



# SCI-COMM MONTH 2016

[scicomm.psu.edu](http://scicomm.psu.edu)

**This October** marks the 2nd annual Science Communication Month at Penn State. "SciComm" Month features a series of events aimed at opening up a discussion about the translation of science to the public and improving individual research communication skills.



**PennState**

The Institutes of Energy and the Environment • The College of Communications  
Penn State Libraries • The Office of the Vice President for Research  
Penn State Harrisburg

Alan Alda Center  
for Communicating Science®

COMPASS

## 2016 Highlights

On Monday Oct. 17, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ian Urbina of the New York Times discusses his work covering topics from fracking, to the oceans, to clean coal.

COMPASS again brings world-class science journalists to Penn State for an open plenary discussion on Oct. 19. This session features a Q&A and is usually a packed house!

Faculty - Don't miss SciComm Saturday on Oct. 29. Only 48 spots are available for the day, which includes a morning research incubator and an afternoon training with the Alan Alda Center. (Training also available in Harrisburg!)

Please find the most up-to-date information, additional links and resources, as well as the **online registration form** at [scicomm.psu.edu](http://scicomm.psu.edu)

Pre-registration for most events is not required but helps us plan. Workshops require pre-registration and have seating limits, so register early!



Alan Alda Center  
for Communicating Science®  
STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

The CHRISTIAN SCIENCE  
**MONITOR**

COMPASS

THE  
HUFFINGTON  
POST

The  
New York  
Times



SCIENTIFIC  
AMERICAN

**Mon. October 3, 2016, 4:00-5:15 p.m.** – Foster Auditorium, Paterno/Pattee Library

## SEMINAR | Everyone Needs an Elevator Pitch: Strategies to Engage Non-Technical Audiences on Technical Research Topics

Andy Gustafson  
Smeal College of Business

Skilled scientists and engineers must be equipped with not only technical expertise, but also with communication skills that can get others interested in their areas of research. This could mean the difference between success or failure in launching a new business, gaining a grant, or garnering support from the community at large regarding why your work matters. Learn strategies from a business communications expert to condense your key message into a “pitch” that can be given in the duration of a typical elevator ride. Seminar is 1hr 15min.

Mon. October 10, 2016 at 4:00-5:15 p.m. – Foster Auditorium, Paterno/Pattee Library

## SEMINAR | Rethinking Slide Design in Scientific Presentation: The Assertion-Evidence Approach

Michael Alley  
Associate Professor, Engineering Communication

A small, but growing, revolution is occurring in the way that scientists design their presentation slides. This revolution advocates alternatives (based on multimedia learning principles) that challenge PowerPoint's default structure of a topic-phrase headline supported by a bullet list of subtopics. One such alternative is the assertion-evidence structure, in which a sentence headline states the main message of the slide. That message assertion is then supported not by a bullet list, but by visual evidence.

Mon. October 17, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. – Foster Auditorium, Paterno/Pattee Library

## KEYNOTE | From Ocean Outlaws and Glue Workers to Fracking and Clean Coal Perspectives on Communicating Science from NY Times Investigative Reporting and Narrative Story Telling

Ian Urbina, *The New York Times*

Ian Urbina has been an investigative reporter with *The New York Times* since 2003. He became a senior investigative reporter for the National Desk in 2010, where he wrote a series in 2011, *Drilling Down*, about the oil and gas industry and fracking.

His investigations most often focus on worker safety and the environment. He has received a Pulitzer, a Polk, and various other journalism awards. Several of his stories have been made into feature films. His most recent and ongoing series, "[The Outlaw Ocean](#)," explores lawlessness on the high seas. He holds degrees in history from Georgetown and the University of Chicago.



 Follow Ian on Twitter at @ian\_urbina

Wed. October 19, 2016 at 12:00-2:30 p.m. – 233A HUB

## WORKSHOP | One Minute to Impress: Grad Student & Post-Doc Message Box Training

This COMPASS science communication training will help graduate students and post-docs share what they do, what they know - and most importantly, why it matters - in clear, lively terms. Grounded in the latest research on science communication, this training is designed to help participants find the relevance of their science for the audiences they most want to reach – journalists, policymakers, the public, and even other scientists. Participants will be introduced to The Message Box- COMPASS' most fundamental tool no matter who you are preparing to communicate with. The Message Box is a powerful tool to help distill what you know and why it matters for your particular audience. There will be time for hands on practice with your peers, and an interactive exercise practicing your “elevator pitch” to explain to others what you do in 30 seconds.



Pre-registration required! Register online: [scicomm.psu.edu](http://scicomm.psu.edu)

There is no cost to participate, but all attendees must preregister; the workshop is *limited to 50 participants*. We will keep a waiting list and your spot will be confirmed via email. Lunch is provided for confirmed registrants from noon to 12:30. The workshop will then be held from 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Wed. October 19, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. – Foster Auditorium, Paterno/Pattee Library

## PLENARY | JOURNALIST DISCUSSION PANEL

Don't miss the chance to hear directly from leading journalists covering science and technology. COMPASS brings reporters and writers to Penn State to discuss how the media is changing and what it means for communicating science to the public and policymakers. They will share their personal perspectives on how to get your stories told and what makes a good science story, and “do's and don't's” of dealing with journalists. This lively session will encourage Q and A. Come early for the best seats!



Jon Hamilton – NPR  
Mark Fischetti – Scientific American  
Kate Sheppard – Huffington Post

Zack Colman – Christian Science Monitor  
Amy Matthews Amos – COMPASS Trainer  
Megan Gilley – COMPASS Trainer



Mon. October 24, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. – Foster Auditorium, Paterno/Pattee Library

## SEMINAR | ADRI: Integrating Arts and Design Research with Science and Technology

Andy Belser, ADRI Director,  
and Director of [FaceAge](#): A Trans-Disciplinary Template for Research and Engagement

College of Arts and Architecture established the Arts and Design Research Incubator (ADRI), the goal of which is to help get high-impact arts and design research projects off the ground and in the public eye. Operating within the Arts and Architecture Research Office, ADRI provides seed funding, technical support and workspace to projects that, although often in their initial stages, have a strong probability of attracting future external funding. In keeping with goals outlined in the college's strategic plan, ADRI projects are typically collaborative and interdisciplinary in nature, push methodological boundaries, link research and teaching, make innovative use of technology, engage with University-wide research initiatives and priorities, and have the potential to garner national and international recognition.



Fri., October 28, 2016 at 1:00-4:30 p.m. – Land & Water Research Building

## WORKSHOP | Interest-Based Negotiation and Multi-Party Stakeholder Engagement

Lara Fowler, Penn State Law & Institutes of Energy and the Environment

Explore interest-based negotiation and working with multiple stakeholders. This hands-on workshop is limited to 20 people and will involve role plays to practice skills. Participants will leave with a better understanding of what interest based negotiation is and how to build a framework for working with multiple parties in a constructive fashion, including running an effective meeting that allows for different voices to be heard. This workshop is based on 20+ years of experience working on water and energy issues, including as a facilitator and mediator.



Note: There is no cost to participate, but pre-registration is required. *Limited to 20 participants.* We will keep a waiting list, please visit [scicomm.psu.edu](http://scicomm.psu.edu) to add your name.

Register now for a unique opportunity to enhance the broader communication impacts of your research activities. This day will bring together communication and biophysical research scientists to explore potential collaborations, and offer hands-on science communication training from the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science.

Sat. October 29, 2016

## MORNING WORKSHOP & INCUBATOR | Science Communication: Research and Practice

9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. | Land & Water Research Bldg., University Park

The morning session of this SciComm incubator will focus on research collaboration and team-building, with the end goal of building collaborative relationships between communications researchers and scientists from other disciplines. The aim is to find the sweet spot where collaborations result projects that advance the science and research agendas of all involved. Attendees will explore how communications research can facilitate broader impacts and improved public understanding and acceptance of their science. STEM and biophysical researchers will have the chance to walk the interdisciplinary talk and brainstorm with communications research faculty. Any researcher (faculty or postdoc) seeking to better understand how to communicate with the public is encouraged to register; in fact, Penn State departments with existing relationships with the College of Communications include Geography, Geosciences, Agricultural Sciences, Environmental Engineering and Earth and Mineral Sciences. Researchers from health areas are also encouraged to apply.

Proposals that result from the event are encouraged to apply to the SSRI seed grant program (level 1, up to \$5000), and will be eligible for additional funding from PSIEE and/or the College of Communications Science Communication Program. Details on the proposal submission and evaluation process will be distributed to registered participants prior to the event.

## Saturday Keynote | Science Communication in Political Contexts: Media and Climate Change

Lauren Feldman, Associate Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers School of Communication and Information

Broadly, [Dr. Feldman's research](#) focuses on the effects of news and political media on political knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. She is particularly interested in understanding the media's contribution to political polarization around climate change and in developing and testing message strategies to help reduce partisan and ideological divides.



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## AFTERNOON WORKSHOP | Communicating your Science without “Dumbing it Down”

2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Following a networking lunch, join us in the afternoon workshop from 2:30-5:30 p.m. to learn general principles for engaging an audience in complex material without “dumbing it down.” We will discuss approaches for interpreting technical information for a general audience, including the use of clear language, vivid examples, and analogies to connect your audience with unfamiliar topics. We will practice how to craft clear, conversational statements about what you do and why your work matters. Participants will be actively engaged in explaining scientific material to lay people. Then use an actual Penn State research topic and practice your newfound skills on real, live people! In Part 2, participants will get to experience Improvisation for Scientists, a workshop pioneered by science advocate, Alan Alda. Learn how and why this approach can help you better connect with your audience. Practice of some basic improvisation exercises that require focusing closely on others, taking responsibility for the needs of the listener, and connecting more directly and spontaneously with different audiences.



There is no cost to participate, but all attendees must preregister; the workshop is limited to 40 participants. We will keep a waiting list and your spot will be confirmed via email. Lunch is provided for confirmed all-day registrants at University Park.

Please find the most up-to-date information, additional links  
and resources, as well as the **online registration form** at  
[scicomm.psu.edu](http://scicomm.psu.edu)

Mon. October 31, 2016 at 4:00-5:00 p.m. – Foster Auditorium, Paterno/Pattee Library

## SEMINAR (TENTATIVE) | Communicating with Philanthropic Audiences

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**#SciCommPSU**

If you require special accommodations to attend any of the SciComm month events, please contact Robin Brenneman at [rjb289@psu.edu](mailto:rjb289@psu.edu) or 814-863-0291.

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