

AUTHOR AID

Online Course in Research Communication

For early career researchers in developing countries

3 October to 20 November 2017 (7 weeks)

Deadline to enrol: 3 October 2017

Expected effort: 4 to 5 hours per week

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Is this the right course for you?

Are you a researcher in a developing country and would you like to...

- Improve your knowledge and skills in writing a research paper as well as communicating your research outside academia?
- Go through instructional content that is relevant to developing country researchers and grounded in a neutral point of view?
- Check your understanding of the content as you go along and take part in writing activities?
- Share your learning journey with hundreds of researchers from around the world by interacting with them on discussion forums and perhaps making new research connections?
- Receive expert advice from an international team of experienced guest facilitators?
- Get all this for free¹?

Then read on!

¹ The course is free of cost and we do not charge for issuing certificates and badges.

About the course

Since 2011, the INASP AuthorAID programme has offered numerous free online courses in grant proposal writing and research writing. These courses have been developed specifically for developing country researchers. More than 4000 researchers from over 80 developing countries have completed these courses so far. For a report of our previous course, please [this page](#).

We are now pleased to announce our 5th open online course starting on 3 October 2017. This course will cover the following topics:

- Literature review
- Research and publication ethics
- Writing a research paper
- Publishing a paper in a journal
- Communicating research outside academia (this topic is new and was not part of our previous courses)

There is no cost to apply or participate in the course. At the end of the course, certificates and digital badges will be issued free of cost to everyone who meets the course completion criteria. A document with the content from the interactive course lessons will also be given to the course completers at the end of the course.

This will be an open course and is targeted at developing country researchers, although any researcher in the world is welcome to join the course. We may introduce an enrolment limit if the enrolment far exceeds our server capacity, so we suggest that you enrol in the course as soon as possible if you are interested. **The deadline to enrol is 3 October 2017.** Please follow the instructions given in the section called “How to join the course” (see page 5) if you’d like to take part in this course.

The content in the course is not specific to any subject area, although there is a slant towards the health sciences and life sciences. Many researchers from several subject areas in the sciences and social sciences have completed this course and found it useful.

You should plan to spend about 4 to 5 hours per week on the course to complete the lessons and activities. You can study in your own time. There will be no live online sessions or face-to-face meetings. There are however some deadlines in the course. You should have regular access to the Internet during the period of the course, but a high-bandwidth connection is not necessary. The course lessons and activities are largely text-based. You may use a mobile phone or tablet to study on the course, but at the time of publishing this announcement the course has not been fully tested for mobile compatibility.

As this course is meant for early career researchers, we suggest you sign up for this course only if you consider yourself to be an early career researcher. An early career researcher is someone who has limited experience in publishing papers in reputable peer-reviewed journals.

The course will be facilitated by Ravi Murugesan, an AuthorAID trainer, and moderated by Andy Nobes, Programme Officer, Research Development and Support at INASP. We also expect to have some guest facilitators from the AuthorAID network on the course.

Outline of the 7-week course

Course induction

- Introduction to the course
- Background information survey
- Learning agreement
- Pre assessment quiz

Week 1: Doing a literature review

- Lesson: Accessing published research
- Lesson: Arriving at your research question
- Multiple choice quiz to check your understanding
- Discussion on the topics covered this week

Week 2: Research and publication ethics

- Lesson: Ethics for researchers
- Lesson: Writing ethically
- Lesson: Ethics for journals
- Multiple choice quiz to check your understanding
- Writing activity: Reflection on ethics
- Discussion on the topics covered this week

Week 3: Writing a research paper – Part 1

- Peer assessment of the previous week's writing activity
- Lesson: Targeting relevant journals for your paper
- Lesson: Preparing to write your paper
- Multiple choice quiz to check your understanding
- Discussion on the topics covered this week

Week 4: Writing a research paper – Part 2

- Lesson: Citations, tables, figures
- Lesson: Writing the sections of a research paper
- Multiple choice quiz to check your understanding
- Writing activity: Write a research abstract or summary
- Discussion on the topics covered this week

Week 5: Publishing a paper in a journal

- Peer assessment of the previous week's writing activity
- Lesson: Checking your paper before submission to a journal
- Lesson: Submitting your paper to a journal
- Lesson: Dealing with peer review
- Multiple choice quiz to check your understanding
- Discussion on the topics covered this week

Week 6: Communicating research outside academia

This is a new topic in the course and we are in the process of putting together the content. You can expect to see some material on how to communicate your research to non-academic audiences such as policymakers, the public, and the media. There will also be a multiple choice quiz to check your understanding.

Week 7: Wrap up

- Complete any pending lessons and quizzes
- Post assessment quiz
- Course feedback survey
- General discussion

This outline mentions only the key lessons and activities – there may be some additional optional activities in the course.

Course completion criteria

Pass grade

Participants who do the following will receive a course completion certificate with a “Pass” grade:

- Complete the course induction activities;
- Pass all the weekly multiple choice quizzes by scoring at least 80% on each quiz (unlimited attempts are allowed on the quizzes); and
- Complete the wrap up activities (post assessment quiz and feedback survey).

Merit grade

Participants who do the above and complete at least one of the two peer assessment activities will receive a course completion certificate with a “Merit” grade.

About the certificate

The certificate will mention the name of the course, your name, the course duration, and average study time. The AuthorAID and INASP logos will be included on the certificate, but the course is not accredited by any organisation.

The certificate will be given as a PDF file. It will not be given in hardcopy or sent by post. A unique verification code will be present on each certificate issued.

Digital badge

Participants who complete the course will also receive a digital badge which they can include as a link in their CV and display on online profiles such as LinkedIn and Open Badges.

Important information about the course

- At the start of the course, you’ll be asked to complete a detailed background information survey, in which you’ll have to give a link to your ORCID profile (you can easily [create an ORCID profile](#) if you don’t have one). You’ll also be asked to complete a pre assessment quiz. You can access the course material only after you complete these tasks.

- Because we expect a lot of participants on the course, our guest facilitators may not be able to respond to every single question. However, most participants in our previous courses have reported high satisfaction with the responses they received on the forums from not only the facilitators but also their fellow course participants.
- There will be two writing activities in the course which include peer assessment. In these activities, you should submit your work and assess a few of your course colleagues' submissions that are allocated to you. At the end of these activities, you can expect to see feedback on your work from your course colleagues. Please note that you will not get feedback on your work from the course facilitators.
- Instructions will be given at various points in the course for the different course activities. You should read all instructions carefully and meet the deadlines if you are interested in completing the course. No deadline extensions will be given.
- We recommend you join the course only if you plan to complete it, but you may join even if you think you may only be able to participate to a limited extent. However, we will not be awarding certificates just for participation. Only those who meet the course completion criteria will receive a completion certificate and digital badge.
- No technical support is available prior to the course. Please carefully follow the instructions given in the next section if you want to join the course. When the course begins, limited technical support will be available on the “technical support” forum in the course. Unfortunately we will not be able to respond to individual email requests for support before or during the course.

What if you have completed an AuthorAID course previously?

Except for the new topic “Communicating research outside academia”, the materials in this course have been largely constant since October 2015. If you have taken an AuthorAID course in the past two years, you are still welcome to join this course if you'd like to refresh your knowledge or if you're interested in the new topic.

We cannot however change the course completion criteria for those who have already completed an AuthorAID course. You will have to fully meet the completion criteria described above if you'd like to receive a certificate and badge for this course.

How to join the course

Please carefully follow ALL the steps given below to join the course.

- Create an account on INASP Moodle if you don't have one already. Visit <http://moodle.inasp.info/login/index.php> to get started.
 - When creating an account please enter an email address that you regularly check. Otherwise you may miss out on important course announcements which will reach you by email.
 - You may need to wait for some time to get the account confirmation email. Please check your junk/spam email folder for the account confirmation email if you don't see it in your inbox.

- If you do not receive the account confirmation email, please use a different email address to create your account.
- Login to INASP Moodle after creating your account: <http://moodle.inasp.info/>
- Visit the course enrolment page: <http://moodle.inasp.info/course/view.php?id=124>
- Enter one of the below enrolment keys to join the subject-area group that most closely matches your area of work.
 - Copy the enrolment key carefully and paste it in the enrolment key box, making sure there are no spaces or other characters.
 - Click the button called “Enrol me” to enrol in the course.

Subject-area	Enrolment key to use
Health sciences / life sciences	aa5group1
Physical sciences / formal sciences	aa5group2
Social sciences	aa5group3
Arts / humanities	aa5group4

Once you have enrolled in the course, you can begin working on the pre course activities which you'll find on the course homepage. On the course start date (3 October 2017), the first set of the course materials will become available. The course administrator will make an announcement in the course on the start date with further information.

Thank you for your interest in the course, and all the best!