Hub: Georgetown University  
Grant: TL1  
Category: Other – Science Communication  
Contact Info: Emily Bujold – eab159@georgetown.edu

**TL1 Science Communication Program**

**Approach:** A series of workshops and seminars targeting TL1 Scholars that promote public engagement and science communication skills to establish meaningful dialogue with diverse audiences and effective public messaging.

**Workshops Offered:**
- Science Communication and Public Engagement Fundamentals (3 hours)
- Engaging the Public with Social Media (1 hour)
- Engaging People of Faith (3 hours)
- Engaging Policy Makers (1 hour)

**Major Participant Activities:** Participants developed individual plans that included a public engagement goal, approaches to engage relevant audiences with tailored messages, and next steps for implementation.

**Issue being addressed:** Communicating Science and Public Engagement

**Approach implemented:** We offered a series of workshops and seminars to our TL1 and KL2 scholar, as well as other scientists as a resource to develop their public engagement and science communication skills, enabling them to establish meaningful dialogue with diverse audiences and to help them get their messages across to the public. This series was delivered in collaboration with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and incorporated the AAAS Public Engagement Framework to support participants in addressing specific audiences, scientific topics, and engagement methods.

In each workshop, participants developed individual plans that included a public engagement goal and approaches to engage a relevant audience with tailored messages. Participants developed engagement scenarios and identified next steps for implementation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this series was offered online via GoToMeeting and Zoom. Workshop topics and descriptions are outlined below:
Science Communication and Public Engagement Fundamentals: this introductory-level, three-hour module introduces the latest science communication research and basic best practices for engaging with the public

Engaging the Public with Social Media: this one-hour module guides investigators through reflection, discussion and group activities focused on the evolving social media landscape, culminating in participants developing their own social media public engagement plans

Engaging People of Faith: this three-hour module supports inclusive engagement with diverse communities and people of faith, focusing on how culture, worldview, and identity (including faith) influence ideas about science; and best practices for science engagement on potentially contentious topics. A group collaboration then addresses a challenging question or situation to shape an approach to future public engagement activities with people of faith.

Engaging Policy Makers: this one-hour module illuminates the policy landscape, illustrating where and how policy happens and the many roles scientists can play in decision-making. Using real-world examples, participants develop an individual engagement goal, strategically identify a target audience and identify key ideas around which to center conversations.

**Outcome measures:** First, we tracked attendance at each session. In order to better compare our outcomes and feedback with other institutions and sites, we used AAAS-developed and administered online survey assessment instruments. Unfortunately, despite very positive verbal feedback, the survey completion rate was very low (7/50). Interestingly, written and verbal qualitative responses both noted the value of the training but raised concerns about "institutional buy-in" and that public engagement may not be valued, but viewed as a distraction from primary research and academic missions.

**Lessons learned:** We need to fully control the registration and evaluation processes so that we can better track participants and encourage and prioritize completion of surveys to provide outcome and impact data. We will need to engage with deans, chairs, provost and chair of committee on appointments and promotions (or equivalent across our hub institutions) to engage them in this workshop series in order to more clearly articulate its alignment with institutional missions.