

Information Packet: RELATE 2017 Intensive Communication and Public Engagement Workshop



Note: Please read the whole packet. You are responsible for knowing all the information detailed in these pages.

What is RELATE?

RELATE (Researchers Expanding Lay-Audience Teaching and Engagement) is a volunteer-based organization founded at the University of Michigan that offers workshops, educational resources, and outlets for public outreach opportunities to enhance researchers' competency in lay-audience engagement. During our practice-based workshops, graduate students and early career researchers develop lay-audience communication skills and create an original portfolio of digital media and oral presentations. Workshop participants put their communication skills into action and engage with Southeastern Michigan communities both online and through our series of public engagement events.

You can learn more at www.learntoRELATE.org.

What is a “lay-audience?”

A diverse group of people with a variety of life experiences and expertise that they bring to bear in understanding STEM topics. Lay-audiences may not have “expertise” in any or all STEM disciplines, but they are usually interested in discussing STEM topics to self-educate or because they have developed views/opinions on the topic itself. **We are all members of a lay-audience at some point!**

Why take one of our communication and public engagement intensive workshops?

There are lots of reasons to work on your communication and public engagement skills! Some commonly cited ones include: sharing your science, reducing the flow of misinformation, encouraging and supporting public funding for research, inspiring the next generation of scientists, or building your

CV and enhancing your professional network. Moreover, communication skills are fundamental to professional success (and are among the top-rated skills among employers, regardless of career path!).

What's involved in the 2017 RELATE intensive workshop?

- 8 weekly 2-hour class sessions (Thursday evenings from 5-7pm) between 14 Sept. and 2 Nov. (expect to spend up to 3 hours practicing workshop content outside of each session)
- Active & practice-oriented learning opportunities covering communication fundamentals and advanced topics
- 1 *required* deliverable: *either* a final video *or* public engagement event
- A schedule of important dates and class topics is below.

What else do I need to know about the workshop?

- RELATE leadership has IRB approval to study the efficacy of our training approach. If you participate in the RELATE workshop, you will be asked to consider participating in the study, which involves allowing us to collect elements of your work for transcription and later analysis. You'll have the opportunity to fully review all study procedures, ask questions, and decide whether you would like to participate at the beginning of the workshop. Participating in the study will not impact your involvement in or experience of the workshop in any way, and participating in the study is **not** a requirement to be a part of the RELATE workshop.
- **You will need to apply for entrance into the workshop. If you are offered a spot in the workshop and accept that offer, we expect you to fully follow through on your commitment to participate fully.** Because RELATE's leadership team is not compensated in any way for hosting the workshop, we ask people to respect our time and those of other workshop participants by participating fully and in good faith. Participating fully means attending all workshop sessions, completing all assignments, creating a final video or participating in a public engagement event at the end of the workshop, and accepting a spot in the workshop indicates your commitment to participate fully. More details about the application are below.
- We ask people to contribute a \$20 participation fee to indicate commitment and offset the cost of the materials for your participation (your RELATE binder and handouts, your RELATE t-shirt). If this participation fee would cause a financial hardship for you, please contact the RELATE leadership at RELATE.directors@umich.edu.

How do I apply to the RELATE intensive workshop?

There are three required parts to the application. **We strongly suggest that you complete #3 before starting the application.**

1. A series of questions about your motivations and prior experiences with outreach and public engagement
2. A brief quiz to ensure you are familiar with the most important elements of this information packet
3. A brief video. Video instructions:
Please record a 3-5 minute video of yourself talking about your research, speaking as if you were communicating with an audience who knows nothing (or very little) about your research. ****IMPORTANT:** Please upload this video to your M+Box account and share the URL to your video file in the box in the application. If you have not yet completed your video, please enter "http://google.com" in the field below, submit your application but "send a copy" to yourself so that you can edit your responses later. If you need detailed instructions about how to complete this, you can find them at

www.learntoRELATE.org/application-instructions. ****NOTE: this video does NOT need to be polished or of high-quality. Any video taken with an iPhone or a webcam will do. If you do not have access to a recording device, you can find additional information about UM resources on the website above.**

How will we choose workshop participants among all applicants?

We will accept a maximum of 35 PhD students from STEM fields. We're looking for researchers from a variety of disciplines and all levels of experience with public engagement. Participants must have a developed research project, as this will be used as the topic of your communication efforts. Preference will be given to those individuals who can commit to fully attending and participating in the workshop.

Important Dates and Workshop Schedule

Application Due	September 1
Applicants notified about workshop decision	September 11
Deadline for participants to accept spot in workshop	September 15
Session 1: Logistics, Goals, & Messaging	September 21
Session 2: Messaging & Narrative	September 29
Session 3: Messaging, Narrative, & Audience	October 5
Session 4: Language (& Elevator Pitches)	October 12
Session 5: Voice and Non-Verbal Communication	October 19
Session 6: Visual Aids	October 26
Session 7: Audience Engagement	November 2
Sessions 8: Practice Talks with Feedback	November 9