



The Royal Society of Victoria

Two-day science-writing and outreach-training workshop with Peter Spinks

The workshop begins on Friday, September 23, and concludes the following Friday, September 30, 2016. The week-long break will allow participants to assimilate material and prepare exercises.

The syllabus

The following topics will be covered (theory being interspersed with a selection of relevant practical exercises):

- Science and the media: why bother? (A snapshot of research indicating why the media matters)
- Introduction to science journalism (How journalists find leads before selecting, writing, editing and checking articles)
- Nosing out news (A summary of what makes science newsworthy)
- The media release (The theory and practice of preparing releases, with case studies)
- A-Z of science writing (A detailed checklist of things to do before, during and after writing popular science articles or features; includes tips on formulaic writing, improving grammar, punctuation and style)
- The science interview (Simple rules to follow during interviews for print and broadcast media)
- Every picture tells a story (How to prepare material for static and interactive graphics, illustrations, photographs and videos)
- Science writing and the law (Legal issues affecting scientists and writers, including codes of ethics, defamation and international copyright law)
- Science in action (Short writing exercises with feedback and instruction)
- Bibliofile (Recommended reading on selected topics)

Strategy: Interaction with participants will be maximised by alternating between theory, appropriate exercises and examples of science stories, media releases, graphics, pictures and videos.

Materials: Photocopies of selected texts and examples, along with notes on the art of science communication, will be provided.

Follow-up: As part of the package, attendees may seek follow-up advice and

guidance by email or telephone for one week after completing the workshop. This is an extra chance to hone skills and prepare successful media strategies.

Previous attendees said:

- “Peter Spinks combines his passion for communicating science with a thorough understanding of Australian and international news media.” – Margaret Ruwoldt, RMIT University
- “An opportunity to tap into a wealth of experience.” – Dave Liddle, Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory
- “I really enjoyed the course and believe it was unique in terms of what it offered.” – Jana Kovar, TVW Telethon Institute for Child Health Research
- “Peter conducted an excellent science-communications course for academics and publicity staff at RMIT. I found the workshop extremely useful and was most impressed with his in-depth knowledge. – Claire Whiteley, CPA Australia
- “I found Peter’s course – the exercises, in particular – very valuable. I write a bimonthly newsletter and, and after his training, now find the whole writing process quicker, easier and less stressful.” – Matt Daniel, Environment Australia
- “The course provided good pointers on writing short, snappy, scientific stuff.” – Kate Duigan, Parks and Wildlife Service of the Northern Territory
- “The course was brilliant! We were all impressed by the content and Peter’s delivery.” – Patrice Brown, Environmental Adviser

For additional, more detailed feedback, please go to:

<http://scienceoutreachworkshops.weebly.com/additional-feedback.html>

Background information on the presenter is at:

<http://scienceoutreachworkshops.weebly.com/the-presenter.html>