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New Players, New Tools: Insights & Innovations in Science Communications

[ICABR Pre-Conference Workshop](#)

May 30, 2017

[Berkeley City Club, Berkeley California](#)

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How the public wants to hear about science is not the way we have historically communicated it. Science and those that advocate for new and emerging technologies (like gene editing, CRISPR, genetic engineering) face several challenges in building trust in our increasingly cynical and interconnected world. While data suggests that scientists continue to be highly trusted messengers, their messages and means of delivery are often outdated, limited in their reach by a lack of incentives and support, or drowned out by more vociferous forces not driven by science. More urgent than ever is the need to amplify the voices of science to ensure that policy is evidence-based and that agricultural innovations reach societies that benefit from them the most.

This is a three-part all day workshop that serves to creatively elevate the conversation around science communication strategies for new and emerging technologies in agriculture through hands-on activities and inspired lectures by key science writers and communication specialists. Science as presented via the channel of pop culture also has become a means by which to either create or dismantle myths about science. Learn from the experts that have worked as science advisors on movies and TV shows and sharpen your skills so that you can positively impact science in the media.

Part 1. New Players, New Tools: Insights in Science Communications - Science into Story

8:00 AM - 10:30 AM - Berkeley City Club

This session will feature journalist [Nathanael Johnson](#) from Grist and biotechnologist [Alison van Eeneenaam](#), an animal breeder based at UC Davis who is using new precision breeding tools in her work.

Through a moderated but intimate conversation between scientist and journalist the audience will develop an understanding of the journalist's process of finding the story in science. How does a journalist identify a good story? How do they choose their characters? What can scientists do to sell their story and how can they ensure that their message does not get lost in transmission? A dynamic Q and A will follow.

Part 2. New Players, New Tools: Insights & Innovations in Science Communications - Workshop!

10:30 AM - 5:30 PM - Berkeley City Club

This afternoon session is a practical workshop for scientists who want to learn new innovative approaches to communicating their work. The workshop is led by [The Story Collider](#) with assistance from the multimedia team of the Cornell Alliance for Science. The Story Collider's



work is based on a narrative driven approach to science communication; “bringing true, personal stories about science to life” both through its live shows and weekly podcast. The Story Collider uses learnings “about science and stories to teach scientists to use narrative” in delivery key messaging and information about science. A narrative driven communication strategy has tremendous social currency in today’s world of mass information.

This workshop will help participants learn best practices for communicating science via the art of storytelling, generating interest and engagement with a topic, improving comprehension, and by influencing real-world beliefs, even among skeptical audiences. Emphasis will be on communicating about new tools such as the tools of gene editing and other new and emerging technologies relevant to the ICABR conference’s theme. We will also feature key experts and influencers from the agriculture industry and related spaces to demonstrate learnings and outreach activities.

Part 3. New Players, New Tools: Insights & Innovations in Science Communications - Science and Hollywood

6:00-7:30 PM - Berkeley City Club with drinks reception

Since the Enlightenment, scientific discovery has reached the public through the channels of popular entertainment. How many children first got excited about science from reading Jules Verne or watching Star Trek? A lot. Today, there are several purposeful efforts to leverage scientific expertise together with entertainment to achieve the goals of both disciplines: compelling narrative and accurate information. For example, the [National Academy of Sciences’ Science and Entertainment Exchange](#) connects subject matter experts in all fields of science to entertainment professionals looking for an edge. During a spirited panel discussion, and over drinks and finger food, this session will bring Hollywood professionals, National Academy communication experts and participating scientist together to explore how Hollywood incorporates and disseminates cutting edge scientific expertise.

Session Participants:

- Rick Loverd, Program Director, Science and Entertainment Exchange, National Academy of Sciences (confirmed)
- Ann Merchant, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Communications, National Academy of Sciences (confirmed)
- Ari Novy, US Botanic Garden Executive Director and participant in Science and Entertainment Exchange (confirmed)
- Various Hollywood professionals (most likely to include screenwriters, sitcom writers, producers, directors, drama writers)

Cost of the day-long program is €30 for students and post-docs; €60 for ICABR attendees; and €100 for all others. Registration opens at 8:00 AM and the program begins at 9:00 AM. Lunch is provided onsite from 12:00 PM- 1:00 PM.

If you have any further questions, please contact stuart.smyth@usask.ca.

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