

We ReLaTe: Advancing effective institutional models towards cohesive teaching, learning, research and writing development.

**Evaluation from CA 15221 Autumn Training School, 16th – 20th September 2019
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Croatia**

After the Training School participants were asked for feedback about the experience. This report is a synthesis of the responses recorded.

The Training School facilitators were Helen Fallon, Maynooth University (Ireland) and Carol Hayes, George Washington University (United States). The Training School host was Gordana Dobravac, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula (Croatia).

What was most valuable aspect of the Training School?

Participants were very positive about the training school experience. Specifically, participants noted as valuable:

- the knowledge that they gained about: writing techniques, processes and strategies; the publishing process; writing templates; evaluating journals
- the chance to meet and work with colleagues from diverse backgrounds, different disciplines, at various career and research stages – the chance to make new contacts and to build/add to a network: 'I liked sharing experiences and ideas with colleagues from the same and different fields, and from different universities.'
- trainers' expertise
- the teaching and learning approaches (pedagogy) employed by the trainers: 'Receiving training is something we don't always have during our work routines, and making it in dynamic seminars and workshops where you actively participate and get to work to further learn is of most value to me';
- to realise that writing is fun
- collaboration in writing

How did this Training School contribute to your own research and working interests?

In answer to this question participants remarked that they intended to use what they had learned in their research either doctoral or postdoctoral.

Colleagues noted that at the training school they felt motivated and inspired to write, and that they had improved writing habits as a result of participating in the school. They felt that the steps and stages in publication were clarified for them. They learned about and experimented with writing goals and publication plans.

Some specific comments included:

'I learnt more about writing groups and techniques to lead them. As a consequence, we are planning to set up a European writing group to support one another's writing process, so this course has been extremely useful';

'I think it contributed both as a researcher and as a teacher. As a PhD student, I have the feeling that I can organise myself much better and maximise my time and effort to make my writing better and quicker. This is essential to be prolific and increase my opportunities for publishing. Plus, academic writing is one of my research interests, so these meta reflections these days helped see new areas of research and led me to change my perspective about things I used to take for granted.'

Participants also learned about ways of working/researching and ways of teaching which they will cascade to their students: 'It provided me with fresh new ideas for teaching academic writing but also marking thesis papers'.

What would you like to learn more about?

Participants expressed an interest in expanding their knowledge on a number of specific topics including:

- bibliometrics and altmetrics
- how to structure a scientific article
- techniques for creating a theoretical contribution
- qualitative methods
- how to teach others how to improve their writing skills
- writing centres and peer tutoring
- analysis of the research data
- editing and work with multiple collaborators.

How effectively did the Training School accomplish the goals that had been announced?

The majority of participants believed the training school achieved all of the goals as announced.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

Several positive comments were noted here including thanks from many participants and congratulations to the facilitators and organiser.

Three quotations capture this:

'I really appreciate the fact that I got to participate in this school. I will take ideas/strategies from it and apply it not only to my research but also to teaching.'

'The host made us feel at home and provided us with some useful tips as well as social evening activities. I believe that this time is fundamental for networking and as new researchers we need this!'

'I would like to thank all organisers, hosts and lecturers on providing us with the opportunity to gain knowledge, meet new people, exchange stories and experiences.'

Dr Alison Farrell
MC Chair
COST Action 15221
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