



## **Improving together: collaborative learning in science communication**

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Most scientists today recognise that science communication is an important part of the scientific process. Despite this recognition, science writing and communication are generally taught outside the normal academic schedule. If universities offer such courses, they are generally short-term and intensive. On the positive side, such courses rarely fail to motivate. At no fault of their own, the problem with such courses lies in their ephemeral nature. The participants rarely complete a science communication course with an immediate and pressing need to apply these skills. And so the skills fade. We believe that this stalls real progress in the improvement of science communication across the board. Continuity is one of the keys to success!

Whilst we wait for the academic system to truly integrate science communication, we can test and develop other approaches. We suggest a new approach that aims to motivate scientists to continue nurturing their communication skills. This approach adopts a collaborative learning framework where scientists form writing groups that meet regularly at different institutes around the world. The members of the groups learn, discuss and improve together. The participants produce short posts, which are published online. In this way, the participants learn and cement basic writing skills. These skills are transferrable, and can be applied to scientific articles as well as other science communication media.

In this presentation we reflect on an ongoing project, which applies a collaborative learning framework to help young and early career scientists improve their writing skills. We see that this type of project could be extended to other media such as podcasts, or video shorts.