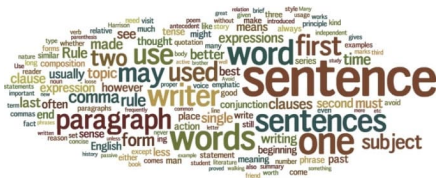
COMMUNICATING IDEAS – TWO DAYS WORKSHOP ON SCIENTIFIC WRITING

JUNE 25-26, 2026, 9:00-17:00
University of Liège, Centre for Protein Engineering
Host: Prof. André Matagne



MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE
FOR MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES

Dr Petra KELLERS
Scientific Coordinator

OUTLINE

- Gather your ideas & generate a plan

We will discuss the writing process itself and address preliminary considerations before starting the actual text production and the importance of having a concept. Answering key questions about purpose, message of your text, and your potential audience might help you to overcome the white paper fear and to develop a sound story along a red thread. We will look at strategies how to organise ideas and how to structure the writing process leading to efficient writing of your paper or thesis.

- Communicate your results – How to write a scientific publication

We will examine the conventional journal article structure, from title to acknowledgement, and the most important facts on figures and tables. What do we need to consider when creating illustrations and graphs and what is important to know about the "visual language"? Things you should not miss and things you better avoid in a paper will be summarised. We will also address how we correctly cite and refer to other peoples' work, what is considered as plagiarism and how we can avoid the plagiarism risk. Finally, we will take a closer look at the peer review process and will discuss how to reply to reviewer comments.

- A matter of style – Clear and concise writing and revision

Basic technical principles such as text and paragraph structure, the value of active or passive voice, punctuation, or word use will be discussed to improve your writing style and to allow fluent reading of your text. We will look at most common writing or spelling mistakes and specific rules and conventions of editorial style. Further, particular issues a non-native English speaker might face, e.g. the use of articles, will be addressed. We will further look at different methods to revise and proofread texts.

- Exercises – Learning by doing

You will have the chance to train what you have learnt by assessing examples and exercises. You will immediately apply your knowledge to your individual abstract (paper, thesis, poster…) and will practise both giving and receiving feedback from your course fellows.

>> Please prepare an abstract (about one A4 page long) in advance and take it to the class!

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The workshop is organized by the FNRS doctoral school "Structure and function of biological macromolecules, bioinformatics and modelling (SFMBBM)" with support from the R&D department of the University of Liège.

Interested students should send an "application package" via email to amatagne@uliege.be and to petra.kellers@mpinat.mpg.de including 1) a motivation letter explaining their background and why they would like to participate in the course and 2) a recommendation letter from their supervisor. Both documents are requested in English.

- Deadline to register: June 12, 2026
- Maximum number of participants: 16
- The course language is English
- Location: University of Liège, Campus Sart Tilman

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