**Writing an effective research proposal or paper**

**RESCAP-MED training for researchers**

**Dublin, 16-18th Sept 2012**

**Course facilitators:** Kathleen Bennett, Peter Philimore, Simon Capewell/Martin O’Flaherty, Julia Critchley.

**Outline programme**

The training and workshops will cover the following topics: targeting a journal, getting started, analysing abstracts, writing an abstract, outlining, drafting, and dealing with feedback from reviewers. There will be some writing and discussion activities.

Participants are strongly encouraged to bring laptops to use at this workshop. The first two days will focus mainly on writing for publications, but this will also be applicable to the final day which will focus on writing for grant proposals.

A short research paper and separate Method & Materials section will be sent out prior to the course.

Attendees are asked to complete the following tasks:

* Read the short paper and prepare a short abstract of no more than 250 words ready to go through **on day 1**. (Attendees may choose to write an abstract on their current research if the prefer- Max 250 words).
* Read the method section and annotate/edit it in hard copy to bring along with you for discussion **on day 2**
* A short reading list and some papers are provided for you to look at beforehand.

**Learning outcomes:** At the end of the course participants will be able to:

* Recognise the need for scientific paper writing and peer review
* Understand the way in which scientific papers are constructed IMRAD
* Critically evaluate poorly written and well written papers STROBE CONSORT, equator
* Distinguish between the relative worth of journals
* Prepare a paper suitable for publication and employ the knowledge gained to get a paper published
* Understand the way in which grant proposals are constructed
* Distinguish between poorly and well written grant applications

**Outline plan for 3 days**

**Day 1: 16th September**

**Papers: Introductions & Key Principles**

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|  | **Topic** | **Facilitator** |
| **9-9.30am** | **Introductions** | **Kath** |
| **9.30-10.15am** | **Getting started on writing – who is the audience? Targeting a Journal. What Editors want?** | **Martin** |
| **10.15-10.45 am** | **An introduction to quantitative writing - General principles/motivation/getting started** | **Julia** |
| **10.45-11.15** | **Planning the writing –**  **Abstract drafting - outline sections of the paper/main messages** | **Kath** |
| **11.15-11.30am** | **Coffee** |  |
| **11.30-12.30pm** | **Titles & Abstracts Lecture:**  **Quantitative and Qualitative** | **Peter** |
| **12.30-1.00pm** | **Literature reviewing before you write – why and how to use it.** | **Julia** |
| **1.00-2.00pm** | **Lunch** |  |
| **2.00-3.00pm** | **Workshop – writing an abstract (sent out before course)** | **All - 3 or 4 groups with a facilitator for each** |
| **3.00-3.15pm** | **Using the abstract as a framework – appraising workshop** | **Martin** |
| **3.15-3.30pm** | **Coffee** |  |
| **3.30-4.00pm** | **Writing in English when it is not your first language** | **Abla** |
| **4.00-5pm** | **Short workshop identifying pitfalls in example papers** | **All** |

**Day 2 – 17 September**

**Publishing papers - Advanced**

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|  | **Topic** | **Facilitator** |
| **9.00-9.30am** | **Writing the Introduction – what is included? Including aims of the research – why you did the research?** | **Martin** |
| **9.30-10.30am** | **Exercise: Drafting an introduction. Using researchers own material or provided** | **All – small group workshop (3-4 groups with facilitator)** |
| **10.30-11.15pm** | **Methods – study design, sample size, etc, and writing methods** | **Julia** |
| **11.15-11.30am** | **Coffee** |  |
| **11.30-12.15** | **Workshop exercise sent out to course – looking at methods of a paper** | **All – critical appraisal of methods section of paper (where it could be improved)** |
| **12.15-1.15 pm** | **Results – describing quantitative and qualitative data etc. & short exercise** | **Kath & Peter (Lecture followed by exercise on displaying results: participants focus on either quant or qual results)** |
| **1.15-2.15pm** | **Lunch** |  |
| **2.15-2.45pm** | **Discussion – key messages** | **Context of other studies, Strengths/limitations/implications**  **Simon (with some input from Peter)** |
| **2.45-3.30pm** | **Exercise on structuring discussion. Key sentences** | **All (small group work)** |
| **3.30-3.45pm** | **Coffee available** |  |
| **3.45-4.30pm** | **Cover letters, authorship etc Plagarism, targeting journals, Responding to reviewer feedback, Revision and Proofs** | **Peter** |
| **4.30-4.45pm** | **Final Discussion** | **All – experiences of feedback (good and bad), dealing with rejection, open access journals etc..** |

**Day 3 Grant Writing – start with developing a proposal and then writing the proposal**

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|  | **Topic** | **Facilitator** |
| **9.00-9.15am** | **Grant writing vs paper writing** | **Kath** |
| **9.15-9.45am** | **Developing a proposal**   * + **Developing ideas and identifying a suitable funding source, building a team** | **Simon** |
| **9.45-10.30am** | **Writing the proposal - Structuring outline:** (1) the proposal summary; (2) introduction of organization; (3) the problem statement (or needs assessment); (4) project objectives; (5) project methods or design; (6) project evaluation; (7) future funding; and (8) the project budget. | **Peter** |
| **10.30-11.30am** | **Exercise – exploring and critiquing successful and unsuccessful proposals** | **All – in small groups, perhaps divide up sections for individuals to review within each group and to feedback to group.** |
| **11.30-11.45am** | **Coffee** |  |
| **11.45-12.15pm** | **What are reviewers looking for?**  **Guidelines reviewers are provided with to rate applications – use these to rate the examples** | **Simon** |
| **12.15-1.00pm** | **Applying for EU funding to include Marie Curie training, fellowships etc** | **Oonagh Kinsman, TCD research office** |
| **1.00-2.00pm** | **Lunch** |  |
| **2.00-4.30pm** | **Exercise**  **Responding to a call and outlining a proposal (Martins document) Selling your idea and your institute.** | **ALL – in small groups** |
| **4.30-5.00pm** | **Responding to feedback** | **Peter** |
| **5.00pm** | **Finish Course/wrap-up** | **Kath** |