



Media Training

Bespoke training course for Ph.D. Students

By the end of this course, delegates will have learned the basics of communicating with journalists and other non-specialists. They will have produced a piece of work, in the form of a draft press release, which can form the basis of future outreach work or interactions with the media. They will have had the opportunity to practice their skills in a radio interview exercise.

Location of the training course

Alfred Denny building, APS Common room – D219

Dates (9 – 12 May 2016)

Each student will be given one date to attend the training course.

What to bring

You can bring your laptop or other electronic device for the writing exercises. If you don't have one, you can use pen-and-paper, which of course works fine.

Course Outline and programme

Time	Activity
9.00	Introductions and aims. Brainstorm: why bother with the media? Opportunities and pitfalls. Fundamental principles of communicating your research to non-specialists. Making you science accessible: key principles of popular style structure. News In Brief case study: the quintessence of effective communication and news writing. Exercise: study a research paper abstract. How would you restructure it into a popular-style article? How to inspire an audience and show why your research matters. Using lively language and avoiding jargon
11.00	Short Coffee break
11.15	Exercise: write a short press release about your project.

	<p>How science hits the headlines: a day in the life of a science journalist, how science reaches the news.</p> <p>Press releases, embargoes and the role of the press office.</p> <p>Best practice when dealing with the media: a case study of how and why a science story was misreported.</p>
13.00	Lunch
14.00	<p>What makes science newsworthy? “News values” and editorial angles. A case study of how different newspapers reported the same science story differently.</p> <p>Editorial meeting exercise: students break out into groups of 4 or 5. Each group role plays an editorial meeting at a different newspaper or science magazine. Groups report back with their stories and headlines.</p>
15.00	Short Coffee break
15.15	<p>Oral communication and broadcast media basics: How oral communication differs from the written word.</p> <p>Requirements of radio/ podcast interviews.</p> <p>Simulated “roving reporter” group radio interviews.</p> <p>Final discussion</p>
17.00	END

Please note that the programme is flexible and timing is approximate

Trainer: Dr. Jon Copley

Jon is the Chairman of SciConnect, Associate Professor of Marine Ecology at the University of Southampton, and an alumnus of APS at the University of Sheffield. As a scientist, he has established a program of public engagement that has been highlighted by RCUK as an example of “best practice” in generating impact from research. His deep-sea research routinely makes the headlines, and he has given more than 100 media interviews about his team’s work since 2008. Jon is also a former reporter and news editor at New Scientist.