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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and ambition

At the heart of doing scholarly work and academic life is communication: researchers are not only expected to master the craft of navigating the literature with the purpose of identifying research gaps and to narrow these gaps by producing compelling lines of argumentation, gathering data and analyzing data; they are also expected to *communicate* findings and contributions in peer-reviewed journals, and sometimes to policymakers, practitioners, and the general public. In doing so, scholars are expected to contribute to ongoing conversations in academic communities and to be open to criticism and learning, but also to translate complex findings into clear and engaging language, addressed at fellow academics, but also to policymakers, practitioners, and the public. For communication in academic communities, a key element for communication is to ‘survive’ a double-blind review process, which is often regarded to be the cornerstone of academic publishing through which quality, credibility and rigor are guaranteed. For early-career researchers, navigating the various stages of this elaborate and often time- and labor consuming process can be a challenge, but also for experienced researchers, the double-blind peer review process occasionally produces new surprises.

This curriculum provides participants an overall introduction to academic writing, the art and craft of getting one’s findings published in peer-reviewed journals, and science communication more generally. The course materials and instructions will be provided through asynchronous modules, as well as with synchronous online meetings in which the work of participants will be discussed.

1.2 Curriculum goals

By the end of the modules in the curriculum, participants will be fully equipped to write, publish, and communicate their research with clarity, confidence, and impact, navigating the academic landscape with skill and insight.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to

- identify appropriate academic journals for your research and understand key criteria for journal selection, including scope, audience, and impact
- navigate the submission and peer review process, including preparing effective cover letters and responding constructively to reviewer feedback
- structure and refine a manuscript to meet the expectations of academic publishers and enhance its clarity, coherence, and scholarly contribution
- know how to formulate your research findings concisely and communicate them in an engaging and attractive way to a non-academic target audience (policy makers, practitioners, the general public) through science communication techniques.

2. Overview of the curriculum

This course equips researchers and professionals with the skills to write, publish, and communicate their work effectively. Through a combination of practical exercises, real-world insights, and interactive sessions, participants will navigate the entire scholarly communication process, from crafting compelling manuscripts to engaging broader audiences. Each module consists of prerecorded lectures and synchronous online activities.

Module	Asynchronous activities	Synchronous activities	Assignments
Introduction to Academic & Professional Communication	Video lectures on academic communication in various communities	Workshop on navigating the publication landscape	Draft of publication plan for researchers
Foundations of Academic Writing	Video lecture on art and craft of academic writing with testimonials of junior and mid-level academics	Feedback sessions on ongoing or recently drafted papers	Sharing and peer-review of participants' draft papers
Publication Strategies	Video lecture on how to navigate the publication landscape (metrics)	Brainstorming session on envisaged publication strategies	Revised publication plan for researchers, (matching) abstracts of present and future publications
Navigating and Surviving the Peer Review Process	Video lecture on basics of review processes, with testimonials	Workshop on how to navigate peer-review, manage the review process, and communication with reviewers and editors	Write a sample rebuttal letter, and assess and constructively comment on other rebuttal letters
The Author Perspective	Videos of testimonials of junior and mid-level academics	Online speed dates, experience sharing in review processes	-
The Editor and Reviewer Perspective	Videos of testimonials of journal editors and seasoned reviewers	Online Q&A with a seasoned reviewer	-
Science Communication	Video instruction of science communication principles, testimonial of Erasmus University's Communication Officer	Workshop on how to extract core elements from a scientific paper and rephrase and translate it to make it appealing for wider audiences	Write a press release
Impact strategies	Video instruction on impact strategies and testimonials of applied researchers	Workshop on how to draft an impact strategy	Stakeholder map and impact analysis

3. Description of modules

Module 1: Introduction to Academic & Professional Communication

We start by exploring the principles and foundations of academic publishing. Participants will gain a clear understanding of peer review models—including single-blind, double-blind, and open review—and the structure of the academic publishing system. This module also sets expectations for the course and introduces participants to the tools and strategies they will use throughout the course.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- explain core elements and basic principles of knowledge dissemination in various types of academic outputs
- reflected on own initial ideas of what where to publish, and drafted a draft publication plan

The module consists of a series of prerecorded video lectures, and an interactive online workshop in which participants navigate the academic publication landscape and share experience with knowledge dissemination in various forms and shapes. The progress of candidates will be assessed and discussed on the basis of a draft publication plan.

Module 2: Foundations of Academic Writing

This module focuses on the core elements of academic writing. Participants will explore argumentation and style across different research traditions while addressing essential ethical considerations, such as plagiarism, co-authorship, and transparency. Practical exercises introduce reference management tools like Zotero and Mendeley, as well as collaborative writing platforms, helping participants strengthen both their writing and technical skills.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- apply academic writing principles in their own writing
- make informed decisions about what tools to use to help them in various stages of research, with emphasis on the writing process

The module consists of video lectures with testimonials of early- and mid-career academics in which they reflect on what they learned throughout the years. An interactive online session will allow participants to learn and share lessons about the fine art of academic writing. The learning will be enhanced by participants' review of draft papers (assignment).

Module 3: Publication Strategies

Participants learn how to strategically select the most suitable outlets for their work and develop skills to craft compelling abstracts and introductions. Through interactive discussions and analysis of successful examples, participants gain the tools to maximize the clarity, impact, and reach of their submissions.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- navigate academic landscape and consider and select relevant outlets for publications
- drafted summaries of present and future publications that match the draft publication plan

Video lectures will be provided to the participants, and participants will share, discuss and reflect on each other's plans and summaries.

Module 4: Navigating and Surviving the Peer Review Process

This module demystifies the peer review system and prepares participants to handle its challenges effectively. Participants learn strategies for responding constructively to reviewer feedback, managing revisions, and navigating rejection or revise-and-resubmit decisions, all while maintaining mental health and resilience in the process.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- Explain the purpose, structure and goals of the peer review process
- Apply strategies to manage major and minor revisions in a systematic and efficient manner.
- Incorporate practices that support mental health and well-being during the peer review and revision process

Prerecorded videos will explain the process and incorporate testimonials. In the interactive workshop, attention will be given to accepted practices and do's and don'ts in the review process.

Module 5: The Author Perspective

Building on the previous module, participants gain firsthand insights from both novice and experienced authors. These real-world experiences illustrate the practical challenges of publishing, offering strategies for responding to critiques, strengthening manuscripts, and navigating the emotional and strategic aspects of peer review.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- demonstrate strategies for managing the emotional and strategic aspects of peer review, including dealing with rejection or critical feedback
- reflect on personal attitudes and responses to feedback to foster resilience and continuous improvement in scholarly writing
- integrate lessons learned from both novice and experienced authors into one's own publication strategy

In prerecorded lectures and the interactive workshop, the focus is on experience sharing.

Module 6: The Editor and Reviewer Perspective

Participants explore what editors and reviewers look for in submissions, including clarity of argument, methodological rigor, originality, and relevance. Ethical responsibilities, such as fairness, transparency, and confidentiality, are highlighted. Experienced reviewers will share what they are looking for, how they form and craft their reviews, what they are looking for, and how their view of the peer review process looks like.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- the key criteria editors and reviewers use to evaluate submissions, including clarity, rigor, originality, and relevance
- explain the ethical responsibilities of authors and reviewers, including fairness, transparency, and confidentiality
- reflect on the peer review process from the perspective of both authors and reviewers to enhance scholarly practice.

Testimonials of experienced reviewers and editors will be part of prerecorded lectures, and participants will be allowed to participate in a Q&A session with a seasoned reviewer.

Module 7: Science Communication

The curriculum continues with a focus on translating research for broader audiences. Participants develop the skills to present complex findings in accessible, engaging formats, including blogs, social media posts, and other public-facing channels. By the end of this module, each participant will have created a piece that effectively communicates the essence of their research to a wider audience, amplifying visibility.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- demonstrate the ability to communicate complex research findings clearly and concisely to non-specialist audiences
- adapt scholarly content for different public-facing formats, including blogs, social media posts, and multimedia channels
- apply strategies to engage and inform diverse audiences while maintaining accuracy and credibility
- create a polished piece of research communication that effectively conveys key insights to a wider audience

The video will feature do's and don'ts as expressed in a testimonial by a professional communications expert. Participants will apply and discuss how lessons learned can be applied in a workshop.

Module 8: Impact strategies

As a final module, this module focuses on how to relate research findings to existing policies, how to engage with practitioners, and translate research findings into interventions, plans, or actionable recommendations. Various impact strategies will be discussed and exemplified with real-world example.

More specifically, after successful completion of this curriculum, participants will be able to:

- analyze how research findings relate to existing policies and frameworks
- engage effectively with practitioners to ensure research relevance and applicability
- develop actionable recommendations, interventions, or plans based on research insights
- apply strategies for maximizing the impact of research in real-world contexts.

Course materials

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