

# Science Communication Building Blocks



Designed by the team behind the Science Communication Unit (SCU), UWE Bristol's renowned Science Communication programmes, **Science Communication Building Blocks**, offers a unique opportunity to bring cutting-edge expertise to your staff, students and teams.

Pick from a wide-selection of three hour sessions covering relevant topics for **contemporary** science communication and public engagement.

Create your own **bespoke** programme, or select from a series of **perfect pairings** designed to fit into one day of training.



**UWE  
Bristol** | University  
of the  
West of  
England

# We offer three levels of content:

## **Introductory:**

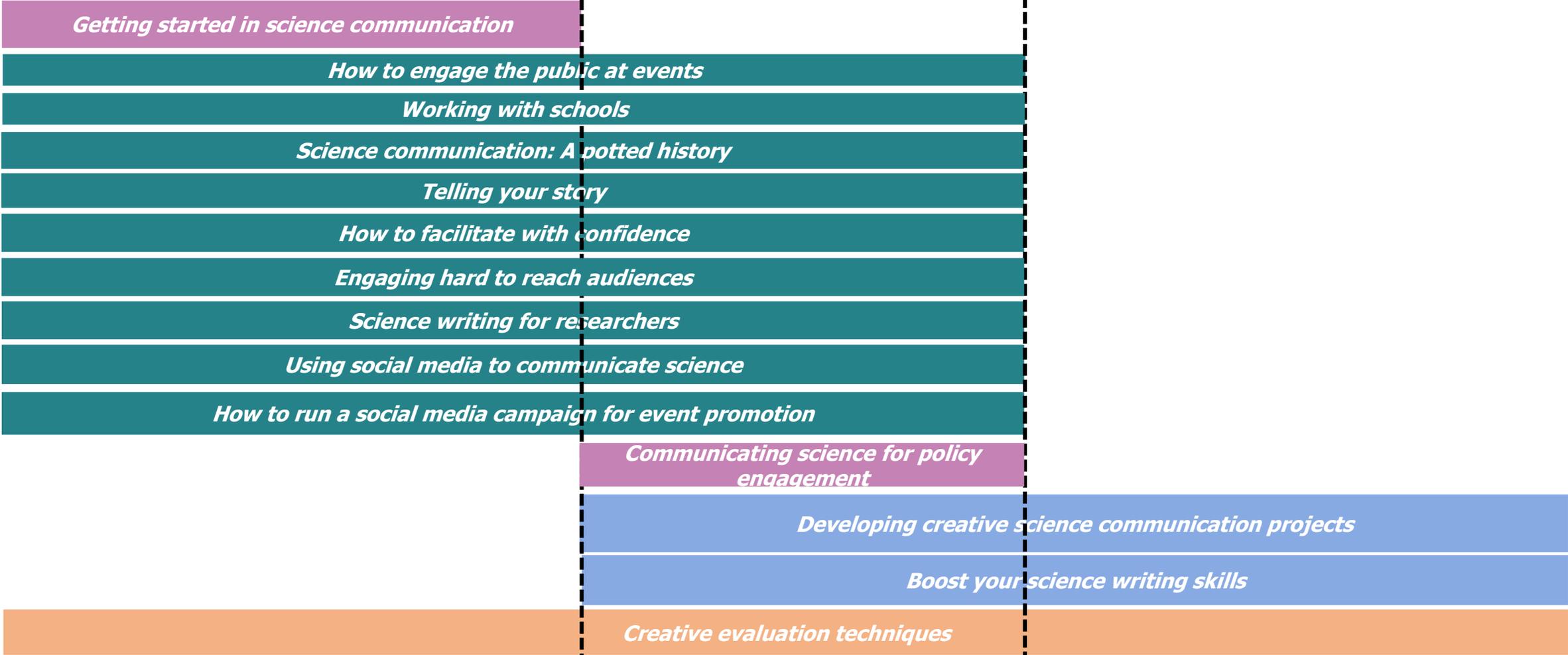
No prior experience of science communication

## **Intermediate:**

Some previous experience of science communication

## **Advanced:**

Previous experience of science communication and actively working in the field



# Block 1:1 Introductory

## *Getting started in science communication*

**Delivered by:** Emma  
Weitkamp, Clare Wilkinson,  
Andy Ridgway, Hannah Little,  
Corra Boushel

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally ✓

### Synopsis:

This brief introduction to science communication will provide a whistle-stop tour of the key reasons why science communication might be important to your role. What are the key drivers for communicating research? What are the benefits of communicating via the media, face-to-face and digitally? Which organisations can offer advice and resources? This practical introduction will answer the key questions for those that are new to the field.

### Key Contents:

- Why do we communicate about science and research
- Key techniques in science communication, their benefits and constraints
- Organisations and additional resources for science communication
- Developing your own science communication action plan



# Block 2:1 Introductory/Intermediate

## *How to engage the public at events*

**Delivered by:** Laura Fogg Rogers, Margarida Sardo or Corra Boushel

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

Public engagement at events is an excellent way to reach new audiences and ensure your research has impact. How do you prepare for a conversation about your work, rather than a lecture? How can you describe the importance of your research in two minutes? How do you find the right location for your event? What types of speakers might you want to get involved? We will cover these and a range of other questions.

### Key Contents:

- Planning your communication approach
- Venues, audiences and collaborators
- Reaching new and challenging audiences
- Organising speakers and providing 'role models' for research
- Using appropriate props and materials



# Block 2:2 Introductory/Intermediate

## *Working with schools*

**Delivered by:** Laura Fogg Rogers, Corra Boushel or Hannah Little

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

Schools are a key audience for communication but they have their own specific needs and requirements. The session will tell you how to get schools interested, what teachers need to know and how to increase the impact of your activity by reflecting your audience. We will also focus on tips and tricks for the classroom. You will leave this workshop more confident in how to make your workshop appealing to schools, and how to work with children.

### Key Contents:

- How to design workshops that work for schools
- Tips for communicating with schools
- Practical matters, including for example, costs, DBS checks and curriculum links
- Working with primary (5-11) and secondary school children (11-18)



# Block 2:3 Introductory/Intermediate

## *Science communication: A potted history*

**Delivered by:** Clare Wilkinson

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

In this interactive session we will find out more about how the field of science communication has developed and examine some of its key drivers. Casting an eye over some of the notable events in the field, we will think about the different influences which has led to support for communication and engagement, as well as the challenges of the field.

### Key Contents:

- Insights into a number of key events in the history of science communication
- Consideration of key agendas in science communication, including scientific literacy, public understanding of science, and public engagement with science and technology
- An opportunity to reflect on and situate ones own science communication practices in the broader development of the field



# Block 2:4 Introductory/Intermediate

## *Telling your story*

**Delivered by:** Laura Fogg Rogers

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

Have you ever wondered why people just won't listen to your research messages? In this session, we will explain how to speak or write so that people will listen. Storytelling is at the heart of presenting at events through to making your messages go viral. The session covers what makes a good story, how to present that in person or on film, and what will make it appealing to traditional or social media.

### Key Contents:

- What makes a good story
- How to find your audience
- How to speak so people will listen
- How to write so traditional media or social media is interested



# Block 2:5 Introductory/Intermediate

## *How to facilitate with confidence*

**Delivered by:** Margarida Sardo or Corra Boushel

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

Feeling confident about interacting with the public is crucial when doing face-to-face public engagement. This session will guide participants through the skills (and tricks!) needed to deal with a public audience and how to overcome any challenges. The focus will be on developing the participants' facilitation skills, specifically in informal public engagement situations, for example if you are carrying out a science café, dialogue activity or a discussion of your research.

### Key Contents:

- Introduction to venues
- Different audiences, different venues, different collaborators
- Dealing with the audience and challenges
- Facilitation skills



# Block 2:6 Introductory/Intermediate

*Engaging hard to reach audiences: Inclusivity in science communication*

**Delivered by:** Hannah Little

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally ✓

## Synopsis:

Science communication primarily engages audiences who already have an interest in science. It is obviously important to engage these people, and provide resources for them to pursue their interest. However, it is also important to reach audiences who are less engaged, especially with issues that are likely to affect their lives. In this session, we will discuss strategies for identifying hard to reach audiences, identifying venues where they might be reached, and strategies to communicate science in accessible, approachable and engaging ways.

## Key Contents:

- Identifying hard to reach audiences
- Identifying where to find hard to reach audiences
- Building strategies for engaging hard to reach audiences
- Communicating in accessible and approachable ways



# Block 2:7 Introductory/Intermediate

## *Science writing for researchers*

**Delivered by:** Andy Ridgway, Emma Weitkamp or Ruth Larbey

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally ✓

### Synopsis:

If you want to spread the word about your work and that of your colleagues outside the academic community, how do you do that in an accessible, yet impactful way? This course will teach you key techniques in science writing, enabling you to write effective blogs, stories for the media and other forms of writing. You will discover how to structure what you write, how to grab your readers' attention and how to write for different audiences.

### Key Contents:

- Key writing structures for online and print platforms
- Techniques for making your writing engaging
- How to write for different audiences
- Explaining science clearly to non-scientists
- Getting your writing noticed online



# Block 2:8 Introductory/Intermediate

## *Using social media to communicate science*

**Delivered by:** Elena Milani,  
Hannah Little or Ruth Larbey

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

Many of us would like to make use of social media to help spread the word about our research and develop new connections. But how do you make the most effective use of your time? This course will provide a clear insight into using the most popular social media platforms so you reach the audience or audiences you want to reach.

### Key Contents:

- Overview of key social media platforms e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram
- Key components of social media content
- Writing for social media
- Getting your social media posts noticed
- Planning your social media activity to maximise its effectiveness



# Block 2:9 Introductory/Intermediate

## *How to run a social media campaign for event promotion*

**Delivered by:** Elena Milani  
or Hannah Little

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

This session will cover social media promotion of events (exhibitions, conferences, etc.), starting with a brief introduction of different social media outlets (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) and their differences, and then discussing how to plan, run, and evaluate a social media campaign. Attendees will learn fundamental steps of a social media campaign such as how to choose the right social media platform, select images to share, create a hashtag, and respect social media ethics.

### Key Contents:

- Overview of different social media outlets (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook)
- Before the event - Planning a social media campaign
- During the event - Engaging with the public
- Evaluating a social media campaign



# Block 3:1 Intermediate

## *Communicating science for policy engagement*

**Delivered by:** Ruth Larbey

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

This session will offer participants the opportunity to develop their skills in communicating scientific evidence to a policy audience. Starting from the principles of science-for-policy communication, this session will cover practical strategies for planning your policy engagement, how to be timely, and techniques that can be used to select and tailor your policy-relevant content, as well as increasing the societal impact of your work.

### Key Contents:

- Key structures for communicating with policymakers
- How to explain science clearly to a policy audience; developing your content-selection skills
- Communicating with policy audiences, such as regulators, local government and corporate policymakers
- The context of current events
- Balancing scientific evidence and public acceptability
- How to find opportunities to pitch science to policymakers



# Block 4:1 Intermediate/Advanced

## *Developing creative science communication projects*

**Delivered by:** Emma  
Weitkamp

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

This session focuses on the start-up and ideas generation phases of project development. The session covers creativity techniques that can be used to generate project ideas as well as considering facets of interdisciplinary working. The session will draw on the experiences of project members and is most suited to those with a reasonable level of experience of science communication, on which the session will draw.

### Key Contents:

- Why we might be interested in creative, interdisciplinary approaches to science communication
- Creativity techniques
- Thinking through the challenges of working in interdisciplinary projects
- Setting and managing expectations in interdisciplinary projects



# Block 4:2 Intermediate/Advanced

*Boost your science writing skills*

**Delivered by:** Andy Ridgway or Emma Weitkamp

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally ✓

## Synopsis:

If you already have some experience of science writing and want to develop your skills further, then this course will help you hone your writing technique. We'll explore how to write lively, engaging stories that are targeted well at their audience. You will also learn how to tell stories in different ways, using your creativity to develop memorable pieces of writing.

## Key Contents:

- Creative development of story ideas
- Writing effective pitches for editors.
- Developing your writing to create lively, engaging copy
- Editing your stories and those of others
- Pitching your writing perfectly at your audience



# Block 5:1 Introductory/ Intermediate/Advanced

## *Developing creative evaluation techniques*

**Delivered by:** Clare  
Wilkinson

**Available:**

Locally ✓

Nationally ✓

Internationally

### Synopsis:

This session will offer an introduction to best practice in evaluating science communication and public engagement projects, as well as offering participants the opportunity to think about designing evaluations which are creative, innovative and appealing for participants to engage with. Starting from the basics, the session will cover good principles in evaluation design including designing SMART objectives, incorporating quantitative and qualitative techniques, and considering ethical principles when collecting data. The session will encourage participants to actively consider approaches which may make their own evaluation activities more creative in future.

### Key Contents:

- Designing aims and objectives for evaluation
- Quantitative and qualitative evaluation techniques
- Creative approaches to evaluation design
- Ethical considerations in evaluation
- Considering funder requirements



# Meet the trainers:

## Science Communication Building Blocks

are delivered by a team of experienced trainers who teach on undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional training courses at UWE Bristol.

Further information on all trainers is available at:

<http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/research/sciencecommunicationunit/scumembers.aspx>

Please note: The specific trainer for your Building Block session will be determined by staff availability but will be confirmed in advance of the session/s.

### Corra Boushel

Project coordinator and communications officer in the SCU, working in public engagement as well as schools outreach.



### Ruth Larbey

Managing Editor and Project Manager in the SCU, working in environmental policy communications, editing and communicating science for change.



### Elena Milani

PhD student in the SCU working in digital and visual communication, with a background in Neuroscience.



### Margarida Sardo

Senior Research Fellow in the SCU working in evaluation, environmental engagement and communication via generic venues.



### Emma Weitkamp

Associate Professor at UWE Bristol and Co-Director of the SCU, working in science journalism, public relations and Sci-Art.



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### Laura Fogg Rogers

Senior Research Fellow in the SCU working on live science events, and the impact of communication for engineers, scientists and audiences.



### Hannah Little

Lecturer in the SCU working on online engagement and digital projects, as well as science comedy, with a background in cultural evolution.



### Andy Ridgway

Senior Lecturer in the SCU working on media representations of science, with a background in science reporting and editing.



### Clare Wilkinson

Associate Professor at UWE Bristol and Co-Director of the SCU, working in public engagement and evaluation.



# Perfect pairings and example programmes:



Looking for a **one-day training event** for **your team**? Why not pair:

- How to engage the public at events + telling your story
- Developing creative science communication projects + creative evaluation techniques
- How to facilitate with confidence + how to run a social media campaign for event promotion... plus many more combinations

Looking for a **two-day training event** for **science centre staff**? Why not include:

- Developing creative science communication projects
- Telling your story
- Engaging hard to reach audiences
- Creative evaluation techniques

Looking for a **two-day training event** for **university researchers**? Why not include:

- Getting started in science communication
- How to engage the public at events
- Science writing for researchers
- Communicating science for policy engagement

# Building Block costs:



|  | <b>8-14 Delegates</b> | <b>15-25 Delegates</b> |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Training at UWE Bristol*                   |                       |                        |
| 3hr session                                | £750                  | £1,000                 |
| Training at your Organisation (UK)         |                       |                        |
| 3hr session                                | £850                  | £1,200                 |
| Training at your Organisation (Overseas)** |                       |                        |
| 3hr session                                | £1,000                | £1,500                 |

|                                     | <b>Within 35 miles of UWE Bristol</b> | <b>Over 35 miles of UWE Bristol (UK)</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Travel costs                        |                                       |  |
| Per trainer, per day                | £50                                   | £250                                     |
| Accommodation and Subsistence costs |                                       |  |
| Per trainer, per night              | -                                     | £180                                     |

\* Additional UWE Catering Charges at: £10 per delegate for tea/coffee/water x 2, £25 per delegate for breakfast OR lunch, and tea/coffee/water x 2

\*\* Overseas training will be subject to an additional charge for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs, a quote must be provided for these prior to your online booking. Please email [science.communication@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:science.communication@uwe.ac.uk) for further information.