniques for negotiation to be more effective.

The course was heavily oversubscribed on opening, so two editions were offered to a total of 24 participants drawn from the entire PRBB community. Exercises included opportunities to role play and receive feedback on a variety of scenarios, and to work with rejection and conflict. Feedback was excellent and comments included:

*“It was beyond all my expectations, really good training and trainer. Highly recommended for everyone.”*

*“A hands on, 360° introduction to negotiation”*

*“I liked the part about handling rejection. I think I will view things a bit differently – it helped me reflect on it.”*

Suggestions for improvement included doing homework preparation exercises before the course and the possibility of offering one-to-one mentoring.

## **4.0 Beyond the PRBB**

In September the *Intervals* team attended and presented a poster on the *Intervals* programme at the annual conference of VITAE, the major researcher development organisation in the UK attended by researcher developers from around the world.

In December we were invited by the Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca (AGAUR) (Agency for Management of University and Research Grants) to contribute to a working group for the development of researchers in Catalonia. We presented the *Intervals* programme in a round table and discussion seminar attended by more than 70 researcher developers and human resource professionals from Catalan research centres.

## 5.0 Challenges

By far the biggest issue of the year was the escalation in demand for places, while the funding available for the programme remained static. Demand for places on general scientific writing and general level oral presentation skills doubled, with courses having to be closed to registration often within a few days of opening as waiting lists ran into the thirties and forties (Box 1).

### BOX 1.

*Courses with high demand necessitating closure of the waiting list (30+):*

- Write it clearly – general scientific writing course addressing fundamentals of scientific writing (3 editions)
- Becoming a scientific writer, putting the “why” before the “how” (2 editions)
- Getting published – general writing workshops (2 editions)
- Say it so it stays – general oral presentations workshop addressing all aspects of planning and delivering a scientific presentation (2 editions)
- Técnicas actorales para la comunicación científica (2 editions)
- Introduction to mindfulness for improved self-mastery (1 English and 2 Spanish editions).

### *Understanding the increased demand*

As *Intervals* has evolved and matured so the environment within which it is embedded has grown. When the programme started in 2008, transferable skills education for scientists in Spanish research institutes was scarcely given the time of day, let alone allocated any substantial funding. Scientists who spent time developing their careers by enhancing their skills in communication or leadership were all too frequently seen as non-serious and often frowned upon.

In the eight years since the programme started many things have happened which have led to attitudes both outside and inside science changing and continuing to evolve. These include:

- Funding competitiveness – major grant bodies now ask applicants to develop plans for dissemination and communication of findings and some major training grants insist on investment in transferable skills education as a condition of funding – see BOX 2.
- Employment – over 90% of doctoral graduates will eventually leave academia and whether they like it or not they must be prepared to compete in a competitive, sometimes savage job market. Scientists who end up in new jobs report high job satisfaction and report on the need for skills and expertise in a range of transferable skills especially communication, followed by team work, project and budget management<sup>2</sup>.
- Climate of uncertainty and ethical complexity – with the growth and power of social media, scientists can no longer hide in their ivory towers. Science and scientists are coming under increasing public scrutiny and scientists must be able to defend their work and argue robustly to obtain funding. The public also urgently needs a cadre of articulate scientists who can communicate clearly the ethical complexities involved in the production of knowledge as well as the implications of its use.

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<sup>2</sup> Haynes et al. What do research staff do next. VITAE series, The Careers Research and Advisory Service (CRAC) Ltd. 2016.

#### BOX 2

*The Innovative Training Networks (ITN) aim to train a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial and innovative early-stage researchers, able to face current and future challenges and to convert knowledge and ideas into products and services for economic and social benefit. ITN will raise excellence and structure research and doctoral training, extending the traditional academic research training setting, incorporating the elements of Open Science and equipping researchers with the right combination of research-related and transferable competences. It will provide enhanced career perspectives in both the academic and nonacademic sectors through international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility combined with an innovation-oriented mind-set. **HORIZON 2020 – Work Programme 2016-2017 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions***

Given these wider societal concerns, many organisations and individuals concerned with the education of scientists and the production of knowledge are becoming involved in developing the broader professional skills of scientists. As a result the PRBB *Intervals* programme is no longer the lone ranger provider of transferable skills in Catalonia and many other science institutes have set up or are actively developing their transferable skills learning programmes.

The implications of this explosion of activity creates a number of challenges for the *Intervals* programme:

- Increase in demand for places on some courses - especially communication skills - as scientists themselves realise the importance of this training
- Lack of agreed quality standards for training competencies achieved – means comparison of course benefits is difficult for participants
- Lack of agreed criteria for competence/quality of trainers and their methods – means comparison of trainers and training methods & contents is difficult for programme organisers
- Relative shortage of experienced trainers creates a competitive market in which prices can soar, quality suffers and programmes with limited budgets are unable to contract quality trainers.

## 6. 0 The year ahead

Whenever there are challenges, there are also huge opportunities and the rise in interest and activity in researcher development can only be welcomed. Better trained, more versatile scientists can be a rich resource of human potential as leaders and change-makers in the future. The fact that the majority of scientists eventually leave academia is a strength not a weakness of such programmes: there are gaping holes in almost all walks of society for strong-minded, critical thinkers who have the social and emotional skills to really lead and engage people in action for the social good.

Nevertheless rising to the immediate challenges for training them all will require a number of different approaches, the need to think laterally and to shift beyond established patterns to new models of provision and funding.

In terms of addressing the high demand for courses we have already started to explore with the PRBB Centres, different models for co-funding and co-organising events to meet specific needs and

some of these co-initiatives will come to fruition in 2017. To stem the immediate tide of demand, we will be re-directing resources towards more communication courses this year.

To address the issues of quality standards we look forward to working further with our trainers and with colleagues in the AGAUR working group and other centres involved in researcher development.

Finally, given the central importance of maintaining and promoting integrity in the scientific endeavour, in collaboration with the PRBB Good Scientific Practice working group, we will be exploring new ways to involve the PRBB community in more dialogue about developing a culture of integrity.

As always, we would like to thank all our trainers for their generosity and enthusiasm in contributing to make our programme once again a resource that PRBB residents can be proud of, and as always to thank our participants for their valuable feedback and energetic uptake of our courses.

Many thanks to:

Jose Antonio Aguilar, Beatriz Bellosillo, Michela Bertero, Sara Capdevila, Joan Cos, Luca Cozzuto, Juana Diez, Malte Engel, Jaume Fatjó, Reimund Fickert, Guillaume Fillion, Francesca Gabetti, Fernando Gallego, Russ Hodge, Gavin Lucas, Tobias Maier, Alicia Marin, Andrés Martín, Áurea Martín, Maruxa Martínez, Eric May, Carolyn Newey, Roser Pinyol, Cristina Pujades, Tobias Rodrigues, Carles Ruiz, Marta Sallés, Louise Schubert, Anna Sharman.

Elinor Thompson

Eroteida Jiménez

PRBB *Intervals* programme, January 2017

*The Intervals courses have something that make me more active,  
with more illusion and make me dream.  
**Intervals participant, 2016***



**TABLE 1** Overview of the activity

**Overview of activity**

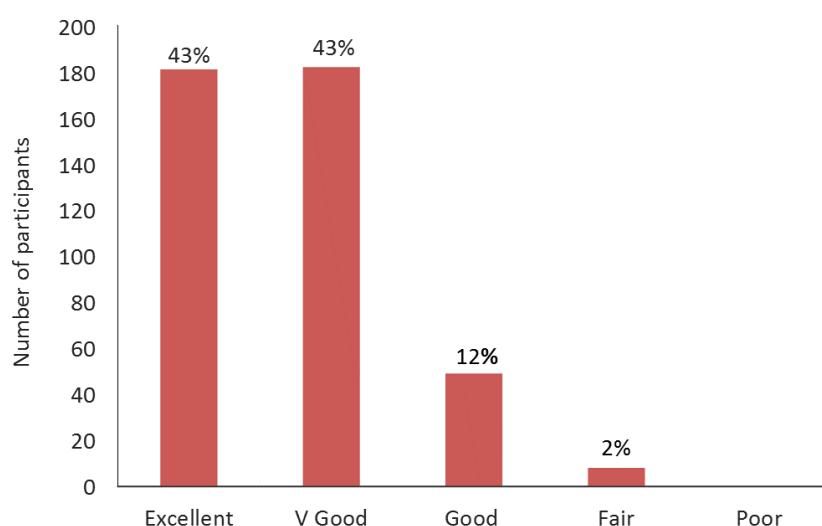
Number of courses/events	38
Number of places	484
Number of attendees	452
Number of individuals registering but not attending	14
Number of individuals	292
Number of individuals registering for more than one course	102

**TABLE 2** Registrations (24h before course starts), places taken up (%) and actual attendances on the day

	# Registrations	% Take-up	# Attendees
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS</b>			
Cross-cultural working: understanding diversity for enhanced performance	10	67%	10
Difficult conversations: how to make them easier	12	100%	12
Effective team playing to achieve your goals (Early & Mid-career)	10	Waiting list	9
Effective team playing to achieve your goals (Mid-career & senior)	10	Waiting list	9
Getting the right person for your team	11	92%	11
Living teams - a systemic approach to team leadership	15	Waiting list	15
Negotiating with confidence, inside or outside science - 1st Ed.	12	Waiting list	12
Negotiating with confidence, inside or outside science - 2nd Ed.	11	Waiting list	10
Peer mentoring scheme (Postdocs)	8	Waiting list	8
Peer mentoring scheme (Senior researchers and managers)	7	88%	7
Search inside yourself	20	Waiting list	20
<b>CAREER DEVELOPMENT</b>			
Beyond the bench. Career development for biomedical scientists	12	Waiting list	12
Interview and job application skills	12	Waiting list	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>		
<b>WRITING SKILLS</b>			
Becoming a scientific writer: putting the Why before the How- 3rd Ed.	12	Waiting list	12
Becoming a scientific writer: putting the Why before the How - 4th Ed.	12	Waiting list	12
Getting published in journals - 3rd Ed.	12	Waiting list	12
Getting published in journals - 4th Ed.	12	100%	12
How to write a postdoctoral fellowship proposal	11	92%	11
Popular science writing	15	Waiting list	15
Write it clearly: fundamentals of good scientific writing - 10th Ed.	14	Waiting list	14
Write it clearly: fundamentals of good scientific writing - 11th Ed.	14	Waiting list	14
Write it clearly: fundamentals of good scientific writing - 12th Ed.	14	Waiting list	14
Writing workshop: revising and editing papers before submission	12	Waiting list	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>128</b>		
<b>ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS</b>			
Elevator pitch - express your ideas quickly and effectively - 8th Ed.	12	Waiting list	10
Elevator pitch - express your ideas quickly and effectively - 9th Ed.	12	Waiting list	11
How to design a visually stunning scientific poster	12	Waiting list	12
10 keys to creating great visual aids for scientific presentations	12	Waiting list	12
Técnicas actorales para la comunicación científica - 9th Ed.	15	Waiting list	15
Técnicas actorales para la comunicación científica - 10th Ed.	15	Waiting list	14
Say it so it stays: oral presentation skills	12	Waiting list	12
Scientifically speaking: a master class in peer-to-peer presenting for scientists	10	Waiting list	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>		
<b>CITIZEN SCIENCE SKILLS</b>			
Explaining your research to ANYONE - inside or outside science	10	83%	9
Make your research viral - social networks and science	12	80%	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>		
<b>GOOD SCIENCE, HONEST SCIENCE</b>			
Mindfulness for improved self-mastery	15	Waiting list	15
Mindfulness para mejorar la maestría personal - 4th Ed.	15	Waiting list	15
Mindfulness para mejorar la maestría personal - 5th Ed.	15	Waiting list	14
Sharpen your reasoning skills	15	Waiting list	13
Visit to the PRBB animal facility	6	60%	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>66</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>466</b>		<b>452</b>

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

Reaction sheet questions	% of maximum possible score weighted			
	2016	2015	2014	2013
1. How would you rate this course overall?	86	86	86	86
2. How would you rate the relevance of this workshop to your professional development?	85	86	85	85
3. How well did the workshop meet your expectations?	83	84	84	82
4. What is your overall rating of the trainer(s)?	91	91	93	91
5. How would you rate the trainer's competence/experience in relation to the subject?	93	93	93	92
6. How would you rate the trainer's interpersonal and presentation skills?	90	90	84	90
7. How would you rate the relevance and usefulness of the training materials?	83	81	80	79
8. How would you rate the venue for this course?	81	79	77	76
9. How would you rate the overall organisation of the workshop?	89	86	85	86

**FIGURE 1** Summary scores for all courses – *How would you rate this course overall?***TABLE 4** Number and percentage of attendees by institution

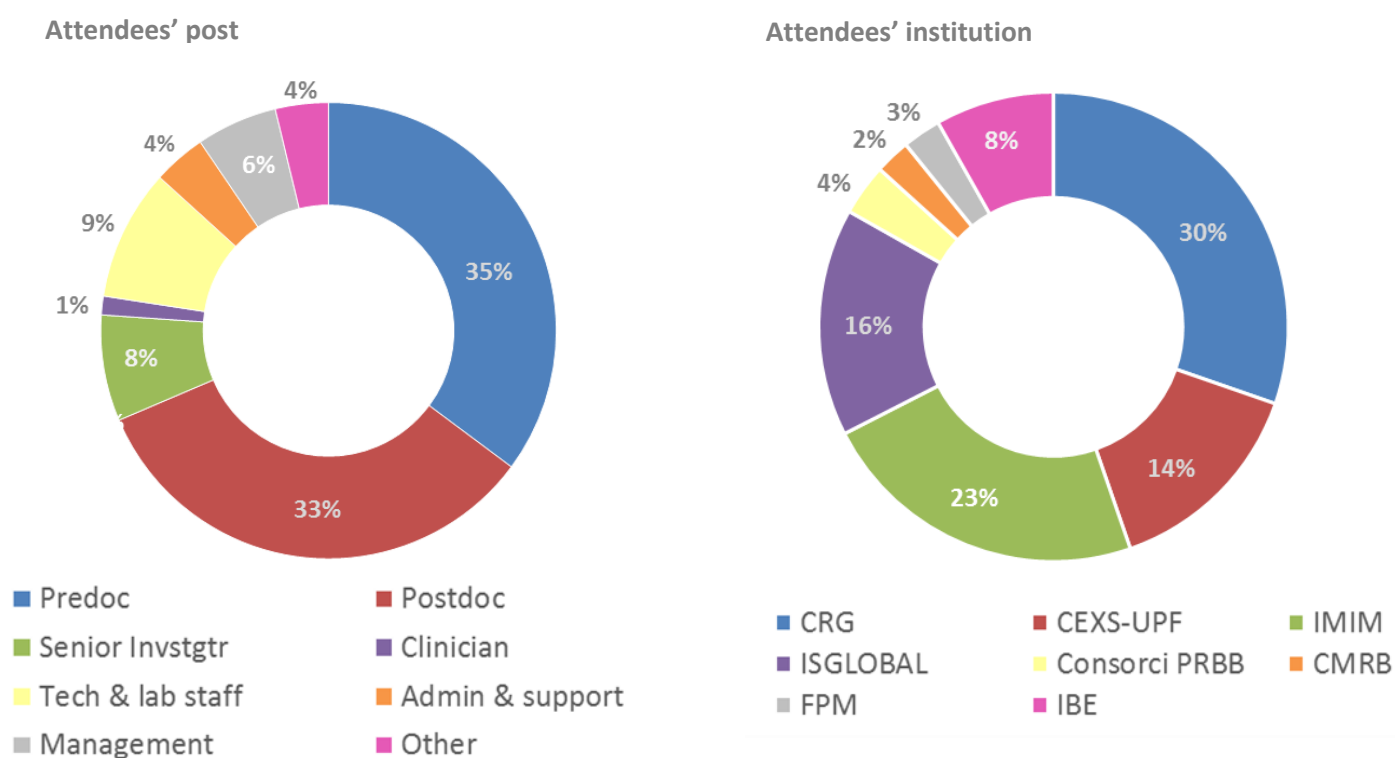
Attendees' institutions	% PRBB residents*	2016	2015	2014	2013
CRG	31	137 (30%)	136 (32%)	93 (27%)	128 (33%)
CEXS-UPF	24	65 (14%)	91 (22%)	85 (24%)	77 (20%)
IMIM	26	103 (23%)	83 (20%)	76 (22%)	89 (23%)
ISGLOBAL	9	71 (16%)	41 (10%)	35 (10%)	28 (7%)
Consorti PRBB	2	16 (4%)	14 (3%)	5 (1%)	4 (1%)
CMRB	3	11 (2%)	7 (2%)	17 (5%)	7 (2%)
FPM	--	12 (3%)	27 (6%)	6 (2%)	10 (2%)
IBE	5	37 (8%)	24 (6%)	33 (9%)	49 (12%)
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>452 (100%)</b>	<b>423 (100%)</b>	<b>350 (100%)</b>	<b>392 (100%)</b>

\* From PRBB demographic data, October 2016

**TABLE 5** Number and percentage of attendees by post

Attendees' post	2016	2015	2014	2013
Predoc	159 (35%)	181 (43%)	179 (51%)	209 (53%)
Postdoc	151 (33%)	105 (25%)	102 (29%)	112 (29%)
Senior Invstgtr	34 (8%)	25 (6%)	34 (10%)	24 (6%)
Clinician	6 (1%)	9 (2%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)
Tech & lab staff	42 (9%)	32 (8%)	12 (4%)	18 (5%)
Admin & support	17 (4%)	16 (4%)	6 (2%)	8 (2%)
Management	26 (6%)	36 (9%)	9 (2%)	11 (3%)
Other	17 (4%)	19 (4%)	6 (2%)	9 (2%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>452 (100%)</b>	<b>423 (100%)</b>	<b>350 (100%)</b>	<b>392 (100%)</b>

**FIGURE 2** Percentage of attendees' institution and post



**TABLE 6** Percentage of women/men

	Attendees to Intervals	PRBB Residents*	PRBB Researchers only*	Attendees 2015
<b>Men</b>	36	43	50	35
<b>Women</b>	64	57	50	65

\* From Consorci PRBB demographic data, October 2016

**TABLE 7** Source of trainers

Source of trainers	2016	2015	2014	2013
PRBB Institutions - Senior Staff	<b>13</b>	19	16	16
External (Spain)	<b>12</b>	11	9	8
External (Europe)	<b>5</b>	5	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	35	28	27

## COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

**Do you have any general comments about the contents and organisation of the PRBB *Intervals* programme?**

### ***General***

- Fantastic as always! I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to attend these courses. Thank you so much!
- Great job, keep up the good work.
- I think it is of good quality.
- Estoy muy agradecida de tener la posibilidad de realizar cursos tan interesantes. GRACIAS!
- Good, quite varied.
- Excellent programme.
- It's excellent! Thanks.
- It has been great so far.
- It could be suggested to PIs and supervisors how important it is that the team members get *Intervals* courses. I wouldn't request for an agreement of the supervisor because we are "free" to develop ourselves in a more productive way. At the end our general performance is improving.
- You are wonderful.
- I think all of them suit perfectly with the need for the career development of PhD students in terms of communication.
- Good job!
- Congratulations for your job!!
- Everything was well organized.
- Felicito al programa d'*Intervals* pels cursos tant interessants i necessaris que organitzen.
- Només he fet aquest curs d'*Intervals* però ha estat molt positiu. S'agraeix de la seva existència i es valora molt.
- Agradeceros que nos deis la posibilidad de hacer estos cursos.
- Great.
- They're great overall!!
- Excellent as usual.
- Very good.
- Thank you!
- You do perfectly.
- I think it's an excellent programme with a great offer to PRBB residents.

- Congratulate the organizers for this effort!
- I love PRBB *Intervals*, all of them have been very useful for me, personally and professionally. I wish I could attend more.
- Excellent program always fulfilling the needs of the PRBB residents.
- I like about the *Intervals* courses (the ones I did, at least) that they sum up to a larger experience. Many topics are repeated in difference classes (e.g., Getting the right person for your team / cross-cultural class / negotiation class) but this is not bad! All to the contrary, hearing similar things over and over again, especially from different teachers, helps a lot in remembering and building a deeper understanding. Very good!
- I think we are lucky to have access to the courses, and I try to take as much advantage as I can of them.
- Great programme!
- I love it!
- Great job!
- There could be a few less reminders and reminders of reminders....
- Very entertaining way to teach, thank you!
- We're very lucky to have this wonderful resource.
- Keep doing it!
- Overall has been excellent and very useful for me.
- Open up to other institutions to increase skill base for staff.
- Thanks for your effort!
- As always, I am grateful for the opportunity these courses provide!
- One day courses should last less. 9:30 -16:00 for example. 8 hours are too much.
- They are awesome in planning and communicating training. Their style of reminders bring you to high accountability, should you miss a session.
- Very good.
- Timely reminders and candidate follow up motivates adherence to courses offered by *Intervals*.
- I appreciate it very much.
- They cover many topics and are very well organised.
- I really like the idea of the *Intervals* and think it is a great opportunity for students and scientists!
- Perfect!
- All fine!
- Good job.

- Offering courses “on demand” e.g. the attendees can pre-decide which courses to run during any given semester.
- Nice.
- It’s a great opportunity for us!
- I’ve been to several courses this year and they have helped me significantly. Thanks!
- Very good to improve our soft skills.
- Estoy encantado.
- Thank you.
- Really good.
- The organizations is very good. I have no much to say!
- Excellent as usual.
- Everything is very organized, nothing to complaint.
- It was great, thank you.
- Well organized, thank you.
- In my opinion contents and organization are excellent.
- Thanks.
- Organized, very well planned.
- Everything is excellent.
- Very well organized.
- Great program.
- As I mentioned, a fantastic course as others that are organized by *Intervals*. They are doing a great task.
- This is the first one I attend and I love it, so I’m willing to register to others and check them out!
- Very good.
- Excellent.
- Thanks!
- I appreciate the opportunity the program gave us. The offer is great and the organization also.
- There are excellent, amazing, diversify and quality.
- The organization has done a correct follow up of the course.
- Todo fantástico!
- Hasta el momento estoy bastante satisfecha con todos los cursos tomados de *Intervals*.
- I like it.
- Very good selection of topics.
- Thanks *Intervals* for the great overall program and organization.

- I find all the courses very interesting. Well done!
- It's always really interesting.
- I really think these courses are very important in a scientific career and even at any other professional field. It gives you clues to succeed in approaching your goals.
- Me parece fantástico, todos los cursos que he tomado son excelentes, y que absolutamente todos me han dejado algo que he incorporado a mi vida, no solo a mi vida profesional, sino a mi vida personal también, y darles las gracias por organizar estas iniciativas.
- I have attended several of the PRBB courses and all of them have been very useful.
- Personalmente me gusta la dinámica del PRBB.
- Hay una oferta fantástica.
- I think it's very complete.

### ***Availability/accessibility***

- It would be interesting to have the classes available online in order to attend those courses that by date is not possible.
- In my opinion, given the current situation in science (lack of job positions that are well financed AND stable) it is more important than ever to open more sessions for the course "Beyond the bench".
- More courses on how to write properly.
- More presentation skills
- Some of the courses are very popular, and it would be good to have more editions per year (for example: "Técnicas actorales" and "Write it clearly"). I would also like a second part of the oral presentation course.
- Sea más frecuente para que haya más plazas.
- M'agradaria que s'ofertessin més places. M'he quedat fora de molts cursos interessants.
- The number of trainings could be increased.
- It's a pity that only a small number of people can participate in the *Intervals*. I already tried two times to do the "Writing it clearly" Intervals course and every time is full. I am afraid I will not be able to do the courses that I would like to do most.
- It would be good more courses, editions. Few places for the most popular courses.
- More sessions? It seems there is a big interest so courses are full very quickly.
- Need to expand the number of participants allowed or the number of trainings for year.
- I would appreciate more courses tailored towards senior postdocs.
- I tried to sign up for Mindfulness course and it was always full.
- I think there are too few places to the writing courses. I've registered to it twice and I haven't get a place.



- Sometimes the courses fill up very fast. You should insist on people signing up even if there is no space.
- It's great, some things could occur more frequently.
- Considering the big number of researcher working in the PRBB associated institutions and the few places available at each course, I would definitely offer additional places as couse-listener (maybe about 20 extra per course?), since even though you may not be able to actively participate in the practical part you will learn a lot from watching and following the trainers presentations. Plus the rooms are usually big enough to include addition 10-20 people.
- The organization was good because they respond you very fast. The only problem I found was that for the people who work in the Campus Clinic in ISGlobal is more difficult to access because you have to sign a paper not just pushing a button in the computer to confirm. Therefore, we are usually in the waiting list, and I think is a problem with a very easy solution.
- There are few places. Always some courses are full.

**Are there any other training issues that you would like to see included in the PRBB *Intervals* programme?**

***Team management skills, team-work, inter-personal skills***

- Project management.
- Some training specific for people in the management area.
- Leadership.
- Methods for interdisciplinary projects.
- More focus on preparation for getting PI positions.
- More courses like this one, also about intrapersonal communication. A follow up of this course would be awesome (*Participant in Effective team playing course*).
- Team building.
- Dealing with strong personalities in the team, more focused to personal achievements and also working with the team. To be able to get the best of my team.
- Gender issues and equality in general (not only gender).
- I think the programs related to conflict management could be extended. Something about conflict resolution.
- Practical team management in life sciences by a tutor who is a good scientist (group leader).
- How to manage people.
- I believe this course must be mandatory at the PRBB ☺ (*Participant in Cross-cultural working course*).
- Strategies to resolve conflicts.

- I do not know in deep all the programme, but reinforce regularly these topics would be useful (participant of the *Effective team playing course*).
- Management para técnicos.
- Groupal work (team) on difficult conversation.

### ***Personal effectiveness, self-mastery, intra-personal skills***

- A lo mejor se podría valorar la opción de introducir algún tipo de curso más psicológico para temas de gestión de estrés, de falta de confianza en uno mismo, etc. Ya que creo que es algo que puede generar problemas en un laboratorio.
- Handling difficult conversations.
- Decision making.
- Time management for PIs.
- Self-management in (cross-cultural) misunderstandings. How to manage cross-multi-cultural teams.
- Same type of class, but more focused on individual variation like “handling difficult people”. (*Participant in Cross-cultural working course*).
- A more deep vision on cultural preferences.
- En general, cursos de creixement personal.
- Si lo que se quiere con este tipo de cursos es bajar el nivel de stress y gestión del tiempo, preferiría algo más encarado a la relajación-respiración-yoga, pero desde el punto de vista teórico (*Participante del curso Mindfulness para mejorar la maestría personal*).
- Una segunda parte del de Mindfulness, es decir, para las personas que ya hemos hecho el primero.
- Aprender a meditar o introducción a la meditación.
- How to cope with criticism.
- Boosting women confidence in science.
- Maybe a specific course on how to highlight your skills and the impact of your project.
- I sense a need for courses on, let’s call it, “science pressure” and related aspects e.g. how to behave when my boss puts a lot of pressure on me; or what to do if I start feeling at the wrong place, too much work, etc. This would be somehow related to good science practice.
- Asertividad.
- Gestión tiempo.
- Stress management.
- Methods about organization skills to improve your efficiency and work performance in the day to day life.
- Time management for lab scientists.

### ***Career development, career planning***

- More career orientation training.

- The opposing course: “Getting the right job/company...” (*Participant in Getting the right person for your team course*).
- More courses like this one (*Participant in Beyond the bench course*).
- How to meet personality type with professional area at work.
- What are we beyond being PhD?

### **Oral communication**

- How to gain confidence to be able to speak in front of a public.
- Técnicas para construir el contenido de un discurso o presentación.
- Chalk talks.
- “The first 3 minutes of a talk”
- More oral presentations courses.
- The theatre techniques course in English.
- Más de este estilo comunicativo (*Participante del curso Técnicas actorales*).

### **Written communication, publishing**

- How to read papers: focusing on the important parts.
- More writing-focused training courses.
- Writing is unfortunately ignored during university teaching, so I would add more courses on it (even though the *Intervals* already are doing a good job at it).
- Writing CV’s and letters to a hiring committee.
- Science communication for all media. Success in publishing papers.
- Proposal writing / Focus on contexts of writing. Different section of manuscripts.
- Més cursos d’escriure projectes.
- How to write other scientific documents.
- A specific course about preprint process and open data.
- More detailed writing paper.
- How to write a motivation letter.
- Add more writing courses.
- Design of reports / Grey literature.
- More writing.
- Writing for beginners (PhD student)
- Related more with the thesis, like: How to write a thesis or related with the defence.

### **Ethical practice, sound research**

- What makes a good research question? How to design a proposal, not how to write one.

- Designing long term research proposals.
- Sessions of peer revision on writing.
- Cómo ser un buen revisor de artículos científicos.

***Miscellaneous***

- Data visualization.
- Courses on how to give a good class.
- I suggest to create a space for meditation within the building.

