

The Royal Society Media Skills Course



Course information

This one-day course will teach you what journalists look for in science stories and how to manage media interviews about your research. It consists of two parts:

Part 1: Pre-course survey and writing assignment: This will consist of a short online survey asking you to tell us about your training needs. We will also ask you to write a short, non-specialist summary of your research project and send it in before the course.

Part 2: In-person course: This will take place at The Royal Society in London. You will receive training in interview technique, as well three practice interviews (two for radio, one for TV), see the agenda on the next page for full details.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email the course manager, Dr Claire Ainsworth at claire.ainsworth@sciconnect.co.uk

| Activity | Description |
|---|--|
| Introduction to the media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Media outlets covering science ● How science hits the headlines ● What journalists look for in stories ● How to prepare for interviews |
| “Soft” radio interview exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practise a “soft” radio interview, receive tutor feedback |
| <i>Coffee break</i> | |
| The role of journalists and scientists in science communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How misreporting of science can arise; how scientists can reduce the risk of this happening ● Science journalists as critics of science ● Preparing for tough questions from journalists |
| “Hard” radio interview exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practise a “hard” radio interview, receive tutor feedback |
| <i>Lunch</i> | |
| Different audiences, different media How science works on TV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exploring different audiences ● Why different outlets cover stories differently ● What TV outlets look for in stories ● Requirements of TV interviews |
| Concurrent editorial meeting and TV interview exercises | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Split into groups and role play editorial meetings at different media outlets ● Meanwhile, individual delegates practise remote TV interviews, receive tutor feedback |
| <i>Tea break</i> | |
| Review of editorial exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review headlines and angles produced by different teams ● Discuss best practice guidelines in media communication |
| When old media meets new | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How old and new media complement each other ● How scientists can leverage both to communicate |
| Final discussion and END | |