



## Motivation



Fewer opportunities for research communication



Growing need for researchers to effectively connect with public



Improv theater combines story-telling and audience engagement

## Workshop Goals

Apply improv principles to research communication

Connect with grad students from other fields

Introduce Grad Slam as opportunity to practice skills

## Workshop Development

Created in consultation with:



Dr. Laura Lindenfeld  
Executive Director of the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science (A PFTF Alum!)



Mr. David Dannenfelser  
Faculty, Theater Program, Rutgers University



Dr. Maja Makagon  
Associate Professor, Department of Animal Science, University of California Davis

## Workshop Itinerary



1. Scaffolding improv theater games to build skills

Active listening



Audience engagement



Story-telling



2. Learn about Grad Slam from the 2021 & 2022 UCD Winners!



Dr. Amelia Munson,  
Animal Behavior



Ms. Alice Dien,  
Biological and Systems Engineering

## Outcomes

Two 90 min workshops in Feb & May 2022



68% of surveyed participants new to improv



100% felt exercises facilitated practice of research communication skills



82% more likely to participate in Grad Slam

"I was nervous about attending this workshop as improv is way out of my comfort zone. But knew it would be beneficial. I'm so glad I went!"

"It has only been a few hours since the workshop finished, but I already had a chance to employ some of the techniques we learned."

## Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to have been a recipient of a PFTF fellowship. My success would not have been possible without assistance from these individuals:

The PFTF Co-Directors, Dr. Teresa Dillinger & Dr. Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, as well as Dr. David Blancha, Dr. Patricia Turner, Ms. Olga Garzón-López, Ms. Manjot Kaur, Dr. Laura Lindenfeld, Mr. David Dannenfelser, Dr. Maja Makagon, Dr. Amelia Munson, Ms. Alice Dien, and my advisor, Dr. Cassandra Tucker.



And to my PFTF cohort, I have learned so much from all of you and I hope we remain connected.