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.

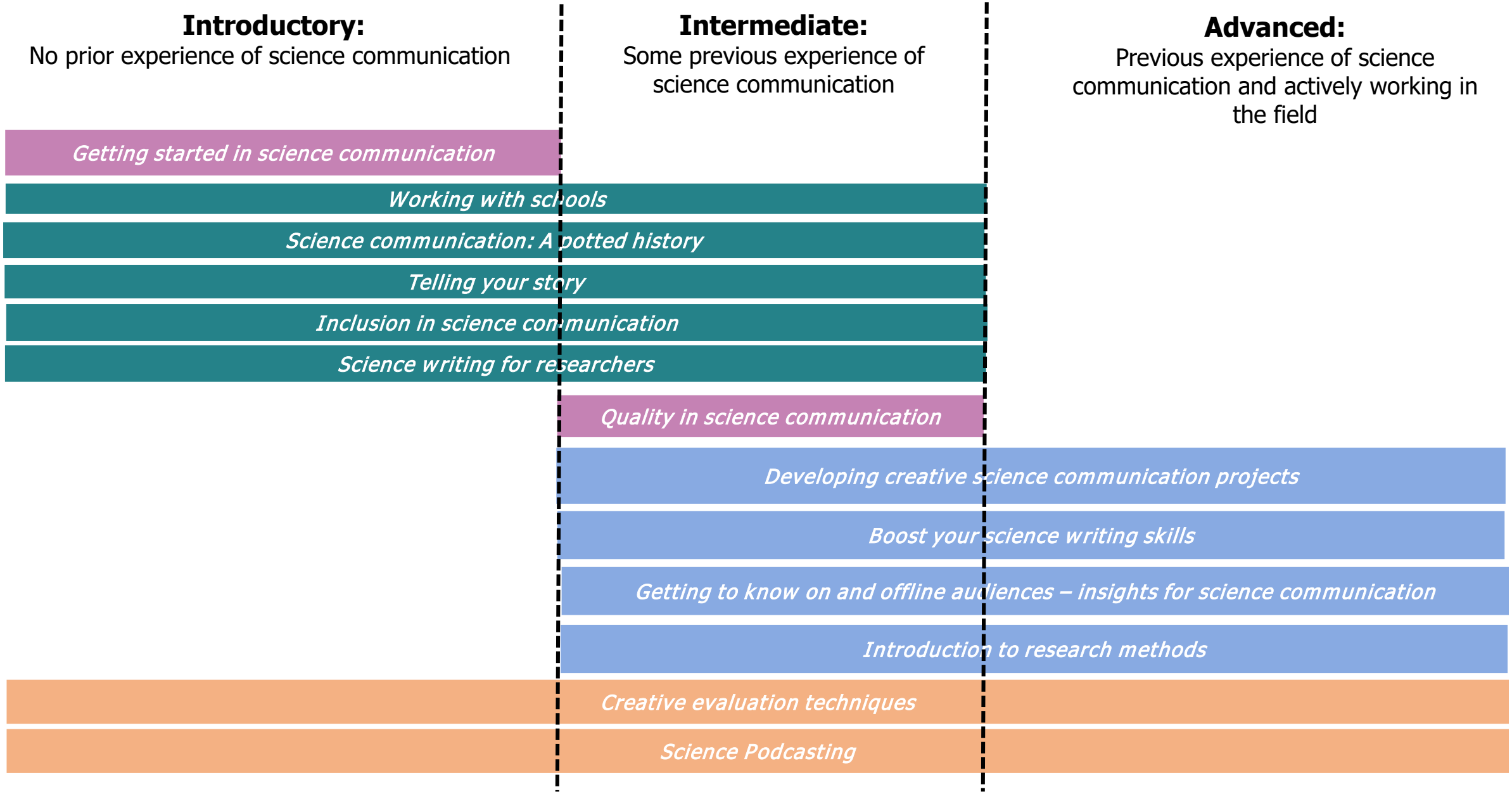
Pick from a wide-selection of three hour sessions covering relevant topics for **contemporary** science communication and public engagement.

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

SCU

UWE Bristol | University of the West of England

We offer three levels of content:



Block 1:1 Introductory

Getting started in science communication

Delivered by: Emma Weitkamp, Clare Wilkinson or Andy Ridgway
Available:
Locally

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

Working with schools

Delivered by: Kathy Fawcett

Available:
Locally

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 2:2 Introductory/Intermediate

Science communication: A potted history

Delivered by: Clare Wilkinson

Available:
Locally

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 2:3 Introductory/Intermediate

Telling your story

Delivered by: Andy Ridgway
or Andrew Glester

Available:
Locally

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 2:4 Introductory/Intermediate

Inclusion in science communication

Delivered by: Clare Wilkinson, Amanda Webber

Available:
Locally

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 those who engage in different ways, especially when issues are likely to affect their lives. In this session, we will discuss strategies for identifying 'underserved' participants, identifying ways they might be reached, and strategies to communicate science in accessible, approachable and engaging ways.

Key Contents:

- Identifying 'underserved' participants
- Key concepts in inclusion
- Building strategies for engaging underserved people
- Drawing on existing research on inclusive approaches to science communication

Block 2:5 Introductory/Intermediate

Science writing for researchers

Delivered by: Andy Ridgway, Emma Weitkamp or Andrew Glester

Available:
Locally

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 2:6 Introductory/Intermediate

Introduction to research methods

Delivered by: Amanda Webber

Available:
Locally

Synopsis:

Science communicators often need to carry out research and this course will introduce you to the basic principles of setting up and managing a project, alongside introducing several key social research methods. It will focus on research to better understand audiences e.g., demographics, perceptions, values, which can provide a useful baseline for evaluation (see block 5.1)

Key Contents:

- How to set up a research project; areas of consideration
- Project planning and management – making sure your research delivers
- How to use questionnaires and interviews to collect baseline data
- Analysis and developing a long-term approach

Block 3:1 Intermediate

Quality in science communication

Delivered by: Emma Weitkamp or Andy Ridgway

Available:
Locally

Synopsis:

In this session you will explore why quality is an important concept in science communication and then consider different ways we can think about quality and who might be responsible for ensuring quality in science communication. The session particularly explores issues around quality in digital spaces for science communication, considering the diversity of communicators that can be present in these spaces.

Key Contents:

- Digital science communication contexts, including who we might encounter communicating science
- Opportunities and challenges to quality in these spaces
- Quality metrics for science communication in digital spaces
- Challenges in shaping quality metrics for science communication

Block 4:1 Intermediate/Advanced

Developing creative science communication projects

Delivered by: Emma Weitkamp or David Judge

Available:
Locally

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, Emma Weitkamp or Andrew Glester

Available:
Locally

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 4:3 Intermediate/Advanced

Getting to know on and offline audiences – insights for science communication

Delivered by: Andy Ridgway, Amanda Webber

Available:
Locally

Synopsis:

The European science communication research project RETHINK looked at how people across Europe make sense of science – who they listen to, what they read, who and what they trust and how they then act on this information. Also, how their pre-existing values and beliefs influence this process. Other research conducted within the unit has explored how people interpret and evaluate information online, including who and what they trust. These insights can transform our thinking into how we communicate more effectively with the audiences we hope to reach.

Key Contents:

- How audiences evaluate and interpret information about science on and offline
- Using insights from audience research to inform the targeting of communication activities
- Adapting the content and tone of science communication so it is more effective

Block 5:1 Introductory/ Intermediate/Advanced

Developing creative evaluation techniques

Delivered by: Clare Wilkinson

Available:
Locally

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

Block 5:2 Intro/Intermediate/Advanced

Science Podcasting

Delivered by: Andrew Glester

Available:
Locally

Synopsis:

If you are thinking of starting a podcast, this is for you. If you already have some experience of science podcasting and want to develop your skills further, then this course will help you hone your abilities. We'll explore how to create engaging podcasts and developing your audience.

Key Contents:

- Creative development of podcast ideas
- Recording audio
- Producing and releasing podcasts
- Editing
- Podcast Audiences

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.

Kathy Fawcett
Senior Lecturer in the SCU, formerly Education Manager at a Science Centre, with a background in science teaching and botany.

Andrew Glester
Lecturer in the SCU, science writer, podcaster, radio presenter and producer/director of films and live events.

David Judge
Lecturer in the SCU working on learning in science centres, museums and other informal settings.

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

Amanda Webber
Senior Lecturer in the SCU and Programme Leader of the MSc Science Communication

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

Clare Wilkinson
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:

- Developing creative science communication projects + creative evaluation techniques
- Science Communication: A potted history + science writing for researchers…

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
- Inclusion in science communication
- Creative evaluation techniques

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

- Getting started in science communication
- Science writing for researchers
- Getting to know on and offline audiences
- Working with schools

Building Block costs:

	8-14 Delegates	15-25 Delegates
Training UWE Bristol* or online		
3hr session	£800	£1,100
Training at your Organisation (UK)		
3hr session	£900	£1,350
Training at your Organisation (Overseas)**		
3hr session	£1,100	£1,650

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

* Additional UWE Catering Charges for training at UWE Bristol: £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 for further information.