Training grant recipient survey

Overview

In 2020 FLEET offered training grants to its members. The following is a short analysis of the 18 training grant recipients' answers to a survey of the following four questions:

1. Have you completed the training – Yes/No?
2. What was the nature of the training you did, eg research-based or transferable skills?
3. How would you rate the value of the training?

    (low; low-medium; medium; medium-high; high)

4. Can you describe how the training was of value to you? Include its value to your research, career generally and well-being (if applicable).

Number of respondents to survey = 13 (from a total of 18 training grant recipients)

Number of participants that completed training = 4.

All other participants have not completed their training or have only partially completed it.

Of those able to rate their training, they rated them as follows (Note: some participants did more than one training course and this include all courses rated)

Medium - 2

Med-high - 3

High – 4

Value of training as described by participants

Participants perceived value that was either specific to their research and was selected for this reason, or it was to enhance transferable skills the participant thought of value to their career.

When the training outcome was not specific to the participant's research, the theme to emerge was a perceived value in improved ability to communicate, usually in reference to their research. This communication was in the form of improved skills in oral presentation, learning how understand and to connect with your audience, and writing for different audiences. Other outcomes noted were improved time management and well-being. See Table 1 below.

Table 1. Description of the value of training for the participant

The course was very important to me as it teaches important values for a good working environment, which is normally not taught in a scientific course. The course will help me in my research, a career, as well as my well-being as an effective communication with people, is an important part of everyday work. Before I know how much the course helped in my communication skills, I need to repeat the learned stuff and try to apply it, but the taught content was interesting and made sense.	Being taught value of work ethic Helping with well-being Learning to communicate to non-scientific audiences Wanting to apply what they learnt **[Communication value]**

I've already used my new python skills to control cameras in the lab rather than use labview on additional computers, since it would have been overkill.	Using skills in lab Developing lab skills **[Research specific training]**
With courses, I understand how to write within diverse creative, informative, and persuasive genres. More importantly, these workshops show how to express valuable and significant ideas by building the strongest possible connection between your text and its readers. I learned how to manage my writing time effectively, avoid procrastination and produce a content-rich first draft.	Learning to write for other genres Learning to write creatively Learning to connect with your reader Managing time more effectively **[Communication value]**
The training has improved my knowledge of and skills in Microsoft Excel. I have been able to utilise the skills I learned in the training on a daily basis.	Learning computer skills Using those skills for work **[Research-specific training]**
They help me get into new areas that I am not familiar with.	Exploring new areas
i. SPIE – Making the most of your presentation: Good presentation skills are an invaluable asset, particularly in the world of physics. Communicating complex principles to world leaders in the field and audience members that have only just found out about your niche area of expertise is a fine line to walk. This SPIE course was the best presentation course I have been on. I have done multiple seminars, webinars, and tutorials before and have left feeling that I have learn nothing. This course was the only time I have found genuinely helpful advice that can apply to both introverted and extroverted individuals. It covers the somatic, verbal and visual components of presenting effectively. I cannot recommend it enough	Learning presentation skills Understanding the value of good presentation skills Understanding the value of presentation skills for communicating physics Finding high value in the training Learning new presentation skills **[Communication value]**
ii. SPIE – Structuring your research paper: Research-based. In a similar vein to above, the ability to structure a coherent, succinct, and complete research paper is a necessity to become a fully-fledged scientist. The same presenter tackles issues surrounding overly-convoluted and untidy scientific literature; he condenses these issues down into easily-digestible and effective	Learning paper writing skills Perceiving high value in the training Perceiving paper writing ability as essential to becoming a real scientist. **[Research specific training]**

guidelines for writing a successful publication. This was also the best paper-writing course I have done.	
iii. Udemy – American Sign Language Level 1: Transferrable skills. I chose this course as I believe any workplace should be an accessible and welcoming environment for all, regardless of disability. Unfortunately, as Auslan is only spoken in Australia, it was not available. Thus, I chose ASL and BSL, as ASL is spoken by internationals and BSL is mutually intelligible with Auslan. The ASL course is done well and it makes it very easy to pick up.	Perceiving a need for skills to improve accessibility of workplace Learning an internationally spoken sign language Trying to ensure physics is universally communicated. **[Communication value]**
v. Udemy – Complete Python Developer in 2021: Research-based. I am most of the way through this 30+ hour in-depth course on Python and machine-learning. Whilst a lot of it is not directly applicable to my PhD, much of the information has allowed me to drastically improve my coding skills – reducing run-times for some scripts from 10 minutes to 30 seconds. It is incredibly well taught and also has an associated discord for people that may be struggling with some of the included exercises. Very valuable for my career, having some more knowledge of the fundamentals for my area of study. As I skipped a masters program I think this filled some gaps. Unfortunately, I don't think the medium (EdX) was engaging as it could have been - there was very little participation from students and lecturers alike.	Perceiving training to be of high value for career Perceiving training to be helpful to PhD Filling knowledge gaps Lacking student engagement through platform used. **[Research specific training]**